

### Introduction

As of December 2022\*, more than 7.9 million refugees have reportedly fled Ukraine<sup>1</sup>, with 2.3 million refugees arriving in Romania<sup>2</sup>. More than 94,000 are reportedly still in the country as of December 2022<sup>3</sup>. According to data shared by the UNHCR, 6,533 refugees have registered for Temporary Protection (TP) in Constanța County<sup>4</sup>. On average 95% of refugees have TP in Romania<sup>5</sup>.

This Area-Based Assessment (ABA) is an overview of the humanitarian situation within the city of Constanța.

Constanța was chosen for an in-depth analysis for several reasons. Firstly, the county hosted the second highest number of refugees from Ukraine after Bucharest. Secondly, Constanța was reported to have received limited amounts of humanitarian assistance. Lastly, as a resort city, the hotels that were used as collective sites for refugees closed ahead of the summer season.

As knowledge of the living conditions and needs of refugees outside of collective sites is limited, including families that had to leave the collective

sites they used to stay in, there was a need for data to inform humanitarian programming and strategy in the immediate long-term interventions.

As a result, REACH Romania with support from the UNHCR conducted this ABA to provide inputs to an area-based response by authorities, as well as humanitarian and development actors with regards to the needs and priorities of refugees in Constanța (including their access to services), social cohesion in the city and the impact the arrival of refugees has had

on the local economy and access to services for the hosts. This approach is expected to enable these stakeholders to better understand the dynamics and challenges in the city to respond more efficiently and fill gaps in the refugee response.

This report presents findings on access to services, humanitarian assistance, employment, living conditions, economic conditions, relationships between hosts and refugees, and priority needs across Constanța city.

### Methodology

The assessment was conducted using a mixed-methods approach: secondary data was reviewed from local actors and online sources, and primary data was collected from members of the community and key informants (KIs), via quantitative surveys, key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). Data collection took place between 28 July and 25 August 2022 in Constanța.

**1) Refugee household surveys:** A sample of 154 refugees outside of collective sites was surveyed regarding their priority needs (including in terms of access to services), social cohesion, and movement intentions through a quantitative structured questionnaire. As the population of refugees living outside of collective sites in Constanța is unknown, the sample is purposive and findings

cannot be considered representative. The interviews were conducted face to face in Russian and Ukrainian.

**2) Host household surveys:** A randomised sample of 164 host community members, including 33 purposively sampled host households were surveyed regarding social cohesion and the impact of the arrival of refugees on the local economy

and access to services through a quantitative structured questionnaire. As the population of host households in Constanța is unknown, the sample is purposive, and findings cannot be considered representative. The host community interviews were conducted face to face in Romanian and the host household interviews were conducted over the phone in Romanian.

### Methodology

**3) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** Five purposively sampled FGDs were organised: three FGDs with refugees and two FGDs with host community members. This provided a qualitative understanding of the economic impact of the arrival of refugees in the city, the impact on the access to services, and the relationship between the refugees and their hosts following a semi-structured questionnaire. The groups were to include six to eight participants each from both genders as no gender-sensitive issues were tackled. Instead of a sixth FGD with host households, four individual In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) were conducted. All FGDs and KIIs were recorded, and notes were taken by enumerators during the discussions. The data were then

transcribed and translated for analysis.

**4) KIIs:** 14 KIIs were conducted with two to four representatives from each major sector relevant to the refugee response (three health KIIs, two education KIIs, two local authorities KIIs, four civil society KIIs and three business KIIs) to understand the impact of the refugee crisis on each of these services, what the response

had been so far, as well as how different stakeholders cooperated following a semi-structured questionnaire. KIIs were selected purposively after a preliminary exploration of local stakeholders. All KIIs were recorded. The data were then transcribed and translated for analysis.

### Challenges and limitations

**1) Participatory mapping:** A participatory mapping exercise was planned through mapping interviews with informed local actors and refugees to identify where refugees live. However, following discussions with local stakeholders, the location of refugees seemed to spread across the city with few noticeable hotspots (other than the district of Mamaia), giving little value to the exercise. As a result, the map was not produced.

**2) Quantitative surveys:** As there was no existing information on the number of refugees living outside of collective sites in Constanta and the number of host

households, during data collection, the samples were determined purposively and the findings cannot be considered representative of the whole population of interest, but indicative. In addition, because of the difficulty in identifying host families, part of the 33 interviews with this type of respondent were conducted on the phone, which differs from the in-person data collection method of the host community member survey.

**3) FGD with Host Families:** The scheduled FGD with host families could not take place in the anticipated format due to the limited availability of the participants. Thus, instead of the FGD,

the questionnaire was administered on the phone as four individual IDIs instead.

**4) FGDs with the Host Community:** Finding participants from the general population in Constanta willing to participate in the discussions proved challenging. As a result, the two groups were smaller than initially planned with three and five participants respectively, instead of the planned six.

**5) FGDs with Refugees:** One of the three FGDs exceeded the target number of participants and gathered twelve refugees. However, the moderator ensured that all participants were given

their turn to speak. The discussion was recorded and thus the analysis covered all the information mentioned.

**6) KIIs:** Some interviews were conducted online through video calls rather than in person. Additionally, several possible key informants refused to participate or lacked the availability to do so.

**7) Timing of assessment:** When interpreting the findings, users were informed that data collection had been conducted in August 2022. Due to the volatility of the situation and the high level of movement, findings should be interpreted as a snapshot of the situation of refugees then.

**The movement intentions of refugees were highly uncertain.**

In the short-term, 70% of respondents wanted to remain in Constanta in the month following data collection, with the availability of permanent accommodation being the most reported reason for staying. Another 13% of respondents reported they planned to leave, while 16% of refugees did not know where they would go. In the longer term, almost all refugees did not foresee long-term integration and wished to return to Ukraine as soon as the security situation would allow them to do so. However, with security conditions in Ukraine showing no sign of improvement, this indicates high uncertainty regarding their medium-term plans. Respondents that chose to move to another location based their decision on the availability of work (52%) and permanent accommodation (43%).

**The language barrier created obstacles to refugees' integration and their access to all services.**

Refugees and hosts highlighted the language barrier as the most significant obstacle to inclusion. It is reported to prevent communication with hosts, affect the integration of children in Romanian schools, be an obstacle to accessing medical services and finding employment, as well as hinder humanitarian aid. Both refugee and host communities identified learning English as a solution to communication issues.



**Refugees' access to information was limited.** While Temporary Protection (TP) grants registered refugees access to healthcare services and education, most respondents did not know how to access these services. 96% of respondents reported having some information needs that were not met. When asked for their top three information needs, refugees most frequently required information on how to receive financial support (62%), healthcare (52%), and how to enrol children in school (43%). The lack of information centre in the city or an online platform with aggregated information was noted as an important issue by both hosts and refugees. Most respondents reported receiving their information through social media channels. However, they reported the only such local channels to be inefficient. Local stakeholders also reported a lack of information available about refugees' needs to support them effectively.

**Education was reported to be one of the main issues for refugee households.**

While refugees registered with TP have free access to the Romanian educational system, the language barrier and the lack of space to have class were the two most reported barriers to education. For 14% of children, respondent parents did not know where they would be schooled in September and another 13% of children were going to attend the Ukrainian community school that was not set up as of September. Most children were going to be following online education from their Ukrainian schools (44%). Two children out of 70 between 0 to 6 years old were reported to be attending kindergarten starting in September. A high demand for extracurricular activities was reported, as they are seen as a solution to the otherwise lack of socialisation of minors. However, a lack of available options and high costs of extracurricular activities were reported.

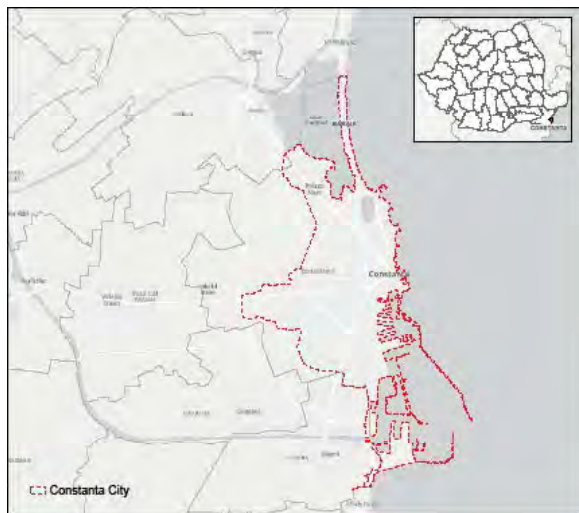
**The civil society organisations reported a significant change in focus from their traditional beneficiaries and saw a shift in the provision of humanitarian assistance to the other local vulnerable groups.**

Three out of the four KIs in the non-governmental sector reported that their programmes directed at other vulnerable groups prior to 24 February were reduced or completely stopped, as humanitarian actors directed assistance towards Ukrainian refugees. Less than two-thirds of refugees surveyed reported ever receiving humanitarian aid in Constanta. While the assistance provided in the beginning of the war was significant, especially from private individual donations, refugees and hosts noted a significant decrease in the amount of aid provided. Surveyed refugees reported that most aid was offered by local and international NGOs and religious organisations, while the local authorities were not perceived to be a major actor in providing assistance in the refugee response in Constanta.

**Social cohesion was generally perceived as positive by both groups, but there appeared to be some sources of potential tension emerging.**

The perception of the relationship was similar between refugees and hosts: approximately 60% of respondents described the relationship as good or very good and most of the rest reported it as neutral. Only 4% of both communities considered it to be bad or very bad. FGD participants generally mentioned few interactions and little tension. However, respondents from the host community as well as KIs reported that there were some negative perceptions regarding the refugees within the host population. Some of the drivers of negative perception reportedly related to the economic status of some refugees and the fact that they would not need humanitarian assistance.

## Coverage



## Hosts Survey Respondent Demographics

**164** RESPONDENTS

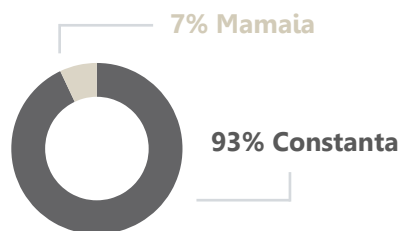
District of respondents

**49%**

% of respondents are female

**51%**

% of respondents are male



Key characteristics of host households

AVERAGE # OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS	AVERAGE AGE OF RESPONDENTS	AVERAGE # OF MINORS
2.6	40	0.5

## Refugees Survey Respondent Demographics

**154** RESPONDENTS

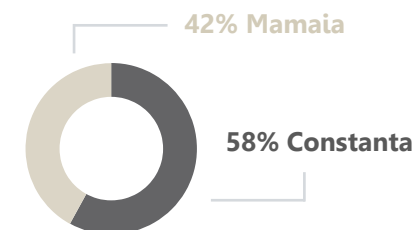
District of respondents

**83%**

% of respondents are female

**17%**

% of respondents are male



Key characteristics of Ukrainian refugee households

AVERAGE # OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS	AVERAGE AGE OF RESPONDENTS	AVERAGE # OF MINORS
3.4	41	1.3

**13%** % of households with infants (0-2)

**29%** % of households with young children (3-6)

**58%** % of households with school-aged children (7-17)

**75%** % of households with children (0-17)

This Area-Based Assessment covers the entire city of Constanta, including the district of Mamaia, the most touristic area in the city. This district counts very few year-round residents (132 in the last census)<sup>6</sup> and is mostly comprised of vacant houses, rented out to tourists. This explains why so few host respondents are from Mamaia.

## Displacement

### Most common Oblasts of origin\*

1	Odesa	51%
2	Mykolaiv	12%
3	Donetsk	10%

### Reasons for displacement •

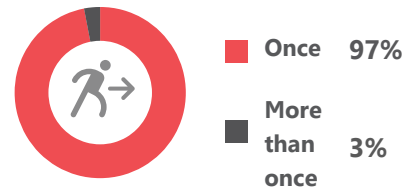
1	Concern about active fighting coming to place of residence	87%	5	Loss of livelihoods	16%
2	Shelling near place of residence	37%	6	Fear of Gender-Based Violence	16%
3	Family reunification	27%	7	Active fighting in place of residence	11%
4	Loss of access to services	27%	8	Already out of the country	5%

### Month of departure from residence, 2022

Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
5%	18%	17%	18%	15%	17%	10%

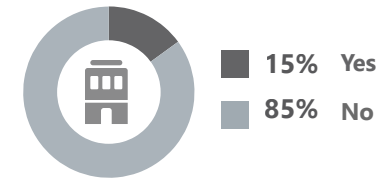
Respondents in the household survey said that they generally chose to settle in Constanta because of the proximity to Ukraine (85%) - notably respondents from Odesa. Many also chose it because of the ease of access to services (53%) and because a member of their household was a seafarer with convenient access to the port of Constanta (42%).

### Times of displacement



## Collective sites

### Previous stay in collective sites



### Reason for leaving collective site (by % of households that stayed in collective sites [n=23])

1	79%	Found private accommodation
2	30%	Wish for privacy
3	26%	Site closed

Few survey respondents reported that their household had stayed in collective sites. Of the 15% that did, very few reported having unmet needs there (4%).


Due to Constanta's status as a resort city, most of the collective sites in the city were hotels. Ahead of the summer season, there were concerns that refugees would be asked to leave to accommodate tourists in their place. However, only 26% of respondents that stayed in collective sites reporting leaving because the site closed. All FGD participants who stayed in collective sites noted that they were **warned on several occasions that they would have to vacate their rooms, giving them sufficient time to find an alternative.**

In addition, one KI noted that the moment the collective sites closed to refugees was around May and June, which also coincided with the implementation of a national initiative providing financial support for accommodation commonly called the **50/20 programme**.<sup>7</sup> Through the programme, many residents of Constanta made their accommodation available to refugees, which supported a smooth transition of refugees out of sites.

## Movement intentions

### Movement intentions in the month following data collection



 **1**  
**Focus Group Discussion participant out of 23 planned to settle in Constanta in the long-term**

### Top factors reported for choosing to come to Constanta

- 1 Closeness to Ukrainian residence **89%**
- 2 Pleasant environment **68%**
- 3 Presence of friends or acquaintances **63%**
- 4 Easy transport access **46%**
- 5 A member of the HH is a seafarer **45%**

### Influencing factors (by % of households that intended to remain in Constanta [n=109])

- 1 Permanent accommodation **63%**
- 2 Security considerations **58%**
- 3 Presence of relatives **31%**
- 4 Availability of work **30%**
- 5 Humanitarian aid **15%**

### Influencing factors (by % of households that intended to leave Constanta [n=19])

- 1 Availability of work **52%**
- 2 Permanent accommodation **43%**
- 3 Public services **29%**
- 4 Presence of relatives **24%**
- 5 Language barrier **24%**

Although the quantitative household survey showed that in the short-term, most refugees intended to stay in Romania, the qualitative data showed a **high uncertainty regarding the medium to long-term intentions of refugees** due to the absence of information on when the war would end.

Some participants in FGDs reported an **intention to return to their usual place of residence** as soon as the security situation would allow them to do so (4/23), whilst only one participant intended to settle in Constanta for the long-term because their residence in Ukraine was destroyed. Almost half of the host community members in the FGDs (3/8) also reported observing that the refugees in Constanta had no intentions to settle in the city. As a result, integration was not seen as a priority by both the host or the refugee communities. However, with the security conditions in Ukraine showing no sign of improvement, this leaves refugees little choice but to remain in Constanta for an uncertain amount of time.

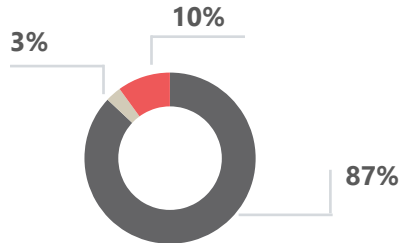
This uncertainty surrounding how long refugees intend to or will have to remain in Constanta impacts all subsequent sections of this report, notably the willingness to find employment, learn Romanian and participate in integration activities.




 **Temporary Protection**

 **90%** of refugee households have at least part of the HH registered for TP

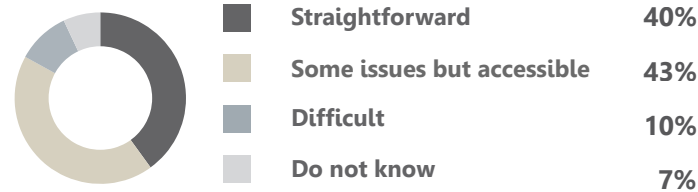
**Most common counties of TP registration** (by % of households that had at least one member registered for Temporary Protection [n=139])

**Temporary Protection Registration**



-  All household members registered
-  Some household members registered
-  No household member registered

**Difficulty of the registration process** (by % of households that had at least one member registered for Temporary Protection [n=139])



- 1** Constanta 62%
- 2** Galati 12%
- 3** Bucuresti 9%

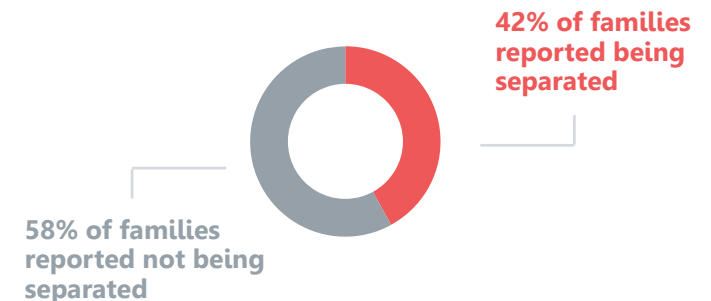
Registering for TP gives one the **right to stay** in Romania for one year as well as provides **the right to work, free healthcare, and free education for minors**, under the same conditions as Romanian citizens.<sup>8</sup>

Even though 97% of the refugee household survey respondents arrived in Constanta straight from their usual place of residence in Ukraine, only 62% of respondents whose household members had received TP registered in Constanta County. Many refugees reported going to Galati (12%), Bucharest (9%), or Brasov (6%) - sometimes in groups - to register. This is because the queues in Constanta were reported to be very large and the process lacked organisation.

**Most reported required changes for easing the TP registration process** (by % of households that found the registration process difficult or with some issues but accessible [n=73])

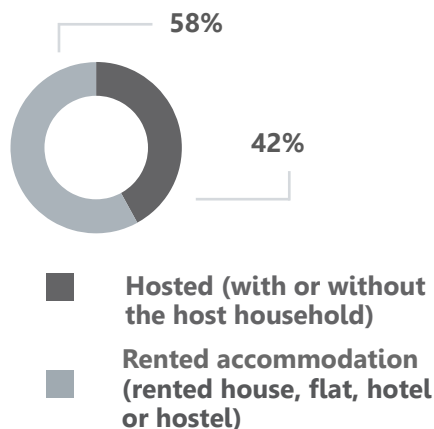


**Family separation**



• Respondents could select multiple answers  
• Four most frequently mentioned options

### Accommodation type



AVERAGE # OF PEOPLE PER BEDROOM*
<b>2.4</b>
% OF HH WITH MINORS THAT HAVE A SEPARATE STUDY SPACE IN THEIR ACCOMMODATION
<b>45%</b>

For the refugee community, **accommodation was seen as one of the least problematic sectors** according to the FGD participants. This is in great part thanks to a national programme providing hosts with financial support, thus giving the incentive to make accommodation available to refugees. The 50/20 programme guarantees RON50 for each refugee per day to cover accommodation expenses and RON20 for each refugee per day to cover food expenses. Both hosts and refugees expressed concerns regarding how much longer the programme would be maintained as its discontinuation was expected to create a housing crisis in Constanta and the rest of Romania for the refugee community.

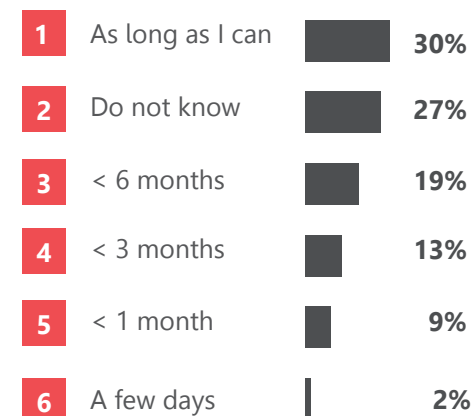
As a resort city, Constanta has a significant number of vacant accommodations, usually used by tourists during the summer season. During summer, refugees reported that finding accommodation had become more challenging due to the competition to obtain a flat under the 50/20 programme since some were rented to tourists. Respondents also reported expecting more accommodations to become available at the end of the summer season. Most KIs, however, reported they did not see the tourist season as having a substantial impact on the housing situation of refugees due in part to the lower number of tourists, as well as to the 50/20 programme.

Although the situation was generally reported as good, there were still a few sources of tension. The first one is that **refugees in the FGDs all reported that they did not receive the RON20 which are due to them** to cover their food expenses. Three participants added that they were afraid to report the issue and lose their accommodation as a result.

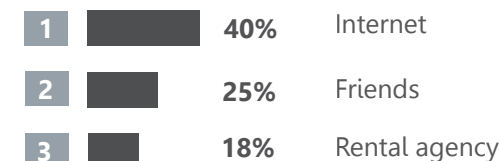
 **31%**  
% of refugee households reporting that they were not paying for any accommodation expenses (rent and utilities)

Based on information obtained through household surveys, no connection was observed between the reported income level of refugees and the type of accommodation chosen (paid or unpaid). Rather, the choice of housing appears to relate to accessibility, as 47% of survey respondents report choosing their current residence because it was the only one they could find. In addition, six participants across all three FGDs reported being accommodated in poor conditions, notably having broken facilities or unclean living spaces. They also reported a lack of willingness from their hosts to improve their situation.

### Expected length of stay in the accommodation



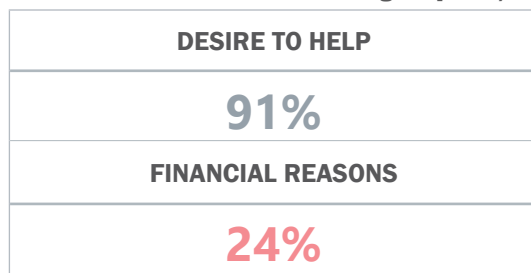
### Most common means to find accommodation\*



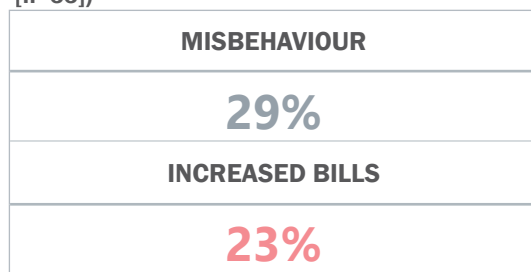


 **Housing conditions**

**Most common reasons for hosting** (by % of households that ever hosted refugees [n=33])



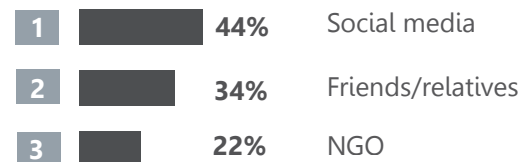
**Most common hosting deterrents** (by % of households that ever hosted refugees [n=33])



 **15%**

**% of host families sharing the living space with the refugees** (by % of households that ever hosted refugees [n=33])

**Most common means to find refugees to host** (by % of households that ever hosted refugees [n=33])



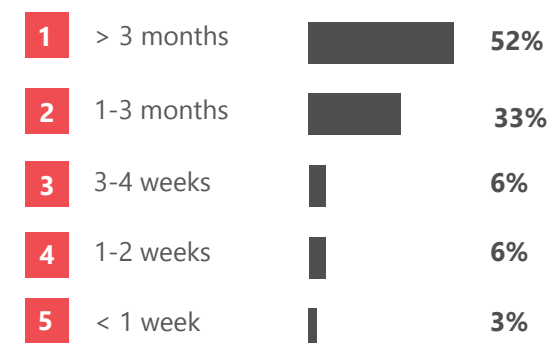
The four host families interviewed shared that their initial motivation to host refugees was the desire to help, but two of them reported that once they found out about the 50/20 programme, they also felt a financial incentive. One host also shared that they were inclined to host refugees from Ukraine as they observed the refugees are culturally similar to Romanians.

All four hosts reported making their entire accommodations available and did not share the living space with the refugees.

Asked for how long they were planning to host refugees, three of the four respondents reported that they planned to do it indefinitely, with two hosts specifying that this was contingent on the continuation of the 50/20 programme, as they could not afford it otherwise. This supports the findings of the survey with 61% of hosts willing to accommodate refugees for an unlimited period, but this figure went up to 90% when disaggregated by hosts who benefitted from the 50/20 programme.

Hosts did not raise specific challenges linked to the arrival of winter. There was only one mention of increased bills being a cause of concerns.

**Length of stay (until the time of interview)** (by % of households that ever hosted refugees [n=33])



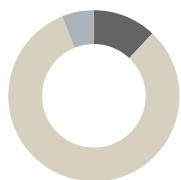
**Expected length of stay** (by % of households that ever hosted refugees [n=33])



• Respondents could select multiple answers

 Host assistance

Hosts' need for assistance (by % of households that ever hosted refugees [n=33])



- Do not need any assistance 82%
- Need some assistance 12%
- Do not know 6%

**63%** of respondents that received support from the 50/20 programme reported that **the funding was sufficient to cover the costs of hosting refugees** [n=19]

In the current situation, hosts reported to be satisfied with their conditions. Only 12% of them requested assistance. The assistance requested was either in the form of financial support (66%, n=2), information on how to register for financial support (66%, n=2), or food products (66%, n=2).

All four hosts who were individually interviewed reported receiving financial support through the **50/20 programme**. They all thought it was **sufficient to cover accommodation costs** including utilities. However, one out of four respondents stated that the amount provided **for food was not sufficient**. All confirmed that the funding was released on time, although one noted that in the early days of the programme, the funding used to be delayed.

As the refugees and KIs, hosts brought up **concerns that the programme would be discontinued**. Half of the four hosts would have to cease hosting for financial reasons. In the case where the 50/20 programme would be discontinued and hosts would no longer wish or be financially able to accommodate refugees, this could cause a severe accommodation crisis and would force refugees to return to collective sites or to pay rent that they might not be able to afford. This is all the more likely as hosts reported receiving no additional help other than what is received through the 50/20 programme. The hosts interviewed came up with suggestions to support hosts if the programme was to come to an end, such as tax exemptions (mentioned by two out of four hosts interviewed).

Although no refugee who participated in the FGDs said they received the **RON20 for food, three out of four hosts reported that they shared that amount every month**.

Receiving support from the 50/20 programme (by % of households that ever hosted refugees [n=33])



- Yes 58%
- No 42%

**79%** of respondents that received support from the 50/20 programme reported that **the funding came in a timely manner** [n=19]

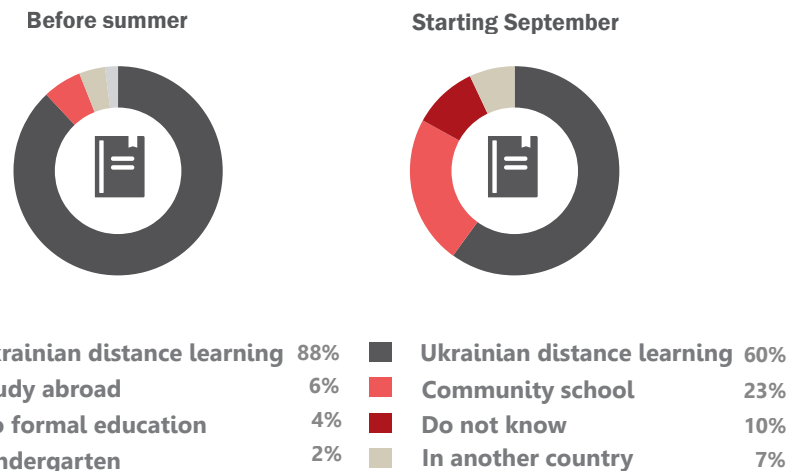
## Access to education

Education has emerged as one of the major issues for the refugee population, with two main barriers to the inclusion of refugee minors in the Romanian system. The first barrier to education reported by both KIs as well as refugees during FGDs is the **lack of educational space**. There is reportedly not enough physical space for the local children and finding venues to accommodate the extra classes has been a challenge for the local authorities. One of the KIs in the public sector reported that they were considering various solutions to the issue of space including transporting the children to nearby schools with available space or setting up containers as a short-term solution.

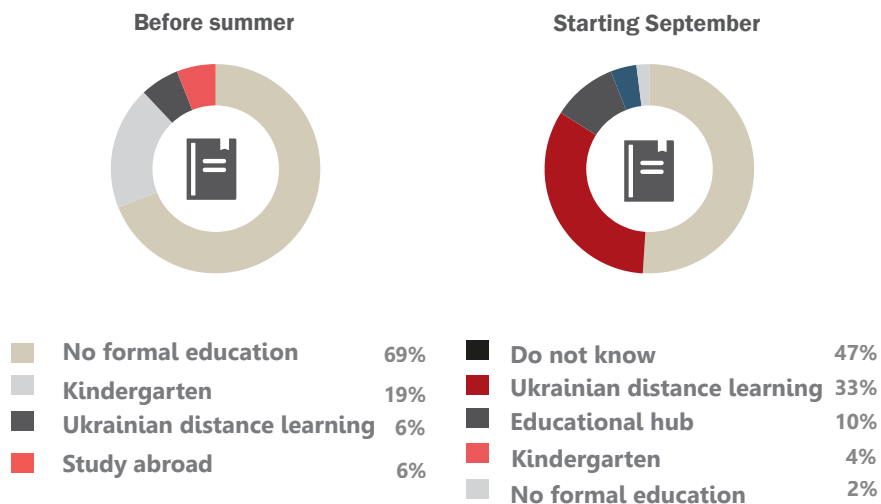
The **second barrier** to education is **language**. According to KIs, the large majority of children under 14 do not speak English, or Romanian, and note that the most frequent choice is for the refugee children to study in their native language. The latter has also been reported by most refugee participants during FGDs. Refugee respondents expressed wanting their children to continue following the Ukrainian curriculum as they are planning on returning to Ukraine once the situation stabilises. Moreover, a part of the respondents expressed concern that young children could not communicate their needs

**86%**  
of minors had access to formal education before the summer vacation

### School attendance for minors aged 7-10 (by % minors in this age group [n=69])



### School attendance for minors aged 3-6 (by % minors in this age group [n=49])



to caretakers because of the absence of a common language. The two KIs in the public sector reported knowing of cases when minors spoke English to some extent and noted that the integration of those minors into the Romanian educational system was unproblematic.

## Educational alternatives

Due to the wish of a large part of the refugee community for their minors to continue their studies based on the Ukrainian curriculum in their native language, there was a community initiative supported by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) to set up a **community school**. According to KIs in the education sector, about **700 children** had signed up for enrolment in the community school. According to KIs, the requests were received by local authorities, but because of the limited educational space, the community school could not be established. Furthermore, one of the KIs reported that the community school received the support of the town hall, which had agreed to cover the utility costs.

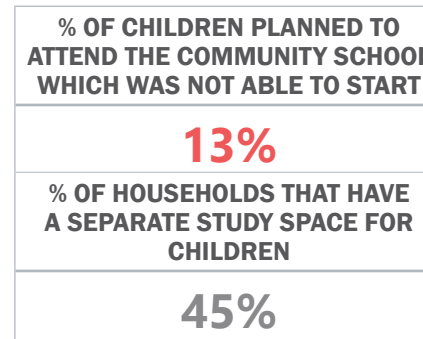
One of the KIs in the educational sector reported trying to set up a co-teaching system as a solution to the language barrier and integration. According to the KI, through the co-teaching system, in the first year, the teaching would be done partly or completely in the native language of the children, following the Romanian curriculum. The KI reported this could be a long-term solution to the issue of integration, however, they also noted that the present legislation does not cover such a teaching system.

## Legislative limitations

On the 7th of March 2022, the Romanian government issued an emergency order<sup>9</sup> establishing that refugee children may be registered as observers and attend Romanian classes until they opt for or can register as pupils. While one KI from the education sector observed that this status is useful as it helps the children socialise while sparing them the pressure of having to follow all classes, another KI from local authorities explained that the observer status is not beneficial from an educational point of view because of the language barrier. However, both KIs from the public sector reported that the **existing legislation was unclear or restrictive** regarding the solutions and support they could offer to the refugees. Moreover, one of the KIs emphasised the need for legislative change that would introduce or cover the co-teaching system or other solutions for the integration of refugee children into the educational system.

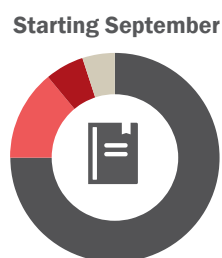
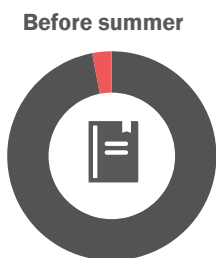
## Extracurricular Activities

As online education has remained one of the main schooling options for refugee children, refugee respondents expressed looking for alternative activities through which children could socialise. As such, a great demand for extracurricular activities was reported, such as arts and sports. Respondents, however, also noted that there is a lack of options available in the city as well as that those available are costly. Some households reported being able to enrol their minors in sports classes for free due to the club offering the classes having a prior agreement with the Ukrainian clubs the children had been attending. KIs in the education sector also noted that the most frequent requests they received were for enrolment into extra-curricular activities and reported that some of the refugee children had been attending those at the Children's palace.



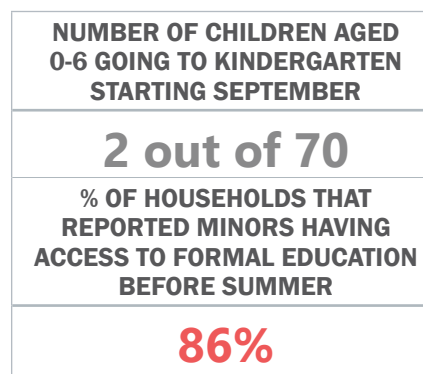
**100%**  
of minors aged 15-17 were reported to have followed distance learning before summer

### School attendance for minors aged 11-14 (by % minors in this age group [n=36])

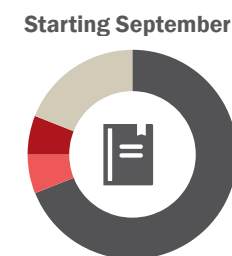


■ Ukrainian distance learning 97%  
■ Study abroad 3%

■ Ukrainian distance learning 75%  
■ Community school 14%  
■ Do not know 6%  
■ In another country 5%

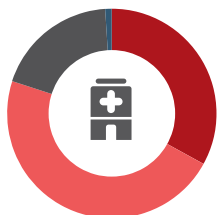


### School attendance for minors aged 15-17 (by % minors in this age group [n=16])



■ Ukrainian distance learning 69%  
■ Community school 6%  
■ Do not know 6%  
■ In another country 19%

**Satisfaction regarding medical care** (by % of HH that reported having accessed medical services [n=58])



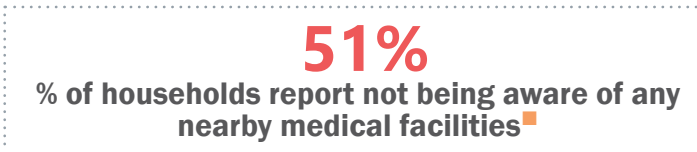
- 33%** Completely satisfied
- 47%** Partially satisfied
- 19%** Completely dissatisfied
- 1%** Preferred not to answer

**Most reported reasons for dissatisfaction** (% out of 22 households that reported being partially or unsatisfied with medical care)

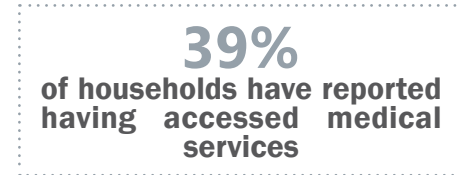
- 1** Language barrier **82%**
- 2** Long waiting time **50%**
- 3** High price **37%**
- 4** Bad service **23%**
- 5** Inadequate facilities **17%**

**Access to healthcare**

During the FGDs, refugee participants reported diverse experiences with healthcare services regarding both access as well as cost. In two of the groups, a number of the respondents shared that medicine was difficult to obtain, because of the need for a prescription or the high price. Several respondents reported being satisfied with the medical services they received and several confirmed that they received free service or free medication across all groups. However, many barriers were still identified by the groups notably the cost (of certain private facilities, or drugs not covered partly or at all by insurance), the language barrier, and the lack of information. The latter was also highlighted by two of the KIs. Regarding the language barrier, KIs had contradictory reports on whether it represented an obstacle to offering medical care to refugees. Two KIs, including a medical practitioner, expressed that the language barrier represented a serious issue, while a third KI shared that they noticed that online translation tools were sufficient to understand symptoms and inform patients. The latter also reported that the refugee patients they encountered spoke English.



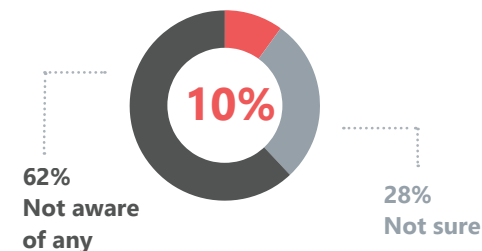
Another important barrier shared by two FGD groups is the difficulty in registering with a General Practitioner (GP), which is essential to get prescription medication or visit a specialist in the public sector. Respondents reported that they had been turned down because of the language barrier or because doctors were not willing to provide multiple free consultations. This issue was also reported by two KIs who expressed concern regarding the refugee's possible lack of access to GPs, linking it to the issue of GPs not being able to address the existing need, as well as the language barrier.



**Key types of medical facilities respondents report being aware of in their vicinity**

- 1** Public hospital **36%**
- 2** Private hospital **26%**
- 3** Clinic **23%**
- 4** Maternity hospital **2%**

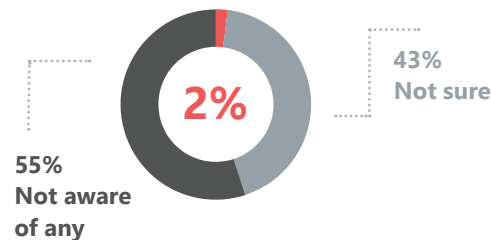
**% of households aware of a general practitioner in their vicinity**



## Access to healthcare

A solution to the issue of access to medical care reported by several of the respondents was receiving the needed care through emergency services. This also matches the information offered by one of the KIs, who reported that many of the refugees that were addressed through the emergency services were not cases of medical emergencies. A refugee participant also gave an account of paying a bribe after waiting for hours in the hospital and was then immediately directed to a private clinic that addressed their condition free of charge.

### % of households aware of mental health or psychological support in their vicinity



## Impact on the health system

KIs in the healthcare sector reported it being mainly unaffected by the arrival of the refugee population. The increase of patients in both private and public medical facilities was reported to be minimal even though refugees with Temporary Protection have access to healthcare under the same conditions as Romanian citizens. Despite this, a participant in the host FGDs reported concerns that the presence of refugees cluttered the medical system, and one of the KIs expressed disapproval regarding registered refugees having equal rights to Romanian citizens. This was also observed in one of the refugee FGDs, with respondents reporting that doctors were not willing to provide multiple free consultations.

## Humanitarian Assistance

### Needs and available aid

The most frequently cited need across all refugee FGDs was **information**. The informal information channels on social media that refugees reported using were described as inefficient because of the large volume of information posted daily. Refugee participants also reported not being aware of the existence of any local information centre in Ukrainian and/or Russian. The need for information and services available in the native languages of refugees has also been noted by the host community respondents as well as KIs.

Other needs expressed through the discussions were financial assistance through cash or vouchers, hygienic products, as well as food products. There

**65%**  
of households reported having benefitted from assistance

were reportedly programmes by JRS and the Red Cross which offered financial assistance and non-food products, although some of the programs had been reportedly put on hold because of the lack of funds. JRS was also the main provider of language courses. The main humanitarian actors providing food were noted to be churches. They were reportedly providing non-food items (NFIs) as well, such as hygienic or baby products. Apart from these, KIs in the humanitarian sector reported a variety of assistance was offered, including support with accessing medical care, accommodation as well as administrative issues.

### Types of assistance received (by % HH that reported receiving assistance [n=100])

1	Food	87%
2	Protection	75%
3	Cash	68%
4	Accommodation	42%
5	Health	32%
6	Non-food items	29%



### Humanitarian Response

Participants among all groups (refugees, host community, KIs) noted that the previous centre at Pavilionul Expozitional where assistance was offered had closed in June and indicated the need for the (re)-establishment of such a centre. Refugee respondents raised complaints about the discontinuation of humanitarian aid provided in the city. This may be related to the funding challenges reported by KIs from the NGO sector as well as to the decrease in the engagement of the host population, as five KIs, as well as three respondents from the host population, reported that some of the assistance was coming in large part from private individual donations.

Criticisms on the humanitarian assistance provided in the city were also expressed by several KIs, notably regarding assistance being insufficient (n=2), disorganisation (n=1), and also on the inadequacy of the help provided (n=1). One host respondent also complained about the management of the previous aid centre. Many refugee respondents reported travelling to Bucharest to receive assistance.

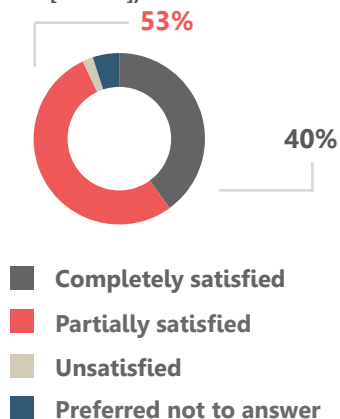
Post data collection, a KI noted that a refugee centre has been set up but it was unclear for how long it would be able to run.

**Three out of the four KIs from the NGO sector reported that their programmes for vulnerable groups prior to the 24th of February were impacted by the new population in need in Constanta.**

According to multiple KIs, there is no formal coordination at the local level regarding the refugee response. Two KIs in the public sector mentioned a quarterly meeting among local public institutions. The other reported receipt of logistical support regarding the community school and organised language classes for refugees - support which the KI expressed hope would continue.

There was reportedly limited involvement from the local authorities, as reported by multiple KIs. According to the two KIs in the public sector, the biggest barrier to involvement is legislative limitations. Since data collection has been concluded, it has been reported that the town hall has organised an event during which it has distributed vouchers to refugees.

#### Reported satisfaction regarding assistance (by % HH that reported receiving assistance [n=100])



#### Reported reasons for dissatisfaction (% out of 33 respondents who reported being partially or not satisfied)

- 1 Assistance stopped 87%
- 2 Poor organisation 75%
- 3 Quantity not sufficient 68%
- 4 Delays/not in time 42%
- 5 Unable to give feedback or complain 32%
- 6 Wanted to be more consulted or involved 29%

#### Most reported sources of assistance (by % HH that reported receiving assistance [n=100])

- 1 International NGOs 59%
- 2 Religious organisations 48%
- 3 UN organisations 43%
- 4 Private organisations 30%
- 5 Government 28%
- 6 Local authorities 28%
- 7 Host Community 27%





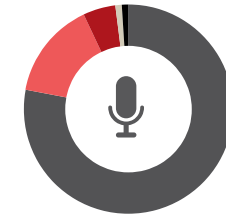
### Main challenge: Information

The coming of winter was not reported to be a major issue for the refugee community by five KIs. The two possible challenges that were to be tackled were the lack of heating or increased price of heating in some accommodation centres and the need for winter items (especially clothes).

The **main issue** has been reported to be the **lack of information**, both available **to refugees** but also information **on refugees' needs** and situations for local stakeholders. The latter was observed by four KIs, while two respondents noted a strong wish to help from people and the private sectors, but the lack of information on what the refugees needed prevented that support from being offered.

Apart from the issue of information, the most reported challenge during FGDs has been that of education, followed by employment and access to healthcare. According to KIs, the most frequently cited needs of refugees were information or an information point (n=8), social activities (n=2), and food (n=2).

### Preferred means of receiving information



78%	Phone/SMS	1%	Community group
15%	Face-to-face	1%	Help desk
5%	Social media		

**14%**  
of refugee households reported having access to information

During FGDs, respondents reported that **the only informal information channels were inefficient** as they were overloaded

### Most frequently requested types of information by refugee respondents

<b>1</b>	How to access financial support	<b>62%</b>
<b>2</b>	How to access healthcare	<b>52%</b>
<b>3</b>	How to enrol children in school	<b>43%</b>
<b>4</b>	How to register for humanitarian assistance	<b>40%</b>
<b>5</b>	How to find work	<b>30%</b>
<b>6</b>	How to get accommodation	<b>20%</b>

### Priority needs reported through the survey

<b>1</b>	Long-term accommodation	<b>53%</b>
<b>2</b>	Health	<b>51%</b>
<b>3</b>	Education	<b>47%</b>
<b>4</b>	Food	<b>42%</b>
<b>5</b>	Economic assistance	<b>39%</b>
<b>6</b>	Employment	<b>31%</b>

### Services: need and access of refugee HH

		Reported need	Reported access
<b>1</b>	Financial assistance	<b>66%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>2</b>	Food	<b>57%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>3</b>	Medical care	<b>37%</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>4</b>	Education	<b>32%</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>5</b>	Housing	<b>27%</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>6</b>	Non-food items	<b>26%</b>	<b>3%</b>





## Income

### Source of income for refugee households

1	Savings	92%
2	Employment	89%
3	Humanitarian assistance	51%

### Amount of highest monthly income in the household (by % of households that answered)

	BEFORE 24 FEBRUARY 2022 [50%]	IN AUGUST 2022 [43%]
None	4%	22%
Less than 12.000 UAH	12%	17%
Between 12.001 and 21.000 UAH	26%	22%
Between 21.001 and 35.000 UAH	17%	18%
Between 35.001 and 57.000 UAH	18%	9%
More than 57.000 UAH	23%	12%

## Employment

**62%** of respondents who were working before 24 February **lost their jobs**

**28%** of these respondents were able to **find new employment** since being in Constanta

AVERAGE NUMBER OF ADULTS PER HOUSEHOLDS WHO WERE:	
EMPLOYED BEFORE 24 FEBRUARY 2022	1.5
EMPLOYED IN AUGUST 2022	1

Although 62% of refugees who were working before 24 February 2022 lost their job in displacement, 89% of households reported that one of the sources of their household's income was employment, notably through another member of their household or still receiving their salary from Ukraine. However, 92% of households indicated relying on their savings. With household members losing employment and relying on savings as well as with depleting income, this could cause increased vulnerability of the Ukrainian households of Constanta. As the crisis shows few signs of improvement and is becoming protracted diminishing the possibility for Ukrainians in Romania to return to their country of origin, **livelihoods could become a priority in the next few months.**

### Ways to continue working (by % of respondents who had a job before 24 February and did not lose it [n=42])



Remote work	55%
Same company in a different office	41%
Regular visits to work area	2%
Prefer not to answer	2%

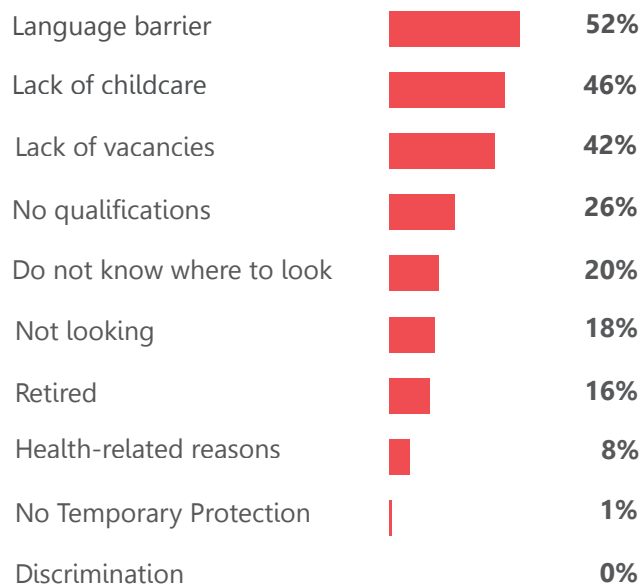
RESPONDENTS	EMPLOYED BEFORE 24 FEBRUARY 2022	NOT EMPLOYED BEFORE 24 FEBRUARY 2022
EMPLOYED IN AUGUST 2022	39%	0%
NOT EMPLOYED IN AUGUST 2022	33%	28%

## Employment

The qualitative data supports the findings of the household survey, with the greater number of FGD participants identifying the top three main barriers to employment as the language barrier (48%), the lack of childcare (43%), and the lack of vacancies (22%).

Although the lack of childcare was mentioned by fewer participants than the language barrier, respondents who identified this as a barrier stressed that it was a much greater barrier than any other for them. One KI shared that **the problem of refugee unemployment would be solved as soon as the issues regarding the education of Ukrainian children would be addressed**, notably the lack of places in kindergartens.

### Reasons for not working (by % of respondents who reported not having a job [n=90])



### Most common employment sectors (by % of respondents who found work in Constanta [n=19])

1	Housekeeping, childcare, cooking	37%	5	Education, childcare	5%
2	Beauty salon services	16%	6	UN, NGO	5%
3	Restaurant, hotel	16%	7	Information, communication	5%
4	Transport, courier	11%	8	Financial and insurance activities	5%

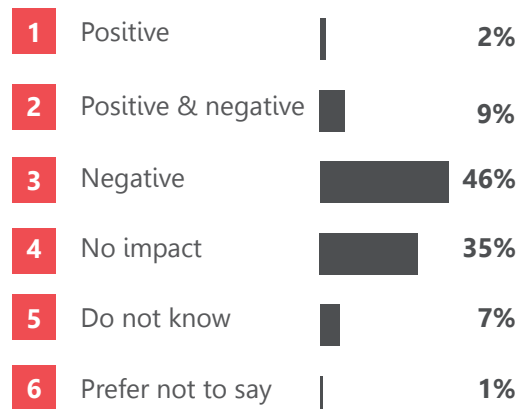
Another frequently mentioned barrier to employment in both the FGDs and the household survey was that refugees reported not knowing where to look for opportunities. All FGD groups mentioned that one of the major issues was the **lack of a centralised job opportunities platform** that would be accessible to them. This barrier was also brought up by two out of the three business KIs. However, such a platform exists (Jobs4Ukraine) but seems to be poorly advertised to the target users of Constanta, supporting our findings regarding the lack of information.

KIs from all sectors identified the very same barriers mentioned by the refugees, and three of them added that there was also **some unwillingness to work** on the part of the refugees, both because they were hoping to return to Ukraine as soon as possible and do not want to commit to a position, or because they used to have high profile jobs and are not willing to accept a position they perceive as worse or with lower income. The three business KIs said that in principle, they would be open to hiring refugees, with two of them adding that **not knowing how long they would be willing to commit was a significant barrier** that needed to be taken into account.

In all FGDs, participants reported that access to the labour market also posed challenges because of **stories of exploitation**. Five different participants in the three refugee FGD groups mentioned being asked to work longer hours, or for lower salaries compared to those received by Romanian staff members. They accused employers of taking advantage of the knowledge that refugees had few options.

For those that did obtain work in Constanta, the findings of the FGDs also support the results of the survey with the vast majority of respondents sharing that they and their acquaintances mostly found jobs in the cleaning, restaurant, hotel, childcare, and beauty salon sectors. Jobs are not just offered by Romanian businesses and residents but also by wealthy Ukrainian refugees seeking cleaning and childcare services and advertising these vacancies on social media channels. **The hotel and restaurant jobs being seasonal raises concern for the end of the summer period.**

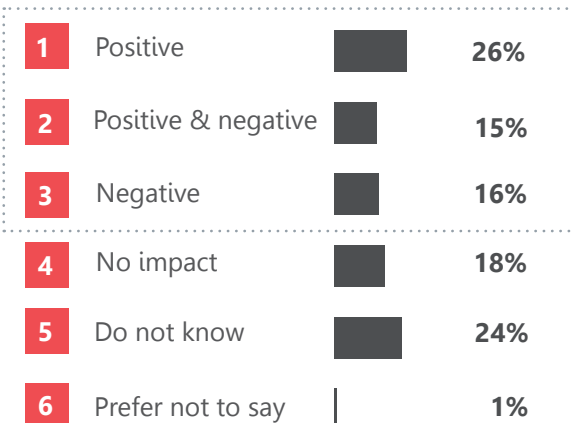
### Impact of the war on the financial situation of hosts' households



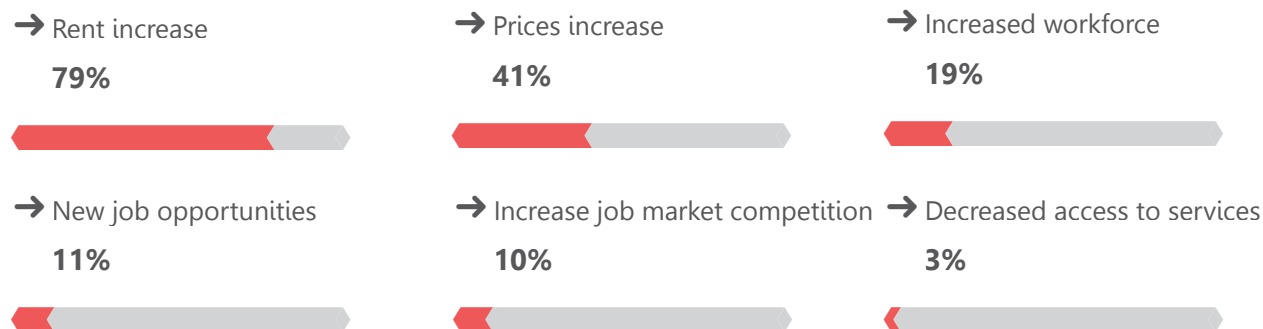
Hosts and business KIs all noted an increase in prices since refugees arrived in Constanta, but almost all took into account the fact that the war was the factor that caused the inflation, not the arrival of refugees themselves. The only sector of the economy where there reportedly was a price increase because of refugees is the **price of rent**. This was linked to the revenues from the 50/20 programme which are reportedly considerably higher than rent costs before the 50/20 programme. Besides this, most people reported that the **local economy had been relatively unaffected**. Business KIs noted they did not experience any increase in demand beyond the normal increase that usually comes with the summer season in Constanta, except one restaurant that chose to serve free meals to refugees, and who admitted that their case was unique. The increase in demand that mechanically occurs when more individuals live in the same area seems to have been so minimal that it was not felt by the business KIs that were surveyed.

It was noted by multiple KIs, as well as host communities, that a part of the refugee population is well-off economically. They saw this as an opportunity for investment that had the potential to make the economy grow as reported by four host community members and one KI. However, one business KI, whose business was not affected by the arrival of refugees, was the only respondent who reported that the arrival of refugees had a negative impact. The KI stated this was because many refugees transited through Romania, including Constanta, towards other countries, and that they thought that the resources invested in the refugees were "for nothing" as the money would be spent elsewhere and would not boost the local economy. They added that the presence of refugees and the significant revenues that result from the 50/20 programme have negatively impacted tourism because of the increase in rent prices.

### Impact of the arrival of refugees on the local economy



### Nature of the impact of the arrival of refugees on the local economy (by % of households that reported an impact [n=93])



## Evolving dynamics

According to the household surveys, the perception of the relationship between refugees and hosts was equivalent in the refugee and host communities with 60% describing the relationship as “good” or “very good”, 5% as “bad” or “very bad” and the remainder either did not know or thought that it was neutral. There is a noted discrepancy between the information acquired through the surveys and the focus group discussions and interviews. In the qualitative data, the relationship is most often described by host community respondents and KIs as neutral with few interactions and tensions. Multiple KIs observed that when Ukrainian refugees first arrived in Constanta, there was a very positive reaction from the general population towards refugees, with much of the local community being very invested in the situation. This is reported to have changed, with multiple KIs explaining the shift as a result of the

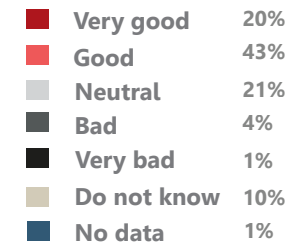
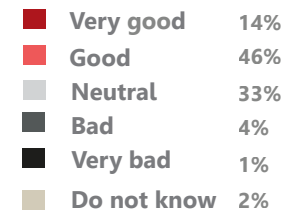
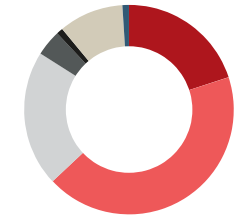
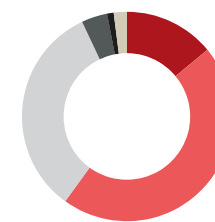
host population becoming used to the war and the refugees. Respondents from the host community also noticed a change in the attitude of the local population compared to the beginning of the war when everyone was interested in helping while observing that the change in the amount of mass media coverage of the war might have played a role.

The **language barrier** has been one of the most reported issues across both household surveys and qualitative data. As can be seen below, communication difficulties are the most reported cause of tension for refugee respondents and the second one for the host community. The language barrier is said to create distance between the refugees and hosts as they generally do not understand each other, and do not have a common language to communicate in.

### Perception of the inter-community dynamics

(by % of refugee households)

(by % of host households)



### Most reported reasons for tensions (by % of households that reported the relationship being bad or very bad)

Rank	Reason	Percentage
1	Communication difficulties	86%
2	Cultural differences	57%
2	Decreased access to affordable housing	57%
3	Increased difficulty in access to services	29%

**Refugee responses**  
(n=7)

Rank	Reason	Percentage
1	Decreased access to affordable housing	63%
2	Communication difficulties	50%
2	Cultural differences	50%
3	Increased difficulty in access to services	13%

**Host responses**  
(n=8)

## Sources of tension

Some sources of tension were reported by both communities. The refugee respondents expressed negative perceptions regarding host families not sharing the RON20 allocated for the food expenses of the refugees from the government programme, which led to a perception of greed and of being taken advantage of by the hosts. During interviews with the host population as well as KIs, several respondents reported either hearing or witnessing what was perceived as refugees attempting to take advantage of their status. Another point of reported tension has been the perception that the refugees were economically advantaged, comparisons being made with the local vulnerable groups or that they were tourists and thus did not require the support they were being offered. However, most respondents across both communities reported positive interactions between the two communities and all the refugee FGD groups expressed gratefulness to their hosts.

## Social Cohesion

Through the survey data it can be observed that more respondents from the host community reported being aware of both formal integration events (42%) and informal events (35%) compared to the refugee community, for which 16% of households reported being aware of formal events, and 6% of informal ones. Moreover, as previously mentioned within the Movement Intentions section, during FGDs, most refugee respondents in all the FGD groups expressed their intention to return to Ukraine and uncertainty related to the length of their stay in Romania. This lack of clarity regarding remaining is also perceived by the host community, with both host community respondents and KIs noting that refugees are not planning on settling long-term in Constanta. As a result, **integration is not seen as a priority by either community**. As a result, English classes are seen as a better solution

to issues of communication by both communities, compared to Romanian classes.

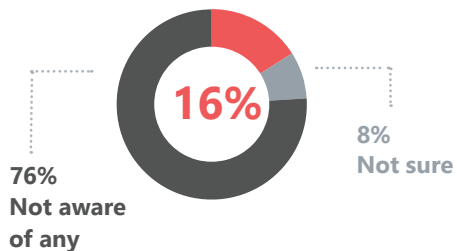
Access to **psychological support services** and **counselling** has also been indicated as an important element for the integration of the refugee community by KIs as well as respondents from the host population. This was particularly emphasized by one of the KIs from the education sector who noted the importance of support available both to the children and their parents. However, no refugee respondent reported the need to access psychological support services.

**Cultural events** have also been reported as a good practice for integration by multiple host community respondents and KIs, to facilitate the two communities learning more about each other.

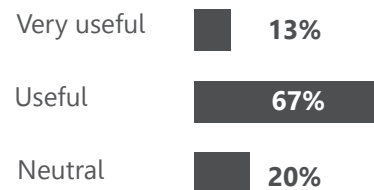
### Most reported organizers of formal integration events (by % refugee HH that reported attending formal events [n=24])

1	NGOs	63%
2	Local Authorities	25%
3	Private organizations	13%
3	Individuals	13%

#### % of refugee households were aware of formal integration events

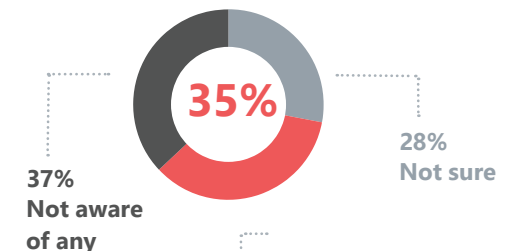


#### Perceived usefulness of formal integration events (by % HH that reported attending formal events [n=24])



**6%** of refugee households reported being aware of social integration events

#### % of host community households are aware of social integration events



Of the 35% host community households that were aware of social integration events, **26%** reported participating

Of the 16% refugee households that reported knowing of formal integration events, **63%** reported participating

## Endnotes

1. UNHCR, Operational Data Portal - Ukraine Refugee Situation. Retrieved from: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>
2. UNHCR, Operational Data Portal - Ukraine Refugee Situation, Romania. Retrieved from: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine/location/10782>
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6. Romania National Census 2011, Populatia stabila pe judete municipii, orase si localitati componenete la RPL\_2011. Retrieved from: <https://www.recensamantromania.ro/rpl-2011/rezultate-2011/>
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