UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Омбудсман України
Ombudsman of Ukraine

UKRAINE PROTECTION SURVEY #3

A year in review

July 2026

The Ukraine Protection Survey was prepared and implemented by UNHCR and the Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine in partnership with Donbas SOS, Right to Protection (R2P), The Tenth of April (TTA), NEEKA, Rokada, and in cooperation with the Protection Cluster.

Protection Cluster Ukraine

ДОНБАСС SOS

NEEKA

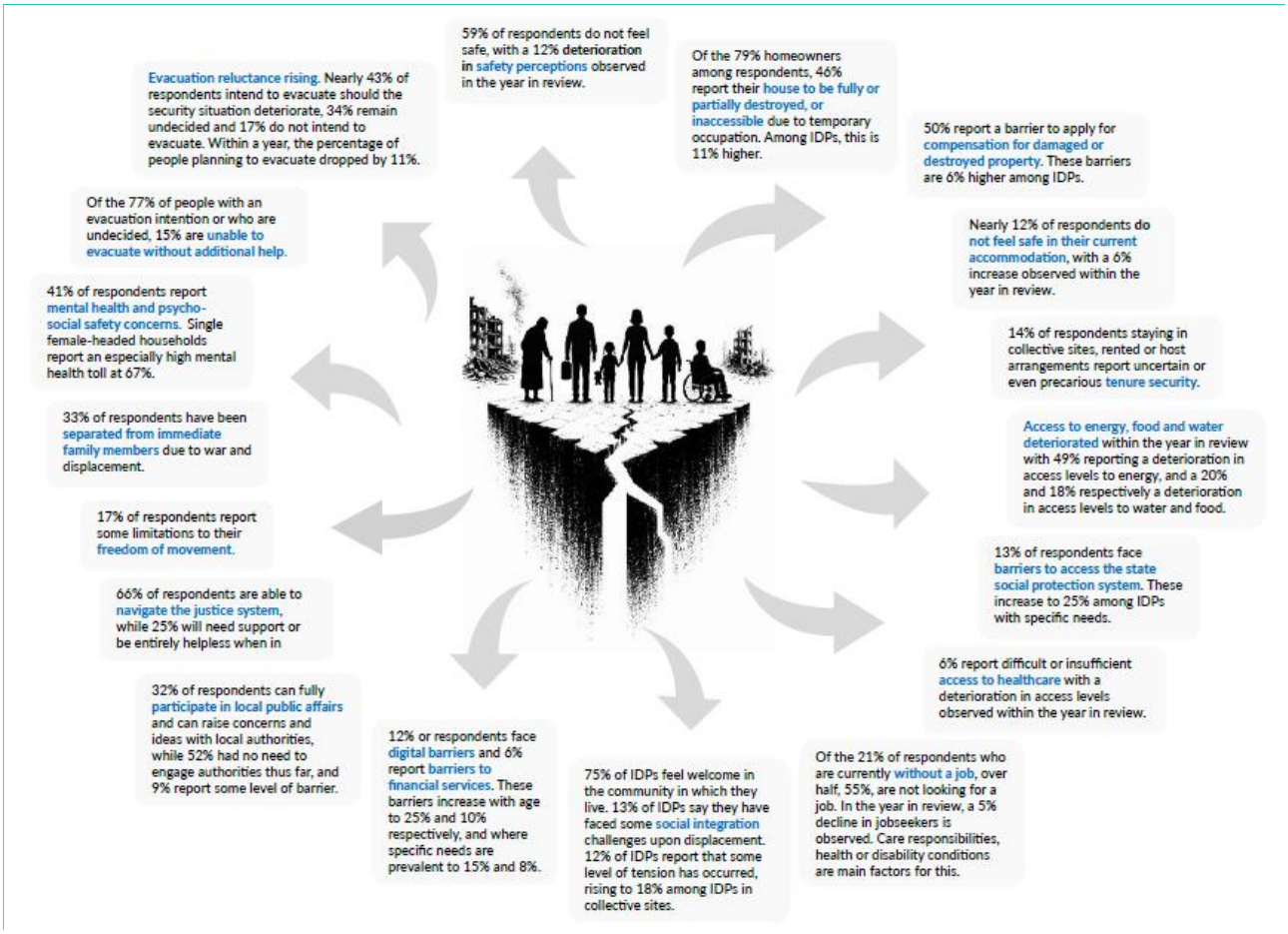
DESYATE KVITNYA

RIGHT to PROTECTION in partnership with HIAS

Rokada Charitable foundation

Protection Brief & Alerts

Ukraine Protection Survey 3 analyses data from more than 13,000 interviews with internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and other war-affected populations collected across three rounds between April 2025 and April 2026. The findings highlight the far-reaching impact forced displacement and the broader consequences of the war have on people's access to rights and essential services, affecting multiple aspects of their lives. The visualized protection brief highlights key results.

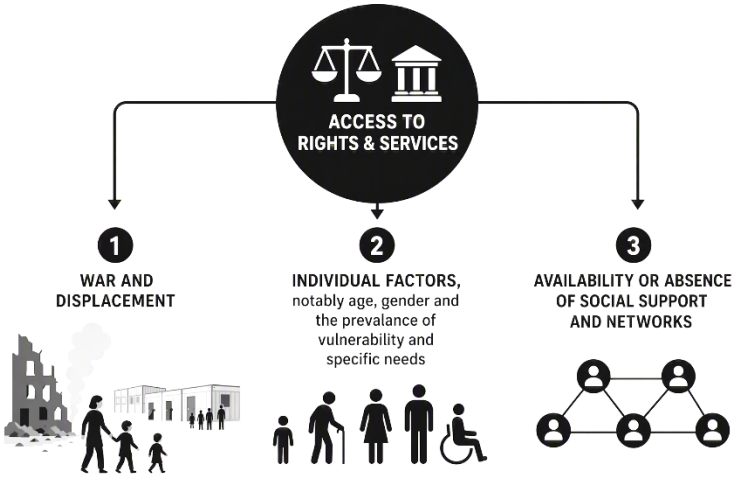


A government system that protects and enables durable solutions: These barriers and exclusion risks continue to impede recovery from forced displacement and progress toward durable solutions. An integrated and coordinated government system is needed to protect rights and support solutions to displacement. With the new Law on Internal Displacement, the State Strategy and Action Plan, and the Coordination Council now in place, the necessary foundations exist. The urgent priority is implementation.

An evacuation mechanism to protect those at greatest risk: The state-led evacuation mechanism needs to be strengthened through improved legal clarity, earlier information provision and preparedness support, and stronger planning and coordination. It must urgently adopt a focus on older people and people with specific needs in frontline areas to enable safe and dignified evacuations of people most at risk of being left behind in danger situations.

A barrier-free environment in Ukraine for all: Physical, material, legal, administrative, digital, and informational barriers undermine access to rights and services. A holistic response is needed to address obstacles affecting freedom of movement, housing and compensation rights, social protection, basic services, employment, participation in public life, access to justice, and financial services.

Of the 13,0000 people responding to the surveys over the year, 58% female and 42% male, nearly half – 47% - report a vulnerability or a specific need. Beyond the effects of displacement and conflict on access to rights and services, individual factors such as age and gender, vulnerabilities and specific needs play a critical role, as do the availability – or absence – of social support systems and community networks.



The Protection Survey 3 continues to identify specific population groups facing heightened protection risks. During the year in review, the following risk profiles have been consistently evident:

- **Protection in evacuation situations:** Older people, particularly those living alone and those with disabilities or other specific needs, face a high risk of being left behind during evacuations, as they are the least likely or least able to evacuate.
- **Mental health toll:** Single female-headed households report a disproportionate mental health burden, with more than two-thirds (67%) indicating mental health concerns.
- **Housing vulnerability:** Older internally displaced people face significant housing vulnerabilities, reporting the lowest levels of intact property ownership (17%) and the highest rates of complete property destruction (32%).
- **Access to social protection:** Displacement, older age, and the prevalence of specific needs are the primary factors affecting access to social protection.
- **Digital barriers and barriers to financial services:** Older age is the factor most strongly associated with limited digital access and reduced access to financial services.
- **Employment barriers:** Gender-related factors significantly shape barriers to employment.

Protection Alerts

In the year in review, the Protection Survey identified specific issues of concern that require focused attention.

- Sharp deterioration of safety perceptions: More and more people report to feel unsafe with a 12% deterioration observed in the course of the year. Fear of airstrikes and energy blackouts has risen by 9% and 7% respectively.
- Evacuation reluctance rising leaving more people at risk: Within a year, the percentage of people planning to evacuate dropped by 11%. Older people and those with specific needs are particularly at risk.
- Housing rights of internally displaced people endangered: IDPs clearly show a higher housing vulnerability than others. 57% of IDPs report their homes to be fully or partially destroyed or inaccessible due to the temporary occupation, and 56% report a barrier to compensation for damaged or destroyed property.
- Unsafe accommodation & uncertain tenure: 12% of people report not feeling safe in their current accommodation and 14% report uncertain or precarious tenure security. Both concerns have been on the rise during the year in review.
- Sharp decline in access to basic needs: Access to energy, water and food deteriorated in the course of the year according to respondents. 49% reported a deterioration in levels of access to energy, while 20% and 18% respectively reported lower access to water and food.
- Highest access barriers to social protection for those most in need: Internally displaced people, including in particular those with specific needs, report the highest barriers to the social protection system. The complexity of the system and insufficient social services capacity at local level are systemic challenges contributing to these barriers.

Key recommendations

1. **The Government of Ukraine has made important progress in developing a state system to protect IDPs, respond to their needs and enable durable solutions to displacement. The new Law on Internal Displacement, the State Strategy and its Action Plan, establishment of the Coordination Council and new state programmes reflect this progress and provide the foundation for a more coherent and effective state policy on internal displacement. The priority now is to ensure continuity, clarify Government roles and responsibilities, and secure the continued political and financial commitment to implement the law, strategy and action plan, while ensuring effective coordination on displacement matters.**

The survey results clearly demonstrate the distinct socio-economic and housing vulnerabilities of IDPs, in addition to displacement-specific barriers and risks to rights and services across different sectors, further influenced by age, gender and the prevalence of specific needs. While the foundations for an effective state policy are now in place, in practice, available state support continues to come in late in the displacement process, often remains fragmented and does not systemically enable durable solutions. IDPs therefore continue to struggle in navigating the system and accessing available support and are increasingly stuck in protracted displacement.

- Implement the new Law & State Strategy on Internal Displacement: The new Law on Internal Displacement (No. 12301) and the State Strategy on Internal Displacement (2026 to 2030) with its accompanying two-year Action Plan reflect the government's commitment to transition to a systematic policy on internal displacement and a comprehensive approach to supporting IDPs from evacuation to a durable solution. Their coherent implementation must be a priority going forward, requiring sustained political and financial commitment, reflected in prioritization within state and local budgets, alongside commensurate support from international donors and partners. In particular, further support is needed to develop financial instruments that enable territorial communities to implement the strategy effectively.
- Operationalize the Coordination Council: A key strength of the new State Strategy lies in its emphasis on national ownership and responsibility for addressing and resolving internal displacement. The Coordination Council foreseen in the state strategy and its action plan, and as already established through CMU Res. 899 adopted in July 2026, needs to be swiftly operationalized as a key mechanism to advance the coordinated and coherent implementation of the State Strategy through a 'whole of government' approach with the involvement of relevant civil society, including in particular IDP councils, and international organizations. This institutional architecture is central to the strategy's success and requires strong and sustained political backing and support.
- Integrate support to IDPs through the 'IDP Pathway' for greater accessibility: Review and integrate available support to IDPs across different spheres into one integrated, coherent and accessible support system serving as a single user journey spanning evacuations to durable solutions through the development of the 'IDP Pathway' as foreseen by the State Strategy. This integration will allow shifting away from current siloes and simplify IDPs' access to available support, and promotes an integrated, multi-sectoral approach to programming to address and resolve displacement going forward.
- Facilitate access to IDP registration and the social protection system: Ensure early and effective access to the social protection system from the onset of displacement by introducing the pre-registration of newly displaced people as envisioned under CMU Res. 1307, followed by timely IDP registration. The pre-registration is also a critical function of the 'IDP Pathway' enabling access to available support earlier in the displacement process and reducing risks. Such timely and effective access to IDP registration requires regularly updating the list of territories under Order No. 376.
- Tailor social services to displacement realities: Continue adapting social services to the realities of internal displacement including by applying the *"money follows people"* financing model. This includes expanding the catalogue of services under CMU Res. 1169, regularizing CMU Resolution 966 (replacing Res. 888) while preserving its displacement-specific focus, and increasing service capacity, including through mobile service delivery. Strengthening services for older displaced people is particularly important, including facility-based care, assisted living, and social adaptation. In parallel, integrate a basic social support model into the social protection system through community-based mechanisms, such as social facilitators, to provide systematic, community-level support that complements formal social services.
- Integrate housing solutions for IDPs into the new State Housing Policy: Considering the distinct housing vulnerability of IDPs, ensure that housing needs and rights of IDPs are properly addressed in frameworks elaborated for the implementation of the Law on Fundamentals of the State Housing Policy by including a dedicated focus on housing

solutions for IDPs in the State Housing Strategy and its Action Plan to it as well as the Law on Social Housing currently under elaboration. It is essential that the housing policy is needs-based and prioritizes those with greatest housing vulnerability, notably those whose homes are fully destroyed or inaccessible due to the temporary occupation.

- Expand access to housing solutions for IDPs: Scale up coordinated efforts for housing solutions for IDPs leveraging and adjusting existing instruments. This includes the prioritized use of the subvention mechanism (CMU Res. 301) to expand available housing options, adjusting the rental support scheme (CMU Res. 1225) for IDPs of older age who receive social adaptation services, amending CMU Res. 495 on temporary IDP housing as well as other state housing programmes ensuring they are needs-based and prioritize those with highest housing vulnerability, notably the programme on housing vouchers (CMU Res. 1176). In particular, accelerate the implementation of the rural housing program (CMU Res.751) and explore the broader use of co-living arrangements with adequate safeguards. Also, measures are needed to promote housing ownership registration, including in frontline areas, and to improve tenure security for IDPs in rental arrangements.
- Simplify access to compensation and reparation for damaged and destroyed properties: The process to access compensation under CMU Res. 381 needs to be further simplified, timelines for compensation payments clarified, information on the process strengthened and documentation barriers removed. Additionally, awareness of the relevance of registers of damages for future reparations needs to be enhanced.
- Devise solutions for collective sites in the housing and social spheres: Collective sites, set up for the temporary stay for IDPs, have become increasingly longer-term accommodation arrangements, often housing large numbers of vulnerable IDPs who have no other housing option. It is essential to review the approach to collective sites, turning accommodation there into a needs-based system, and, where appropriate, take measures to transform them into temporary housing or social services. To reduce risks of protracted displacement in collective sites, the employment for IDPs of working age staying there should be prioritized and the social adaptation service systematically rolled out for the most vulnerable IDPs.
- Promote social integration and cohesion: Concerns related to social integration and cohesion need to be systematically addressed by local authorities, so they do not continue to affect evacuation decisions, safety perceptions in displacement and durable solutions prospects. To promote social integration and cohesion in communities, local authorities should also leverage the role of community-based organizations and IDP councils. In addition, mediation approaches and capacity need to be broadly promoted and built to help prevent, address and resolve tensions in communities.

2. The state-led evacuation mechanism needs to be strengthened through improved legal clarity, earlier information provision and preparedness support, and stronger planning and coordination among all stakeholders. The evacuation mechanism must be people-centred and tailored to the needs of those at greatest risk in an evacuation situation, notably older people with specific needs including those living in institutions in frontline areas. Evacuations should be fully integrated into the overall state support system on internal displacement to ensure that all newly displaced people have timely and equal access to support.

Old age and the prevalence of specific needs are the most important factors to consider in a people-centred evacuation mechanism as older people, and especially those with specific needs, are least likely and often last to evacuate and face particular barriers notably due to reduced mobility and health conditions as well as limited access to information and support. Fear of losing everything and the absence of alternatives are the two top impediments for people to evacuate, followed by financial constraints. The following recommendations for an enhanced state-led evacuation mechanism will contribute to safer, more predictable, and more dignified evacuations.

- Provide legal certainty in the evacuation framework: Align the Civil Protection Code and secondary legislation by defining evacuation types in clear legal terms and harmonizing terminology to eliminate ambiguity and inconsistencies regarding nature, scope, and modalities of evacuation. This enables greater predictability and preparedness.
- Advance assessments to inform systematic planning: Introduce systematic advance assessments to enable planning and preparedness for evacuations. Such assessments should include numbers and population profiles as well as needs of people in hromadas likely to come under evacuation, as well as accommodation and service capacity in receiving hromadas, including for older people and people with disability.
- Provide early information and preparedness support for people: Strengthen early awareness and information through targeted communication providing comprehensive information on evacuation preparedness and procedures, available support for evacuations as well as in reception areas, especially on alternative accommodation and availability of services. Such information provision needs to be coupled with preparedness support, notably older people, people with disabilities and families with children, including psychological and practical preparedness support for the evacuation event.
- Protect persons with specific needs in an evacuation context: Ensure evacuation planning and support adequately addressing the needs of older persons, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups through accessible information, tailored preparedness support, appropriate transportation, suitable accommodation, and continuity of access

to care services. Evacuation and relocation arrangements for people residing in institutional care settings should also ensure safety, dignity, and uninterrupted access to necessary care.

- Enhance coordination between stakeholders involved in evacuations: Strengthen the coordination for evacuations among hromadas, regional administrations, central Government, and involved humanitarian organizations for enhanced planning, streamlined information provision and preparedness support, and implementation of evacuations without duplication.
- Introduce documentation and compensation for ulterior housing use: Where private houses of people evacuated is used for defense purposes, standardized procedures are needed for the documentation of ulterior use of vacated housing, remedies and potential access to compensation, as may be applicable, notably when damage is incurred as a result.
- Integration of evacuation into broader system on internal displacement: Evacuations should not remain separate but form a part of the systematic approach to internal displacement as set out in the new Law and State Strategy on Internal Displacement. An integrated approach ensures better access to support and services and enables durable solutions earlier.

3. A barrier-free environment for all people needs to address those specific for IDPs, returnees and other war-affected people with particular attention to older people, people with chronic illnesses and disability as well as single-headed households. Specifically, the Government needs to address barriers affecting freedom of movement and compensation rights; accessing social protection, basic services and employment; public participation and justice system; digital access; and access to financial service providers.

The survey findings underline that barriers to rights and services are not only physical, but also administrative, legal, digital, informational and financial. A barrier-free Ukraine needs to be a barrier-free environment for all and should therefore address these barriers together for IDPs, returnees and other war-affected people, with particular attention for older people, people with disabilities, people with chronic illness and single-headed households. Given Ukraine's strong digitalization trends and considering the war's impact on infrastructure, energy systems and digital services, particular attention needs to be paid to those without digital access and to the effects of energy outages.

- Address barriers to public services and transport: Enhance efforts to remove accessibility barriers in public infrastructure, services and transport, specifically for older people and people with disabilities, and expand access to assistive devices on a needs-basis.
- Address digital access barriers and devise offline alternatives: With digitalization being a clear trajectory for access to state support, develop and implement a strategy to (a) reduce gaps in digital access and literacy in particular for older people and people with disabilities; and to (b) increase outreach to people excluded from digitalized mechanisms. Considering the war's impact on energy and related functionality of digital systems, it is essential to have workarounds, contingency plans, and alternatives in place both for uninterrupted access to services.
- Adress barriers to the social protection system: Access to social protection remains hampered by lack of awareness, documentation challenges, unavailability or inaccessibility of services, and limited capacity of providers in some areas. Addressing these barriers must be a priority considering the criticality of social protection for the survival and wellbeing of people. In addition, standardize good practices, such as increased use of mobile service provision, inter-municipal cooperation and stronger partnerships with community-based protection mechanisms, such as social facilitators or CBOs, within the social protection system to optimize the use of resources.
- Enhance mental health and psychosocial support to enhance integration pathways: This can be achieved through stronger community-based MHPSS activities, outreach to older people living alone, caregiver support, and integration of MHPSS into the displacement response from evacuation to a durable solution.
- Addressing documentation and legal awareness barriers: Strengthen rights awareness and expand access to the Free Legal Aid (FLA) system to address information, documentation and legal barriers. Priority areas for the FLA system should address barriers for housing ownership registration, for accessing compensation, exercising freedom of movement, and accessing employment and social protection.
- Enhancing access to employment through flexibility and care service availability: Promote re-skilling and flexible work arrangements given the demographic shifts and increasing prevalence of specific needs to broaden access to employment for people with disabilities, single caregivers, IDPs and others who face barriers. Expand day care, home-based care and respite services to enable caregivers, particularly single female heads of households, to seek employment.
- Leveraging IDP councils for greater public participation: Local authorities should proactively leverage IDP councils to inform needs assessments, local planning and decision-making. IDP councils serve as an important mechanism to facilitate meaningful public participation, ensuring IDPs' perspectives are reflected in local policies and programmes. Additionally, IDP councils play an important role in identifying displacement-specific needs and barriers of relevance to the development of state programmes at central level.

Protection Survey

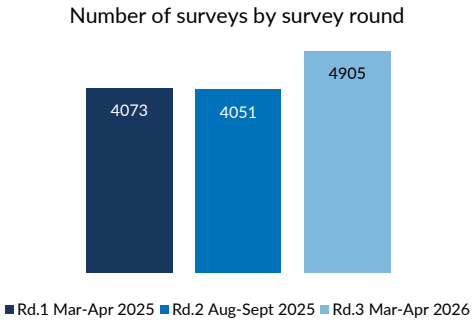
The Ukraine Protection Survey provides country-wide analysis on people's access to rights and services with a focus on internally displaced people, returnees and others directly affected by the war. It aims to inform actions by the Government of Ukraine, as well as humanitarian and recovery stakeholders.

Objectives of the Ukraine Protection Survey:

Providing protection analysis: The survey, using a human rights-based approach, provides an analytical overview of the protection situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees and others directly affected by the war, including their access to rights and services across various sectors.
Enabling the 'Leaving No One Behind' approach: The survey considers age, gender, disability, as well as the prevalence of specific needs, thereby identifying groups that may face particular or heightened risks and barriers.
Informing durable solutions to displacement: Identifying displacement-specific needs and barriers, the analysis helps to inform planning and programming to support IDPs' durable solutions.

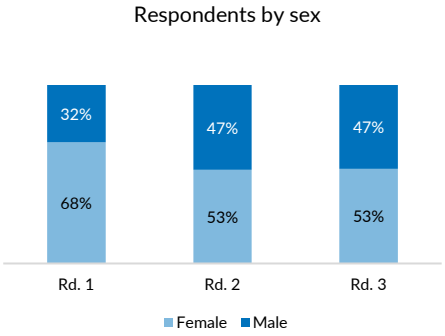
Protection Survey 3 provides analysis of over 13,000 interviews conducted in three intervals within a year from April 2025 to April 2026 (confidence level 95%, margin of error 0.86%). Qualitative information of 476 key informant interviews conducted in 51 hromadas during the three survey rounds complements the quantitative analysis.

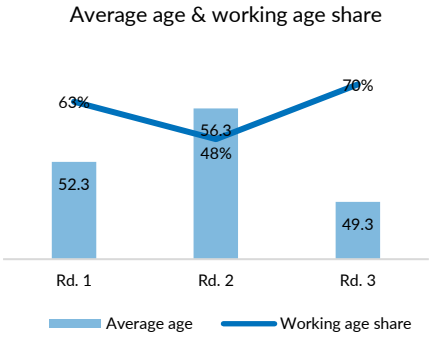
Data collection took place from March to April 2025 (Protection Survey 1), August to September 2025 (Protection Survey 2) and from March to April 2026 (Protection Survey 3). In addition to cumulative analysis spanning the year (indicated by 'overall'), Protection Survey 3 also provides comparative analysis where relevant, indicating relevant trends and patterns observed during the year. The methodological note is annexed.

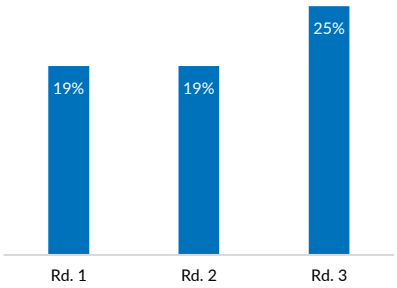


Demographic & displacement situation

Age & Gender: Of the 13,000 respondents, 58% are female and 42% are male. The average household size, 2.4, was steady across the three data collection intervals. The average age of respondents is 52.4 years. 39% of respondents are not of working age, while 61% of respondents are of working age. Average age and proportion of survey participation of people at working age varied across the three surveys. Of those at working age, 35% reported to be employed (full-time, part-time or self-employed) while 21% reported to be without a job, with a majority of them (81%) not registered with the state employment service.

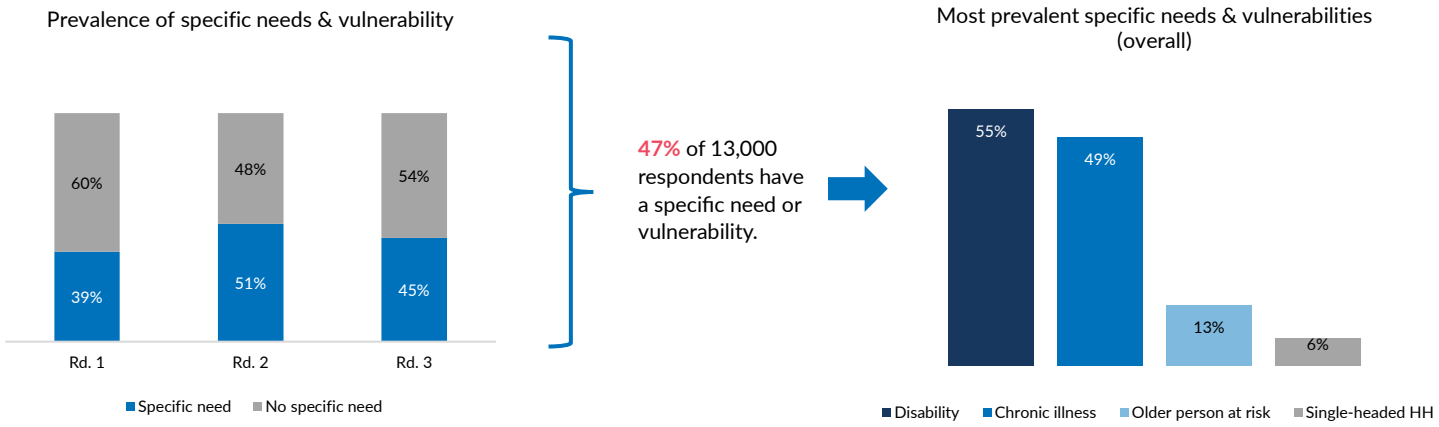






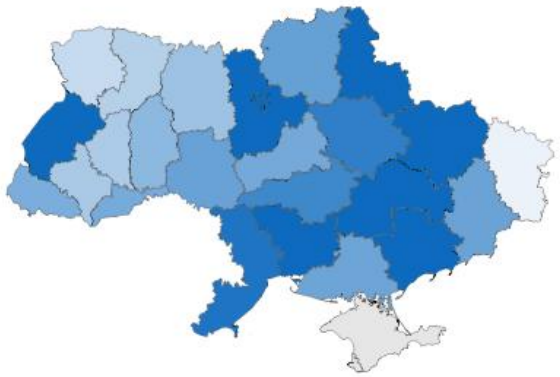
Prevalence of specific needs and vulnerabilities: 47% of respondents reported that they or a family member had a specific need or vulnerability. Disability is the most prevalent specific need among respondents. Of the 55% of respondents with a disability (at 63% for men, 49% for women), the vast majority (93%) had a recognized disability. Almost 45% of respondents

suffers of a chronic illness (41% male, 48% female). 13% are older persons at risk (15% female, 11% male), notably older persons without social support structures or with care dependencies, while over 6% are single-headed households, predominantly female.



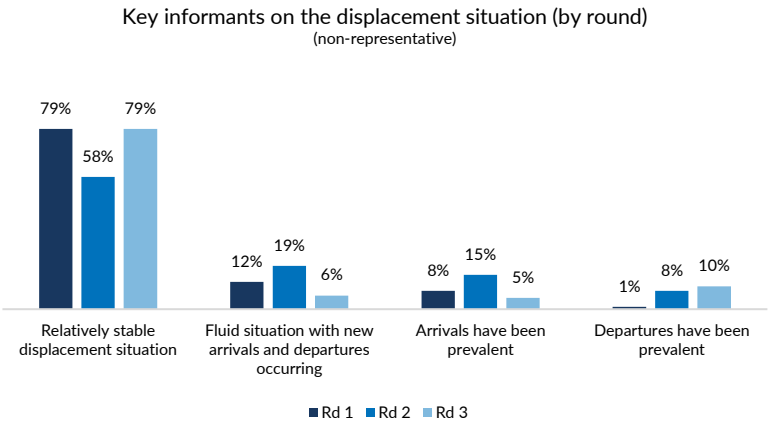
Displacement situation: Most respondents (77%) are internally displaced people (IDPs), 15% are returnees (87% from within Ukraine, 13% from abroad) and 8% are non-displaced war-affected respondents. Nearly 20% of all respondents live in a collective site, and 29% of respondents live in the 30km belt along the frontline. Of all respondents, 34% are currently residing in the East, 18% in the West, 17% in the North, 14% in the Centre, 13% in the South, and almost 5% in Kyiv. The following is the distribution of respondents of the household survey by oblast of current and original residence.

Current oblast

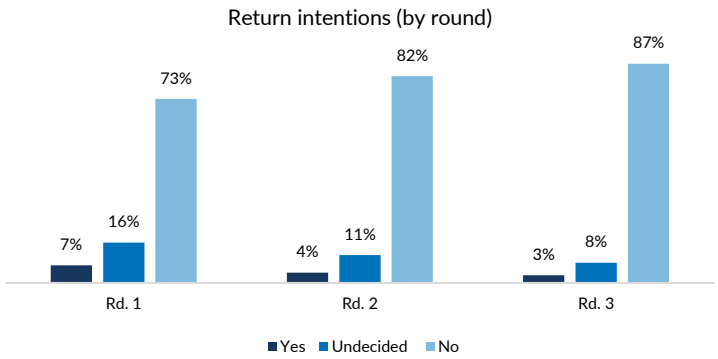


Origin oblast

The 476 key informants across 51 hromadas assessed the displacement situation in their hromadas overall as stable, with few new arrivals, departures or returns noted. In Round 2 of the Survey, key informants identified a greater fluidity in the displacement situation compared to round 1. In round 3, the displacement situation was again described as largely stable with a notable increase in departures from hromadas. The share of such reported departures of IDPs was higher in frontline hromadas (34%) suggesting secondary displacement.



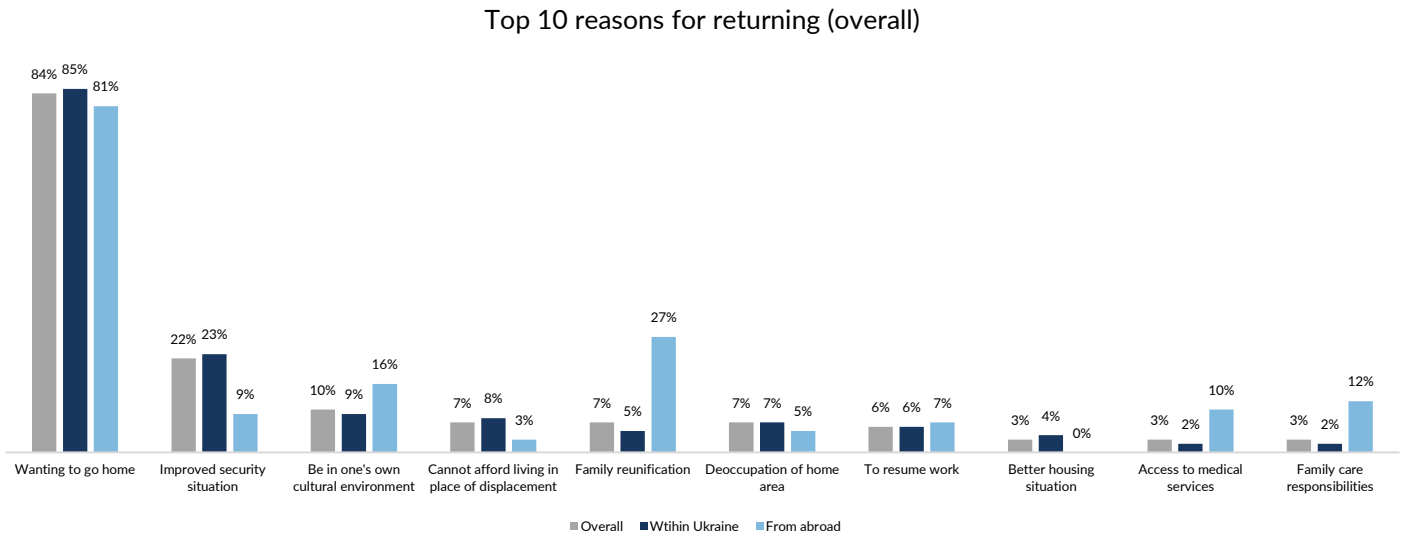
Future intentions: Of the 77% IDPs responding to the surveys, 5% expressed an intention to return, 12% were undecided, and 81% did not plan to return. The remainder preferred not to respond to this question. A steady decline in return intentions across the three survey rounds, with a growing number of respondents being undecided or not planning to return at present was observed. This indicates a growing trend of protracted displacement and a need to support local integration, including through social adaptation for durable solutions.



Male respondents more often did not plan to return (83%) than female respondents (79%). Age also matters for return intentions. The average age of respondents with a return intention is 57 years, while it is 53 years for those who are undecided or are not planning to return.

Of the 93% of respondents that are either undecided or not planning to return at the present time, almost all (97%) plan to stay in their current location. The top three reasons for not planning to return or being undecided relate to the security situation (74%), housing challenges (37%), and the temporary occupation of their home area (35%). Other factors are mentioned less frequently.

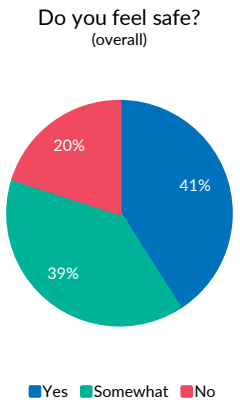
Reasons for returning: On average, the 15% of returnee respondents were in displacement for 14.1 months prior to their return, however, with significant differences between those returning within Ukraine and those from abroad: For internal returnees, the average displacement time stands at 13.3 months, while for refugee returnees it stands at 19.9 months.

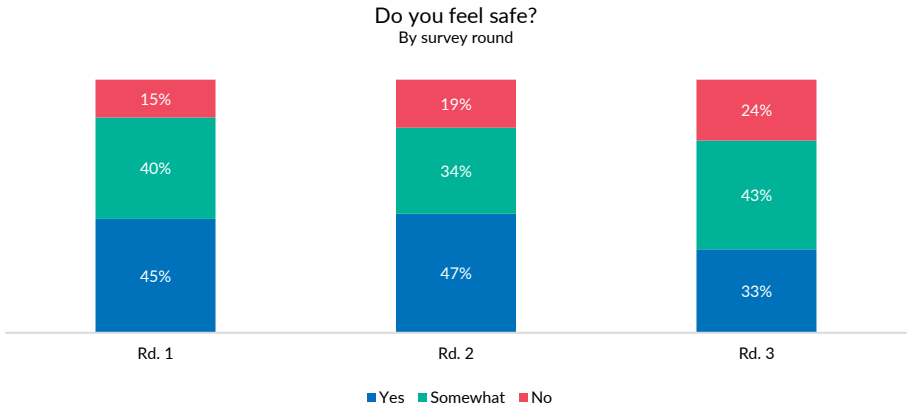


While the desire to go home was the main reason to return for returnee respondents within Ukraine and from abroad, other return drivers differ by location of displacement. For returnees within the country, improvements in the security situation are a relatively more important factor for returning than for those abroad. Affordability of living in displacement is another factor contributing to internal returns more frequently than from abroad. The desire to be in one's own cultural environment, family reunification and family care responsibilities as well as access to health care are more prevalent reasons for returns from abroad. This aligns with the findings of UNHCR's border monitoring in the reporting period of this survey.

Safety and security

59% of respondents reported feeling unsafe or only somewhat safe. This deteriorated across the year, rising by 12% from 55% in round 1 of the survey to 67% in round 3.

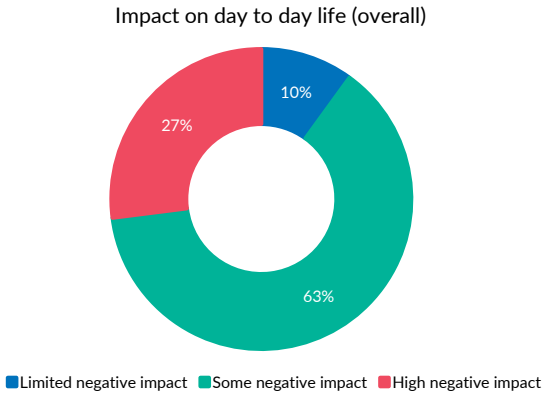




- Returnees and non-displaced but war-affected respondents report negative safety perceptions at a markedly higher level of 83% and 82% respectively, while IDPs report feeling unsafe or only somewhat safe at 52%.
- There is no significant difference in safety perceptions between male and female respondents. Respondents above 60 years have less safety concerns, with 46% feeling safe, while only 39% of younger respondents do so.
- The prevalence of specific needs is associated with lower perceptions of safety at 63%, 8% more than households without a specific need prevalence. Feeling unsafe is particularly high among respondents with a chronic illness (67%) and among single-headed households (72%).
- Perceptions of safety are better in central and western macro-regions, with concerns reported at 41% and 30% respectively, while concerns are highest in Kyiv (72%) and the southern macro-region (72%) followed closely by the eastern (70%) and northern (68%) macro-regions.

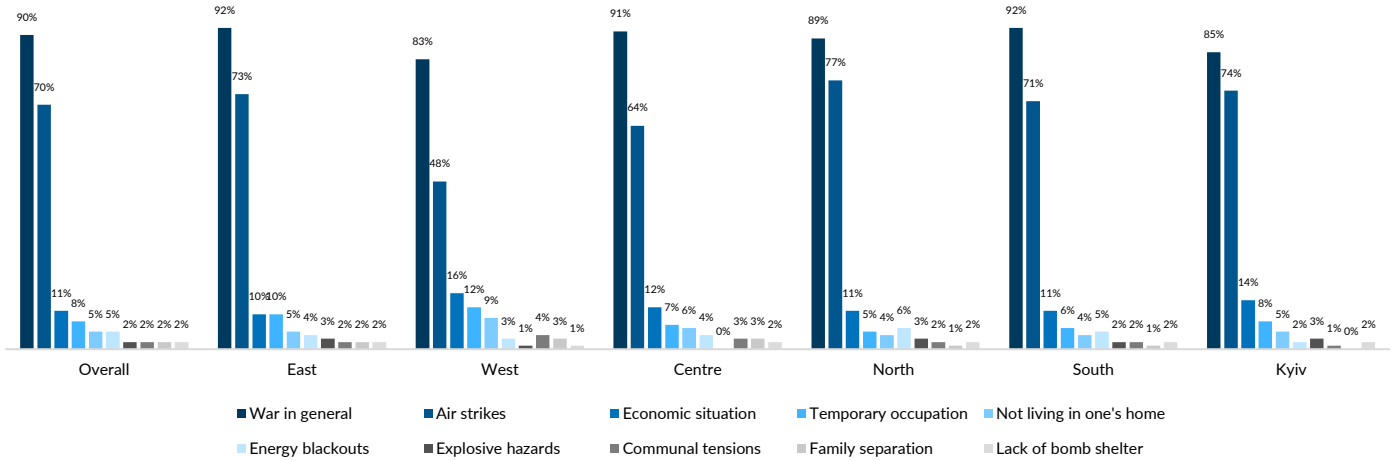
Of those 59% of respondents who feel not or only somewhat safe, 27% report a high negative impact of the security situation in their day-to-day life, while 63% report some negative impact and 10% report only limited negative impact. For the 20% of respondents who report feeling unsafe, the share of those experiencing a high negative impact on their lives stands at 48%.

Female respondents report a higher negative impact on their lives (29%) than males (25%) as do older respondents (29%) compared to younger ones (26%). Persons with specific need experience the highest negative impact at 31%, 8% more than respondents without specific needs. High negative impact is experienced at an especially high rate, at 41%, among single-headed households.



The war in general (90%), air strikes specifically (70%), the economic situation and fear of poverty (11%), the temporary occupation of parts of Ukraine (8%) and not living in one's home (5%) are the main five factors for negative safety perceptions. Fear of airstrikes has risen by 9% within a year and fear of energy blackouts by 7%.

Main reasons for negative safety perceptions by region (overall)



War-related fears in general and airstrikes specifically are the two dominant factors for negative safety perceptions across the country, with lesser prevalence in the western-macro region. Fear of airstrikes is highest in the North and in Kyiv. Socio-economic concerns are highest in the western macro-region, where fear of poverty, concerns over not living in one's home and community tensions are reported more frequently. Fear of energy blackouts are highest in the northern and southern macro-regions, while concerns over communal tensions are heightened in central and western regions.

Safety and Security: How well do you cope?

- Adaptive: 74% of respondents with a safety concern say they are coping well or okay. Most find the security situation stressful, but they are able to adapt.
- Stressed: 22% of respondents say that they are just about coping and find the fear, stress, disruptions, uncertainty and unpredictability hard to cope with. It takes them effort and resilience to cope.
- Precarious: 4% of respondents say that they are not coping well or can barely cope anymore. They report a high negative impact at 76% and report socio-economic fears more frequently than others.

Female respondents report 1% more often to be in a precarious coping situation than males, and 7% more often to be in a stressed coping situation. Similarly, respondents above 60 years are more often in a stressed or precarious coping situation reported at 24% and 5% respectively, while this stands at 21% and 3% among younger respondents. The prevalence of specific needs matters. 5% of respondents with specific needs report to be in a precarious coping situation, while 28% report to be in a stressed coping situation. The situation is particularly difficult for older persons at risk, who report at 8% to be in a precarious coping situation. Single-headed households struggle the most with 14% saying they are not coping well or can barely cope with the prevailing security situation.

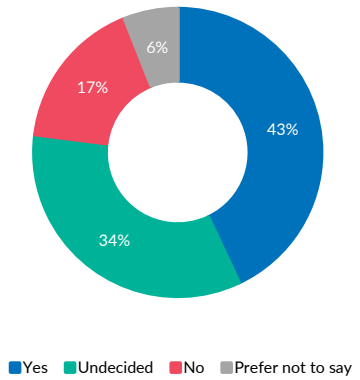
Older people above 60 years with a specific need show particularly precarious coping capacities, notably those who are a single-headed household (18%). Among those, male respondents struggle the most (25%).

Generally, people tend to deploy positive mechanisms to cope with the security situation by adapting their lives as possible, relying more on support from their families and their communities, and communicating more with family and friends. Some seek as much information as possible on the situation or professional mental health support to better cope. Helplessness or negative coping mechanisms, notably self-isolation, are reported more rarely. Such negative coping mechanisms are slightly more prevalent among respondents over 60 years as well as among households with a member with a specific need. In addition, 3% are planning to move elsewhere within Ukraine or even abroad due to the security situation.

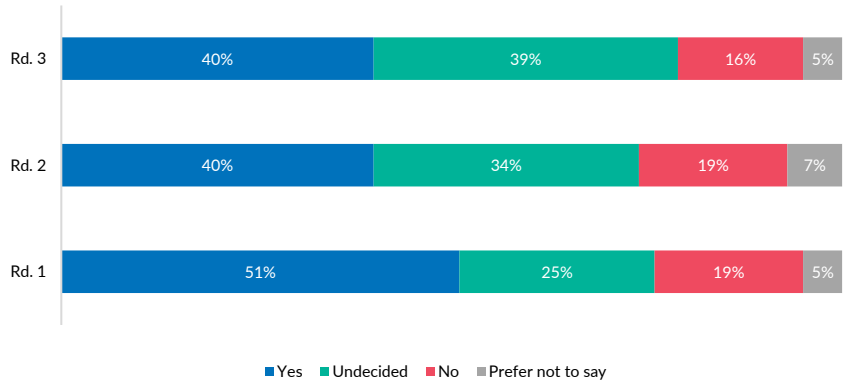
Evacuations

29% of respondents surveyed in the three rounds live in the 30km belt along the frontline. Nearly 43% of respondents intend to leave their homes should the security situation deteriorate; over one third (34%) was undecided and 17% do not intend to leave their homes. Within a year, the percentage of people planning to evacuate dropped by 11%, while those reluctant or not planning to evacuate rose from 44% to 55%. This suggests the growing need to invest in earlier engagement with communities at risk of evacuation to help prepare for an eventual evacuation.

Evacuation intentions (overall)

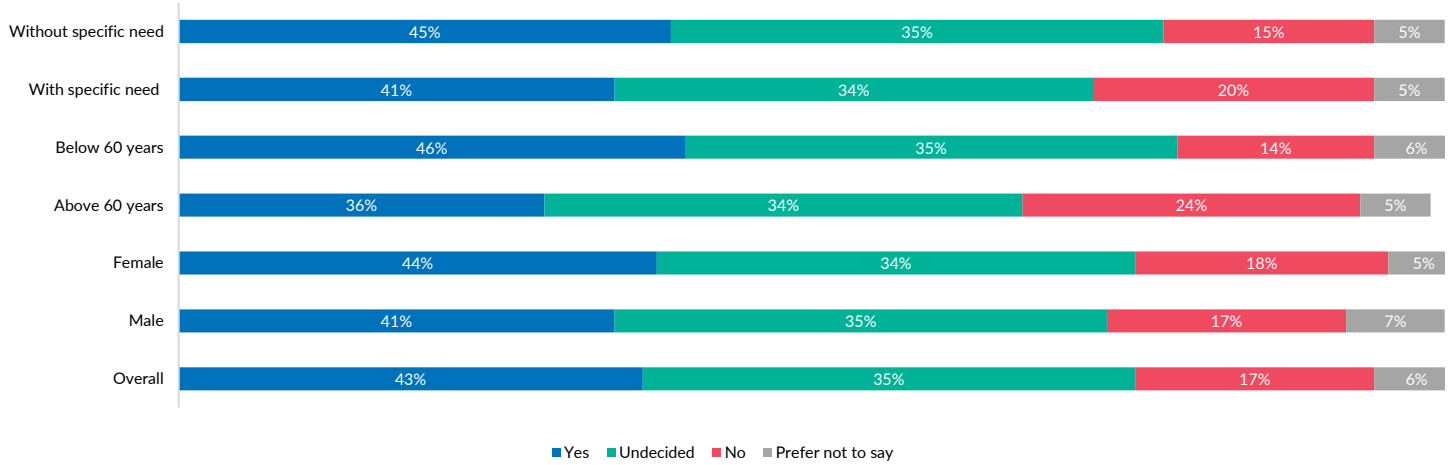


Evacuation intentions (by round)



- Evacuation intentions between female and male respondents are similar, with males slightly more reluctant to evacuate. Of note, male respondents most often preferred not to answer this question.
- Age matters the most in deciding on whether to evacuate should the security situation deteriorate. Respondents over 60 years (with an average age of 68 years) are least likely to evacuate exhibiting the lowest share of respondents with an evacuation intention (36%) and the highest share of those with no evacuation intention (24%). By contrast, younger respondents (with an average age of 43 years) are most likely to evacuate should the situation deteriorate (46%).
- The prevalence of specific needs also influences evacuation intentions. Respondents with a specific need tend to be less likely to evacuate with 20% reporting no evacuation intentions, 5% higher than respondents without a specific need.

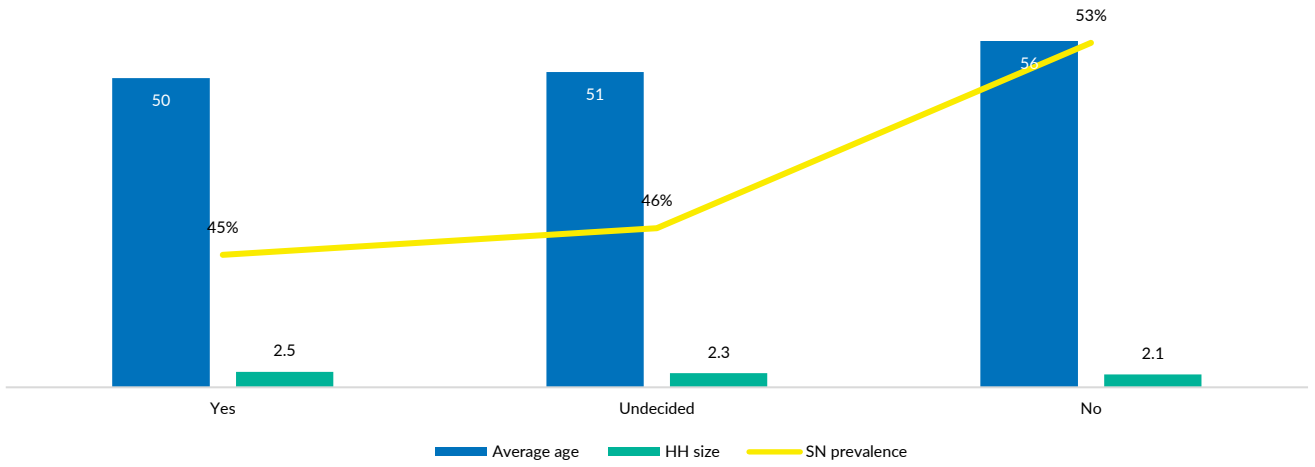
Evacuation intentions in comparison (overall)



- Women aged over 60 (average age of respondents 69 years) with a specific need are least likely to evacuate should the security situation deteriorate, with over 30% reporting no evacuation intention.
- Men aged over 60 (average age of respondents 68 years) with a specific need are most often undecided on whether to evacuate should the security situation deteriorate at 36%.

Across all three survey intervals, average age, household size and the prevalence of specific needs mattered for evacuation intentions: Average age is increasing from those intending to evacuate to those without such intention, while the average household size is decreasing. In addition, the prevalence of specific needs in a household is lower among those intending while it increases among those undecided or not intending to leave.

Intention to evacuate (overall): average age, HH size, SN prevalence



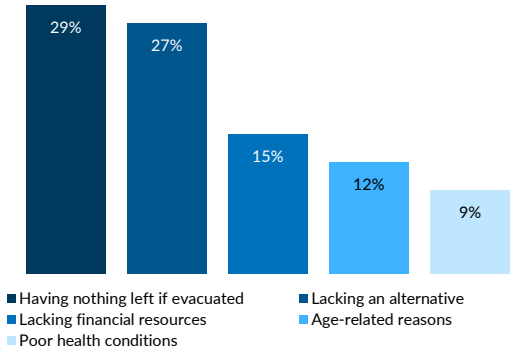
People most likely to remain or delay evacuation are of older age, often live in one to two person-households, and exhibit higher levels of vulnerability.

For the 17% of respondents with no evacuation intentions, the following are their main reasons to stay behind: 29% said that this is their home and they feared losing everything if they evacuated, while 27% do not know where to go or have no alternative place to go to. While these were consistently mentioned as top two reasons for not evacuating across all three surveys, in round 3, a significantly higher percentage (38%) did not intend to evacuate for fear of losing everything, while lacking an alternative was less prevalent (18%) than in previous rounds.

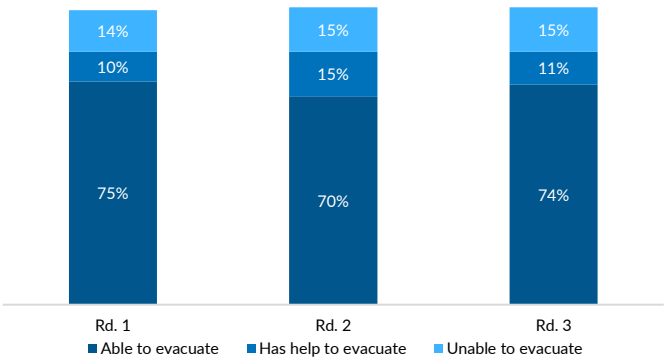
15% reported lacking the financial resources to evacuate, while over 9% noted poor health conditions as their impediment. 12% of respondents said that considering their age, they prefer to spend the remainder of their lives there and die at home. The average age of those respondents is 67 years. Nearly 6% were worried about not being received well elsewhere, 4% are working at their current place of stay and 3% worried about not being able to return once they leave.

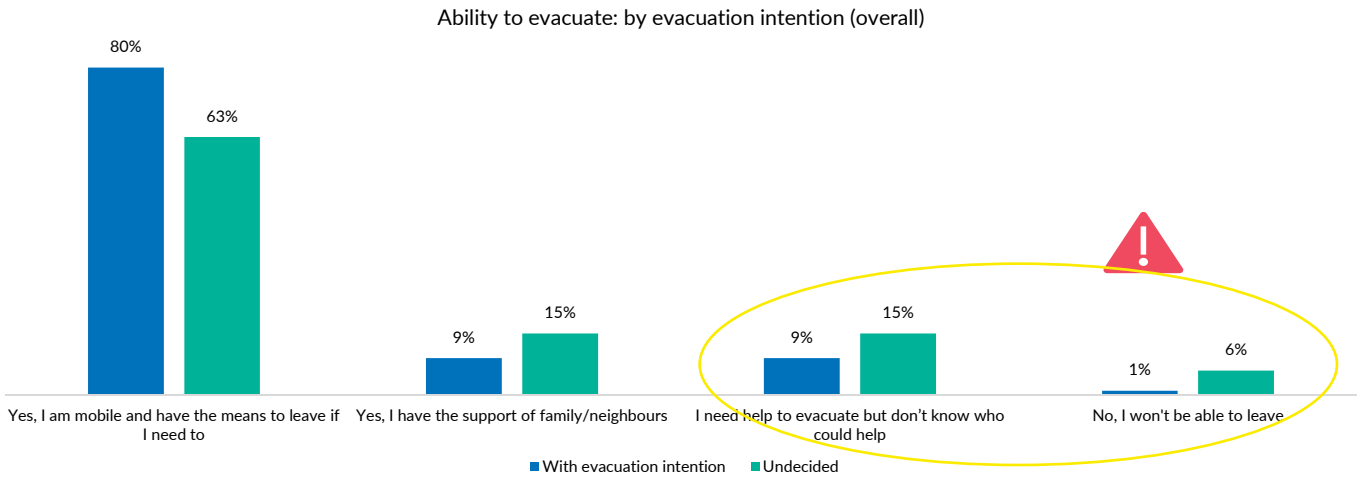
Of the 77% of respondents with an evacuation intention or who are undecided, the vast majority, 85%, will be able to evacuate, either on their own or with the support of family or neighbors. 15% of respondents, however, noted that they would need help to evacuate but don't know who could help them or even indicated that they don't think they will be able to evacuate. This ratio changes among those with a firm evacuation intention to 89% able to evacuate, while nearly 11% note they would need help or could not evacuate at all, while among those undecided this ratio stands at 79% to 21%. These patterns remained consistent with little variation across the three survey rounds.

Not evacuating: Five main reasons (overall)



Ability to evacuate (by round)



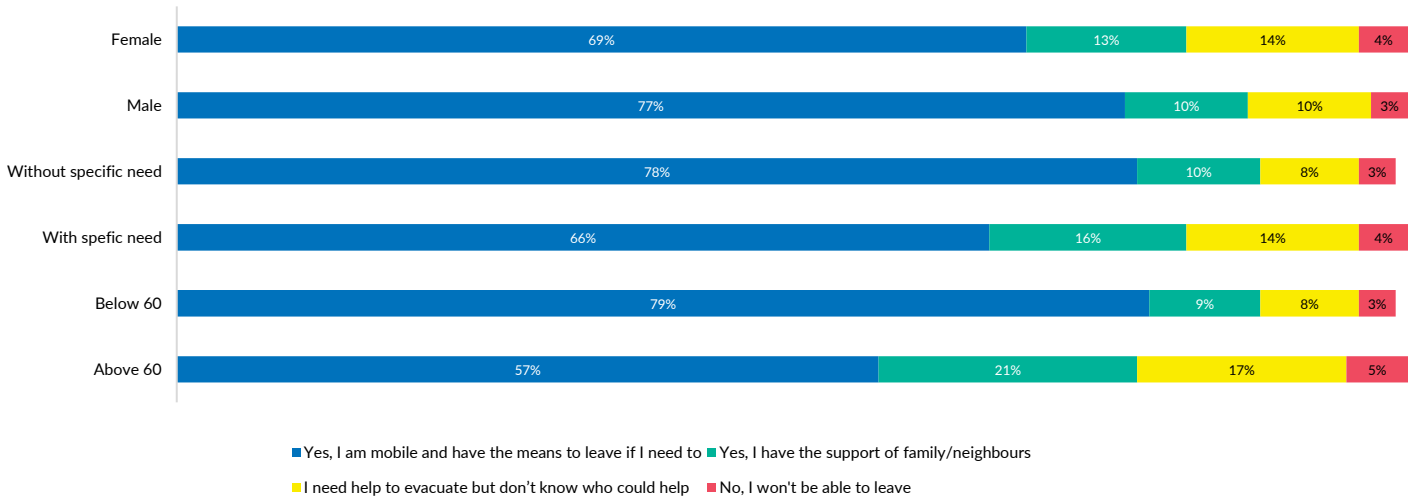


Of the 43% of respondents with the intention to evacuate, over 80% are mobile and have the means to leave if they need to. 9% would rely on support from family or neighbours to do so. 9% would need help to evacuate but don't know who could help them. Only few respondents (1%) said they would not be able to evacuate at all.

Of the 34% undecided respondents, 63% are mobile and have the means to leave if they need to. 15% would rely on support from family or neighbours to do so. 15% would need help to evacuate but don't know who could help them and 6% don't think they could evacuate at all even if they decided to do so.

Age, prevalence of specific needs and gender matter for the ability to evacuate of the 77% of respondents with evacuation intention and those undecided:

- 22% of respondents above 60 years would need help or think they cannot evacuate at all, 11% higher than younger respondents.
- 18% of respondents with specific need do not have the ability to evacuate, 7% higher than among respondents without specific needs.
- Female respondents more often report not being able to evacuate (18%) than male respondents (13%).

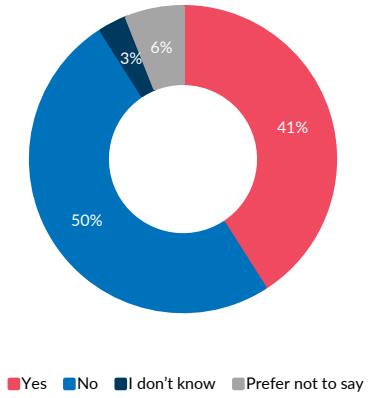


Women aged over 60 with a specific need have least ability to evacuate even if they intend to do so or are undecided, with 30% reporting barriers.

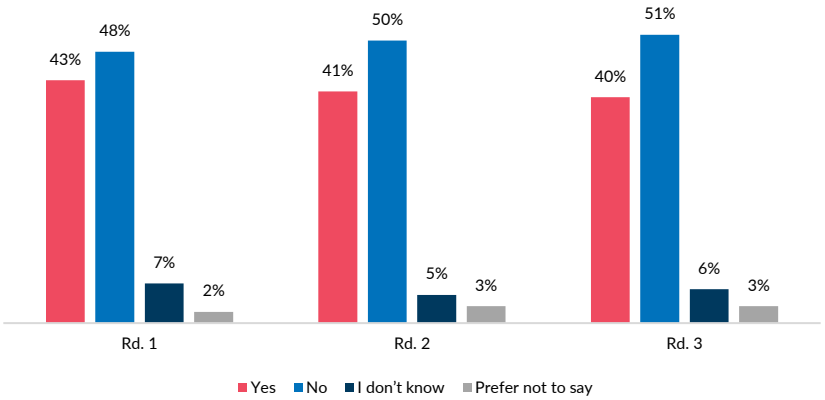
Psycho-social safety

41% of respondents report mental health and psycho-social safety concerns (MHPSS concerns), including stress, anxiety, and depression. A slight downward trend in reported MHPSS concerns can be observed across the three surveys.

Mental health & psycho-social concerns (overall)



Mental health & psycho-social concerns (by round)

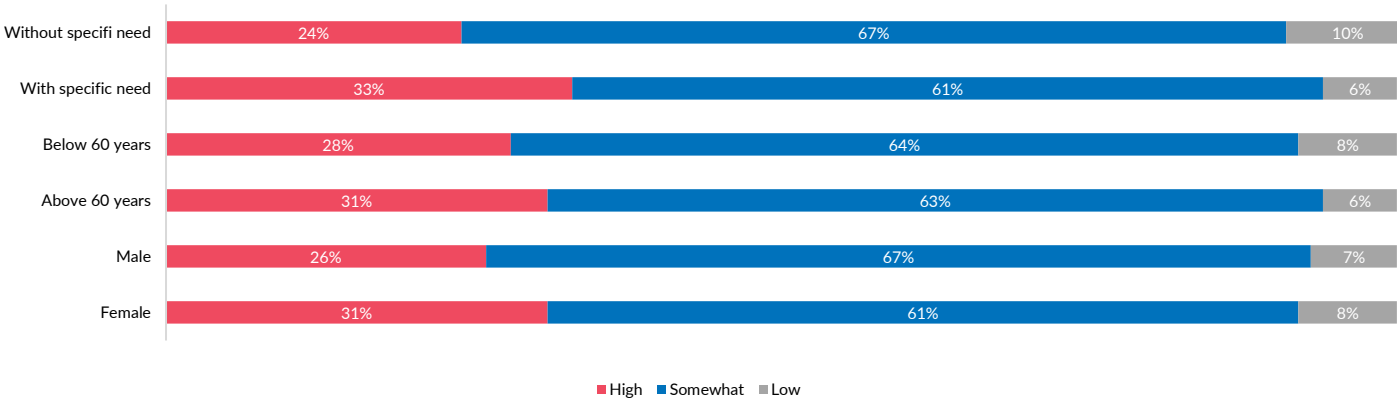


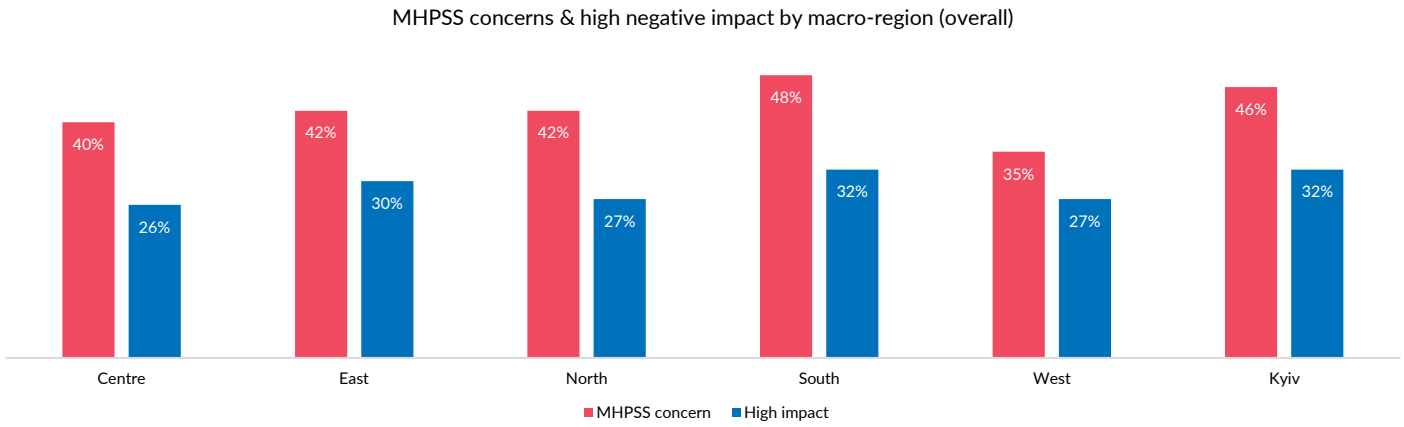
- IDPs report a mental health concern at 40%, while it is elevated for war-affected at 43% and reported as highest among returnee respondents at 47%.
- Mental health concerns are elevated among female respondents (45%) and lower for male respondents (37%). For respondents above the age of 60 years such concerns are heightened at 44%, and lower for younger respondents (40%).
- Mental health concerns are significantly higher for people with specific needs reported at 52%. They are particularly high among older people at risk (50%), respondents with chronic illnesses (57%), and for single-headed households (60%).

- The mental health toll is high on women aged over 60 years with a specific need, with 60% reporting a mental health concern. This rises to 65% among returnees and to 66% among war-affected respondents of this profile.
- Single female-headed households report an especially high mental health toll, with 67% reporting a mental health concern with little age-based variations.

The 41% of respondents reporting MHPSS concerns experience different levels of impact: 64% said that their mental and psycho-social safety is somewhat impacted, while 29% of respondents experience a high negative impact as they worry every day and are reaching the limits of their resilience. 8% report little impact only.

Mental health impact: comparison (overall)





MHPSS concerns are highest among respondents in the southern macro-region with 48% sharing such concerns, followed by respondents in Kyiv (46%). The negative impact of the mental health toll on day-to-day lives is also reported to be highest in the south and Kyiv at 32%.

Mental health: How well do you cope?

- Adaptive: 83% of respondents reporting mental health concerns say they are coping well or okay. Most find the situation challenging for their mental health, but they are able to adapt.
- Stressed: 14% of respondents say that they are just about coping and find the ongoing war and uncertainty stressful and hard to manage.
- Precarious: 4% of respondents say that they are not coping well or can barely cope anymore. They report a high negative impact on their mental health and psycho-social safety.

Returnees and those war-affected report stressed or precarious coping levels at an elevated level of 20 and 21% respectively. Age, gender and the prevalence of specific needs also matter: Female respondents report stressed or precarious coping levels at 19% -5% more than male respondents; respondents above 60 years report such coping levels at 21% - 6% higher than younger respondents, while respondents with specific needs report to be in such a situation at 24% - 13% above those without specific needs. These coping levels are high for respondents with a disability (22%), further increase for those with chronic illnesses (28%) and older persons at risk (29%), and escalate to 34% for single-headed households.

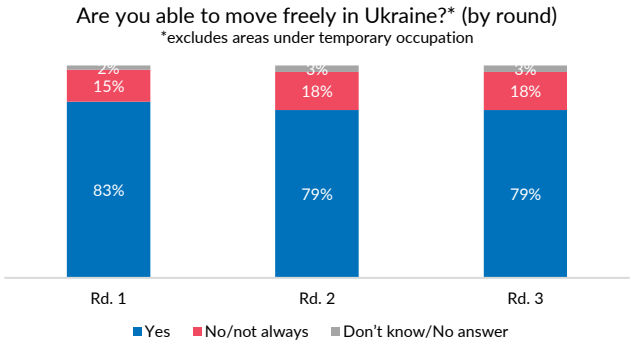
Single-headed households above 60 years, i.e. mostly older people living alone, report the highest levels of precarious or stressed coping capacities at 41%. These are alarmingly high among female respondents at 43% and 46% among male respondents.

Generally, people tend to deploy positive mechanisms to cope with the situational impact on their mental health and psycho-social safety from trying to keep their lives as normal as possible and adapting where needed (63%), relying more on support from their families and their communities (34%), and communicating more with family and friends (33%). Some try to stay informed about the overall situation in Ukraine, noting that this helps them to be better prepared (10%), while others seek professional mental health support (5%). Helplessness or negative coping mechanisms, notably self-isolation, are reported by relatively few respondents at 1% and 3% respectively. Self-isolation and helplessness are slightly more prevalent among respondents over the age of 60 years and by households with a member with a specific need (both elevated by 1%). In addition, only few are planning to move elsewhere within Ukraine or even abroad (3%).

Freedom of movement & Family unity

80% of respondents can enjoy their freedom of movement in Ukraine (areas under temporary occupation are excluded), while 17% report some limitations to their freedom of movement. Compared to the first survey round a year ago, a slight deterioration in people's ability to move freely by 3% was observed in the second and third round.

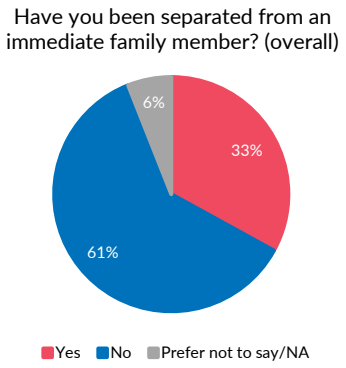
Male respondents report higher limitations to their freedom of movement at 21% compared to female (14%), further elevated to 25% among younger male respondents with an average age of 44 years. War-affected respondents also report higher barriers to their freedom of movement than IDPs and returnees at 25%.



Respondents with specific needs exhibit more movement limitations at 22%, further heightened to over 25% if respondents are above 60 years. Specifically, older persons at risk and single-headed household stand out as the two categories with greatest movement restrictions at 28% and 32%.

The main reported obstacles to freedom of movement are (a) security-related, such as air attacks, concerns about mobilization or checkpoints, (b) related to the lack of accessibility of public infrastructure and transport, including affordability challenges, and limitations to the ability to move, notably due to lack of needed assistive devices, and (c) documentation challenges. In addition, poor health conditions are widely reported as a constraining factor for people's mobility, notably among older people and those with specific needs.

- Risk of air raid sirens and air attack is a main reason constraining people's freedom of movement (35%). Returnees (52%) and war-affected (45%) respondents report this constraint more often than IDPs (30%). Female respondents also report these concerns more often (46%) than males (41%), while it is a lesser concern among older respondents (31%) than younger ones (38%).
- 13% of respondents note constraints due to the lack of barrier-free infrastructure or transport as well as lack of assistive devices. These constraints are highest among respondents over 60 years at 19% as well as those with specific needs at 21%. This constraint is also heightened for IDPs at 16% compared to war-affected (10%) and returnee (10%) respondents.
- Overall, 21% of respondents do not have their own transport and 8% cannot afford public transport. IDPs report more often than others not having their own transport at 22%, while affordability constraints for public transport remain at 8%. This constraint is reportedly also higher among female respondents with 23% reporting not having their own transport, and 10% facing affordability constraints (as compared to 19% and 5% respectively among males).
- 23% report limitations to their freedom of movement due to mobilization risks, and 11% due to the checkpoints. Both are significantly elevated for male respondents at 41% and 20% respectively, and are the top two constraining factors for males of younger age.
- With regards to access to civil and identity documentation, the survey confirms that respondents in government-controlled areas of Ukraine do not face significant barriers to documentation. Documentation challenges are severe for Ukrainian residents arriving from the temporarily occupied territories as well as among newly displaced, including those evacuated.



61% of respondents have not experienced family separation, while 33% have been separated from immediate family members.

- Most often, respondents are separated from one or several of their children (49%), their parents (37%) or their spouse (24%).
- Respondents in the western macro-region have experienced family separation at heightened levels, reported at 41%, while in other macro-regions separation levels range from 30 to 34%.
- While 3% of respondents reported it to be a voluntary family separation, forced displacement, both within and outside Ukraine, is the main reason for family separation reported at 61% and 18% respectively. 13% report to be separated due to the war-effort, most notably due to the mobilization.

Housing, land and property rights

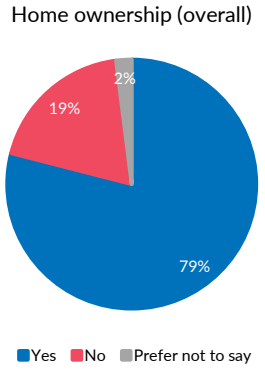
High housing vulnerability of IDPs

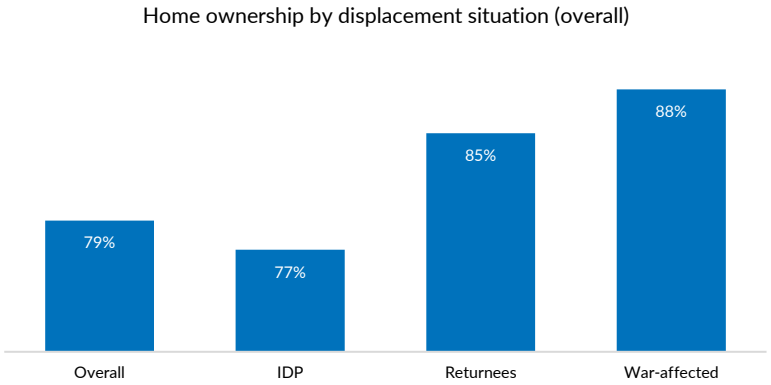
The Protection Survey has continuously confirmed the heightened housing vulnerability of IDPs in line with the findings of the fifth Rapid Damage Needs Assessment (RDNA 5). Together, these findings show a cumulative housing disadvantage for IDPs across tenure, housing condition, documentation and compensation access.

- **Stay in collective sites:** Collective sites are a last resort accommodation form that primarily IDPs are compelled to use in the absence of an alternative.
- **Stay in rented accommodation:** IDPs are also significantly more often compelled to live in rental arrangements. Of the 77% of IDP respondents among the 13,000 households surveyed, 56% live in rented accommodation, while only 7% of returnees and war-affected respondents do so.
- **Stay with relatives and friends:** An additional 13% of IDPs are staying with relatives and friends, 5% more than returnees and other war-affected respondents.
- **Lower home ownership and poorer home conditions:** IDPs also report lower home ownership (77%) than those non-displaced and returnees (86%). There are also significant differences in the condition of the homes between IDPs and other respondents, with IDPs facing higher levels of damage, destruction and non-accessibility due to occupation at 57%.
- **Higher barriers to compensation rights:** While IDPs face higher levels of damage and destruction to their homes, they also experience higher barriers to exercise their compensation rights with 56% reporting a barrier.

Ownership rights

The majority, 79% of respondents own a house or apartment in Ukraine. Home ownership is more common among older respondents above the age of 60 years, at 88%, than younger respondents (73%). Male and female respondents report home ownership at similar levels. IDPs report significantly lower home ownership (77%) than those non-displaced war-affected respondents (88%) and returnees (85%).



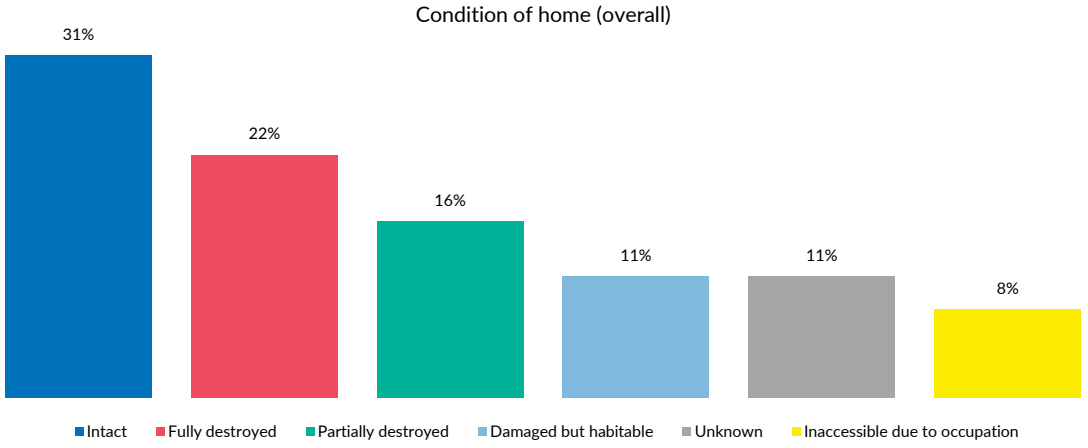


Lack of valid titles and full property registration may challenge ownership rights. Despite high levels of reported home ownership, only 78% of homeowners have a valid title deed and property registration to confirm their ownership. 9% do not have or only have partial confirmation of ownership, while 5% of respondents were uncertain. Others preferred not to say.

Property ownership documentation and registration is reportedly better among older respondents at 81%, while 13% have either no or only partial documentation or were uncertain. Younger respondents report documentation levels at 75%, while 15% have insufficient documentation or were uncertain. 15% of IDPs owning a home and 12% among returnees and other war-affected respondents report insufficient documentation and registration or uncertainty over it.

Condition of home

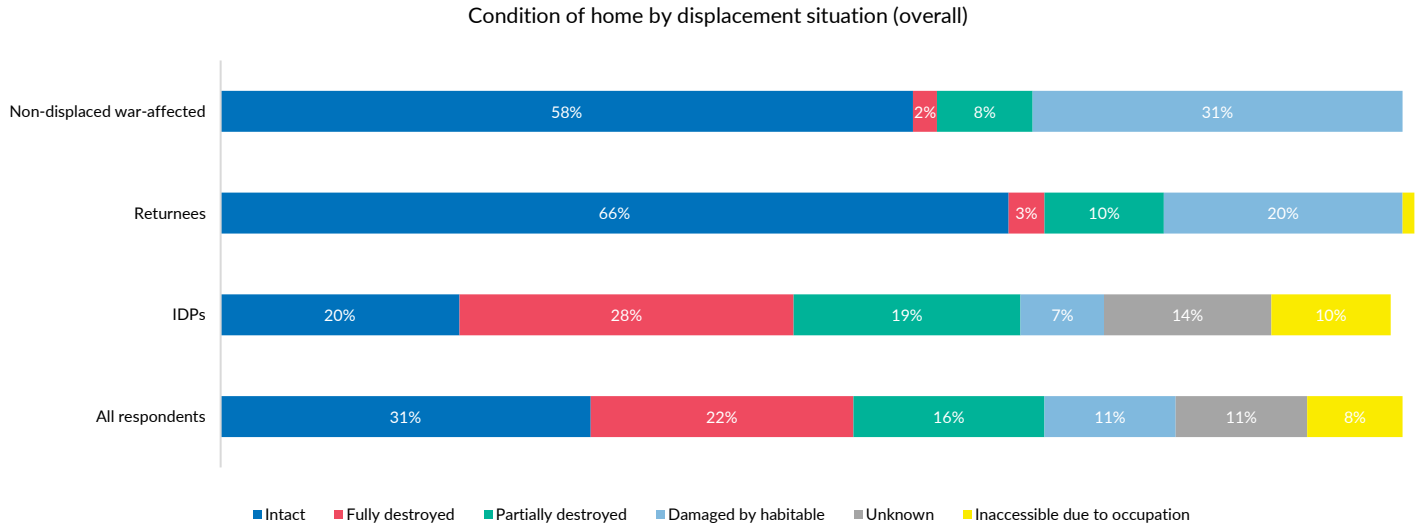
The home of 31% of respondents is reported to be intact. 38% report that their home is fully or partially destroyed and an additional 8% cannot access their home due to the temporary occupation of parts of Ukraine. 11% of respondents note that their home is damaged but habitable. 11% of respondents don't know the condition of their homes.



While respondents above 60 years report higher levels of home ownership than younger respondents, their property is less often intact (25%) than those of younger homeowners (35%). Older respondents report 10% higher levels of fully or partially destroyed homes.

There are significant differences in the condition of homes between IDPs on the one hand and returnees and other war-affected non-displaced respondents on the other.

- Notably, IDPs report lower levels of intact homes at 20%, while the homes of returnees and non-displaced respondents are intact at 66% and 58% respectively.
- Levels of full and partial destruction are also higher among IDPs (47%) compared to returnees (13%) and non-displaced war-affected respondents (10%). They report higher levels of damaged but habitable properties at 20% and 31% respectively.
- A large share of IDPs report their home to be inaccessible due to temporary occupation (10%) or don't know the condition of their home (14%), while such is not a major concern to other groups.

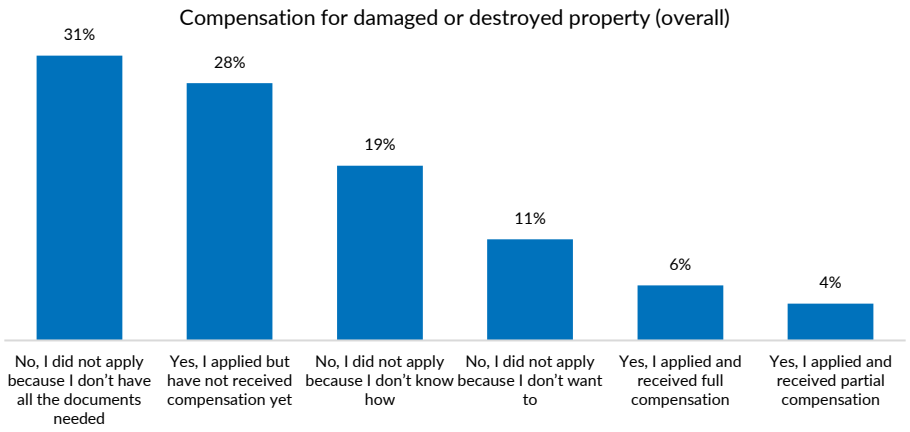


IDPs above the age of 60 years have least intact property (17%) and face highest levels of full property destruction (32%).

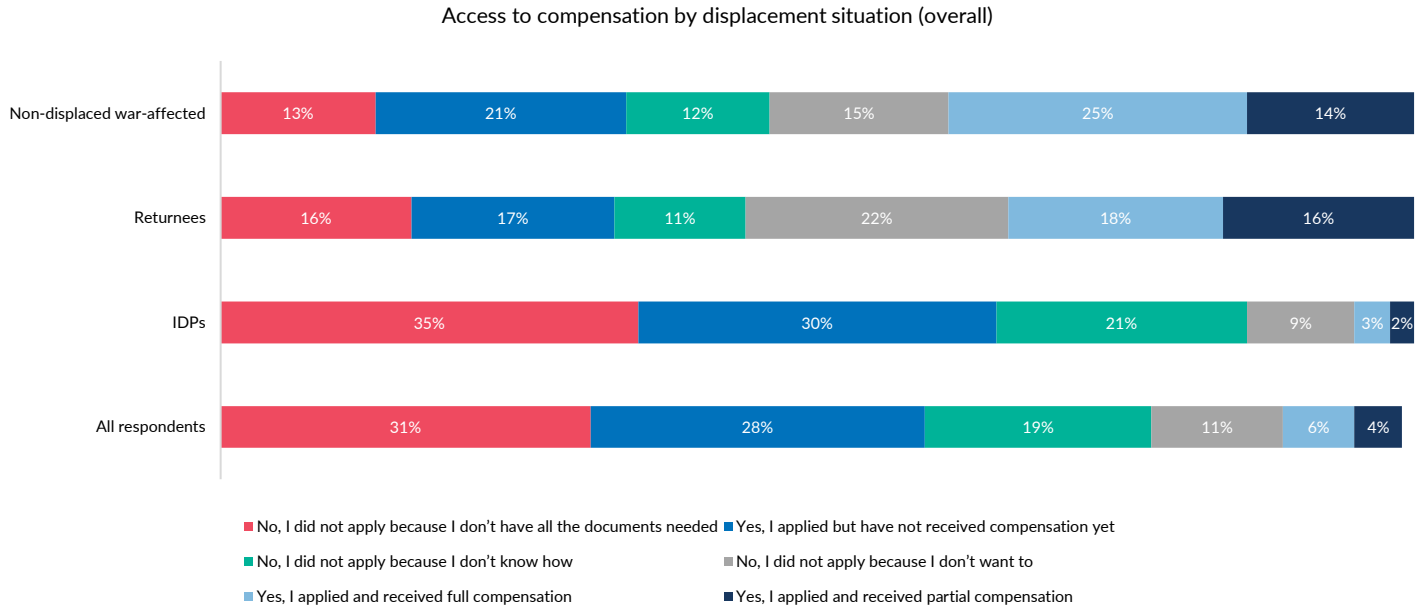
Access to compensation

Of the respondents with damaged or destroyed property (38%), nearly 11% report that they received either full or partial compensation, while 28% have reportedly applied for compensation but are yet to receive any payment.

50% report barriers to accessing compensation, either because of lack of needed documentation or due to lack of awareness of the compensation procedure. These barriers are almost equally high for men and women, older and younger respondents as well as respondents with and without specific needs.



Internally displaced respondents report significantly higher barriers in accessing compensation for damaged or destroyed property, compared to returnees or other war-affected respondents. While only 5% of IDPs report having received either full or partial compensation, 34% of returnees and 39% of war-affected respondents have received compensation at least in part. This adds to IDPs' specific housing vulnerability and impedes their housing rights.

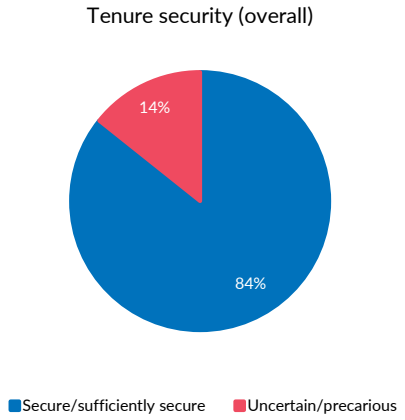


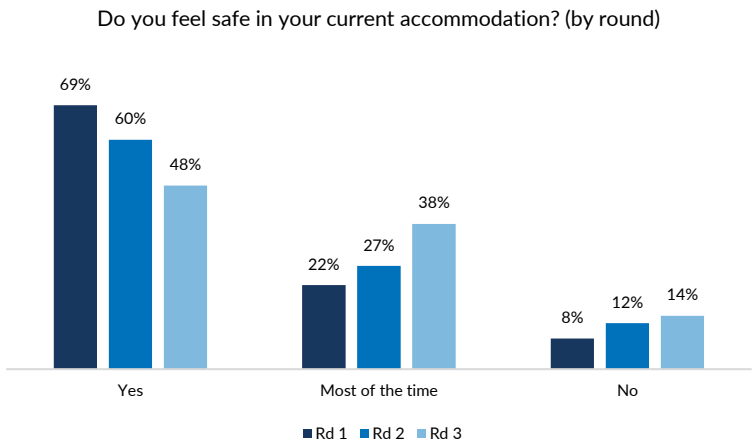
Only 5% of IDPs with damaged or destroyed property have reportedly received full or partial compensation. They also face heightened barriers to accessing compensation, with 56% reporting a lack of needed documents or unawareness of the procedure. IDPs are also more often in limbo with 30% reporting having applied for compensation but not having received a payment yet.

Just below half of respondents, 48%, whose house suffered damage or destruction registered the damage with the national and/or international register of damages. 52% of respondents did not, either because they did not know how to (36%) or they did not want to (16%).

Safety & tenure security

Over 58% of the overall respondents feel safe in their current accommodation, and another 29% at least most of the time. However, nearly 12% report they do not feel safe at home. From round 1 to round 3 of the survey, an increase of 6% was observed. Overwhelmingly, this is due to the war in general (51%), unsafe accommodation location, including proximity to the frontline (27%), not being in one's own home (18%), unsafe accommodation conditions (17%), and lack of privacy (6%). Of displaced respondents, almost 36% report not being in their own home as a main reason for feeling unsafe in their current accommodation.





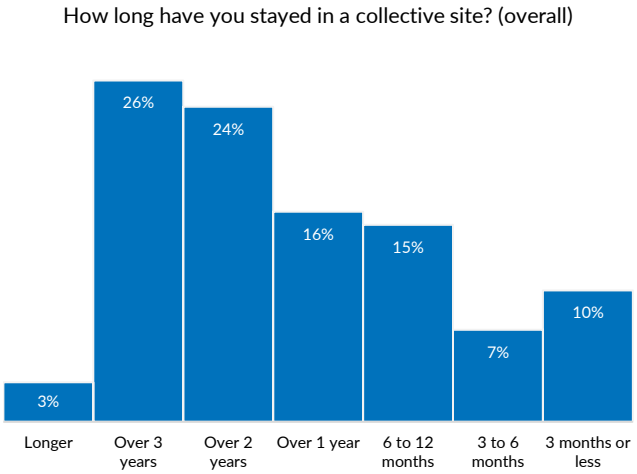
The overwhelming majority of respondents living in host arrangements, rented accommodation or collective sites say their tenure situation is secure or sufficiently secure, with only minimal uncertainty (84%). For 14%, their tenure security is uncertain or even precarious as they are at risk of eviction. In round 3 of the Survey, the highest level of tenure insecurity was recorded thus far at 16% compared to 14% in round 1 and 12% in round 2. IDPs and other war-affected respondents report slightly higher levels of tenure insecurity at 15-16% compared to returnees (4%).

Despite the high levels of reported tenure security, 58% reported that their tenure is documented only through an oral agreement. Almost 36% have a written contract, while over 2% of respondents have no documentation.

Stay in collective sites & barriers to leave

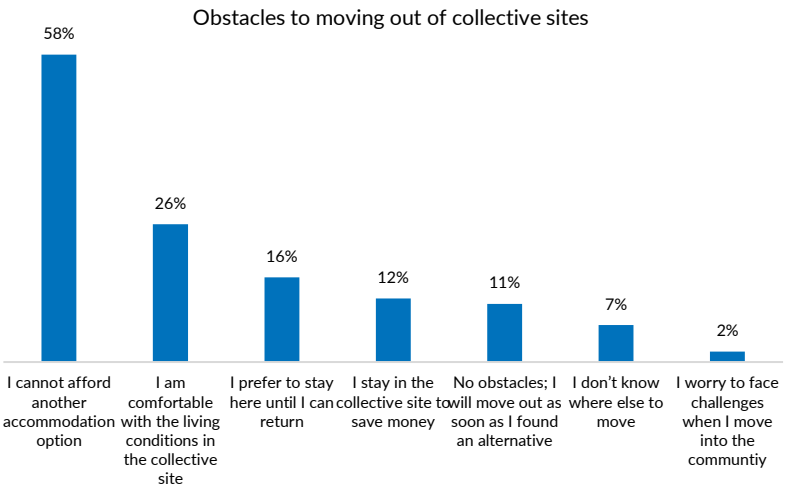
IDPs in collective sites, as an accommodation form of last resort, are a particularly vulnerable group, a point that is reinforced in the survey findings. According to the Protection Cluster in Ukraine there are over 1,500 collective sites spread across the country, hosting some 70,500 internally displaced people as of June 2026.

Across the three Protection Survey rounds, nearly 20% of the 13,000 respondents were staying in collective sites, representing 25% of all respondents in internal displacement participating in one of the three surveys. Of those, more than two thirds (69%) have lived in a collective site for at least one year, while over one quarter (29%) has already spent more than three years in such accommodation. Such long stays in collective sites create dependency risks and contribute to protracted displacement, requiring systemic solutions.



The following are the main barriers to moving out of collective sites:

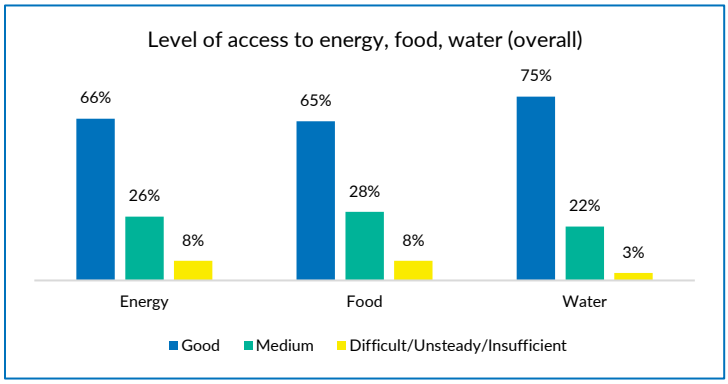
- Financial considerations: Affordability of alternative accommodation is the greatest obstacle to moving out of collective sites (58%). Some 12% also report to stay in collective sites to save money. This reason is more frequently reported by younger female respondents who have a family member with a specific need (14%).
- Stability in the absence of alternatives: 26% are comfortable staying in collective sites and 16% are simply waiting there until they can return home. This causes extended stays in collective sites where return is not near.
- Helplessness: Some 7% don't know where else to move. Such helplessness rises to 11% among older people with specific needs, requiring the expansion of the social adaptation service.

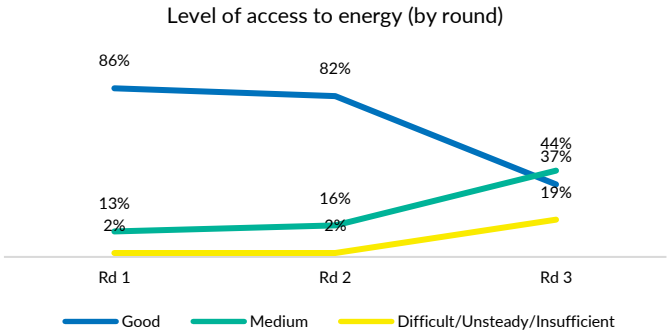


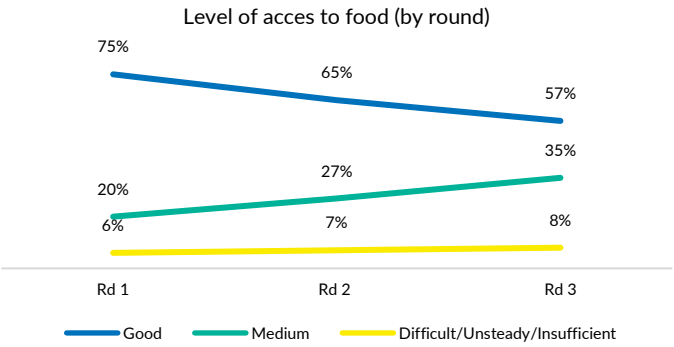
11% of respondents say they don't have any barriers and plan to move out as soon as they find another place. This suggests that the purpose of collective sites has changed by their actual use as only a small percentage of residents are using them for the originally envisaged purpose – a temporary and short-term accommodation for newly displaced people. This discrepancy between design and practice needs to be addressed and collective sites adapted to their actual use, with time-bound, needs-based support and clear pathways to adequate housing or social accommodation.

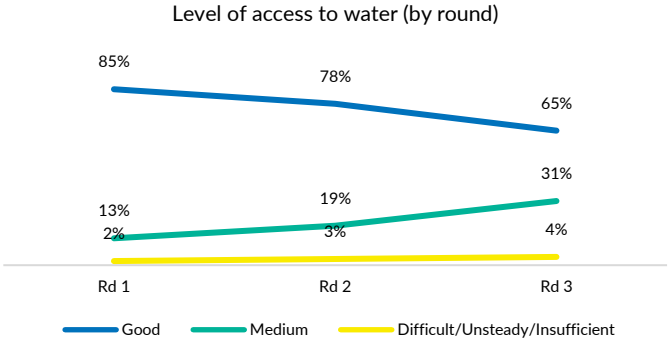
Access to basic needs: energy, food, water

Between two thirds and three quarters of respondents report generally good access to basic needs, while a quarter to one third report medium to difficult access. However, a clear deterioration in access to basic needs is observed across the Protection Survey rounds.







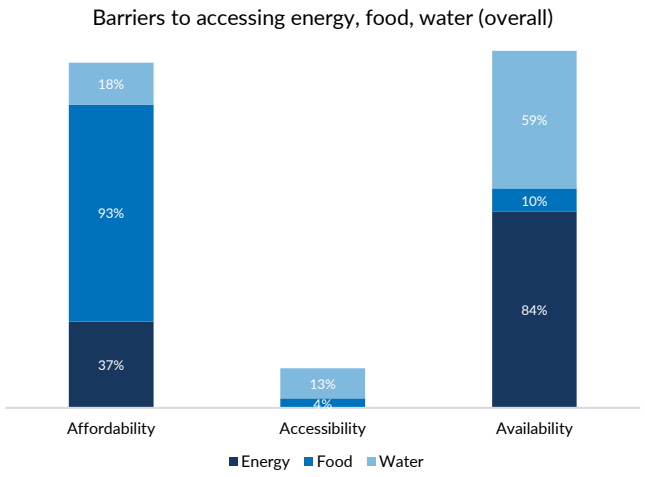


Deteriorating access to basic needs

Access to all three basic needs deteriorated within a year. The most significant deterioration concerns access to energy with 44% reporting only medium level access in round 3 as compared to 13% and 16% in the previous two rounds, and an alarming 19% reported difficult, unsteady or insufficient access to energy – an increase by 17% compared to prior survey intervals. Access to food and water also deteriorated with a growing share of people reporting medium-level access rising by 15% for food and by 18% for water. The access deterioration is also noticeable among those reporting difficult, unsteady or insufficient access to food and water, albeit to more modest extent.

- **Access to energy:** In round 3 of the survey, war-affected but not displaced respondents report a higher level of difficulties accessing energy compared to IDPs and returnees, with one quarter (25%) reporting difficult, unsteady or insufficient access. While no significant gender- or age-based differences were observed in round 3, the prevalence of specific needs matters. 24% of respondents with specific needs report difficult energy access, 8% more than those without such needs. Single-headed households stand out with 30% reporting such difficulties.
- **Access to food:** Older people with specific needs report a higher level of difficulties in accessing food at 13%, 5% above the overall response rate in round 3 of the survey. This elevates to 16% for those with a chronic illness and even to 22% for those living alone. Females among older respondents with specific needs report food access difficulties more often (16%) than males of this profile (10%).
- **Access to water:** Older people with specific needs are also more affected by difficulties in accessing water in round 3 of the survey, with 37% reporting medium access and 5% even higher water access constraints. Respondents in the southern macro-region are more affected by difficulties in accessing water with 36% reporting medium water access and 6% even difficult access to water.

Barriers to accessing energy, food and water are primarily related to limited availability as well as to difficulties in affording them. Accessibility is a lesser barrier and primarily affects access to water (13%) and to a lesser extent to food (4%).



Energy: Availability challenges are the dominant access barrier to energy (84%). Compared to round 1 (55%) and 2 (53%), a steep rise in unavailability of energy is observed in round 3 (89%). 37% report affordability challenges. These were slightly higher during the first two survey rounds (40%) compared to the third (37%). However, older respondents faced higher affordability challenges in round 3 (43%) than in previous rounds.

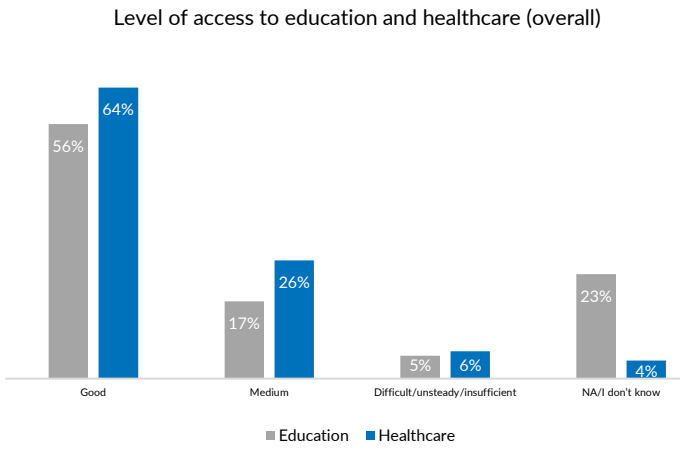
Food: Affordability is by far the most relevant barrier to people's access to food at 93% without major difference in the three survey rounds. Affordability challenges have risen though by 4% for older respondents with specific needs in round 3 of the survey. 10% report availability challenges, steadily reported in the year in review. Physical access challenges are limited (4%), with a slight increase by 1% only observed in round 3 of the survey.

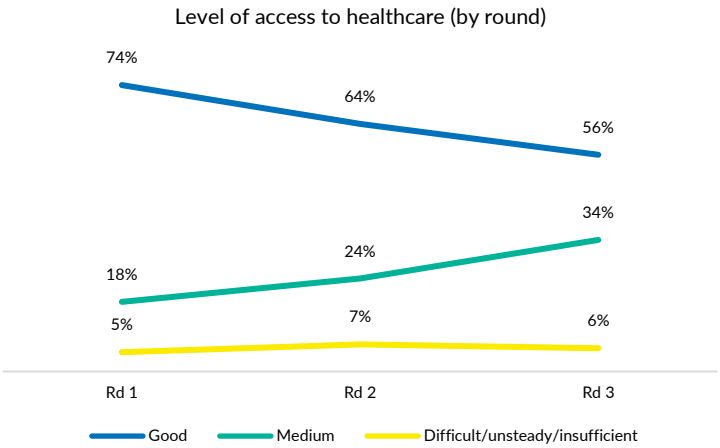
Water: Availability of water is the greatest access barrier for people at 59%, followed by affordability challenges for 18% and accessibility constraints for 13% with steady reporting during the year in review. Affordability is a greater challenge for older people with specific needs with 24% reporting this barrier. In addition, an overall 27% report poor water quality as a barrier to their access to safe water.

People with specific needs are most severely affected by the deterioration in access to energy, food and water. Single-headed households report most difficulties in access energy, while older people above 60 years with specific needs face greatest challenges in accessing food and water. Availability constraints are the most significant reason for limited access to energy and water, while food insecurity largely stems from people's inability to afford food.

Access to basic services: health

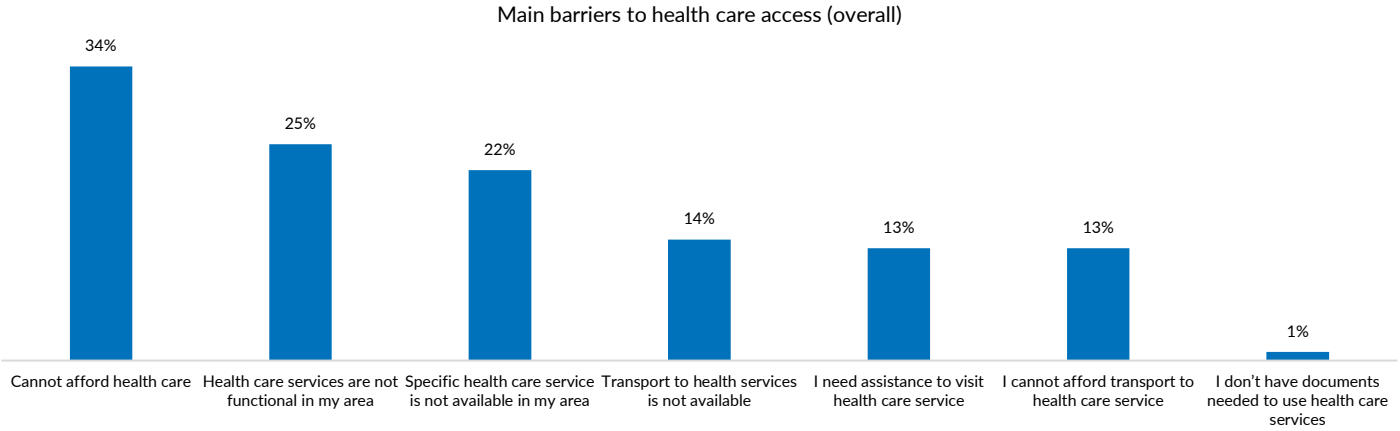
Overall, respondents report good to fair access to education and health services during the past three months. 5% and 6% respectively report difficult to insufficient access to these basic services. Access to both basic services deteriorated during the year in review, with more respondents reporting medium-level access compared to before.





- Among the overall respondents, those war-affected report higher difficulties in accessing healthcare compared to IDPs and returnees, with 10% reporting difficult, unsteady or insufficient access to healthcare.
- Access to healthcare is more challenging for respondents over 60 years with a specific need reported at 11%. For them, access challenges are highest in Kyiv reported at 22% followed by respondents in the northern (13%) and southern macro-regions (13%).

Of the 6% of respondents with difficult or insufficient access to health care, barriers relate to affordability, accessibility and availability of services needed. Specific accessibility barriers include lack of transport, unaffordability of transport or lack of needed documentation.



While affordability challenges are the greatest barrier to health care across all three survey rounds, in round 3 fewer respondents report affordability challenges (30%) compared to round 1 (35%) and round 2 (36%). At the same time, a significantly larger share of respondents (34%) report non-functional health care services in their area as the main barrier – an increase from 19% in round 1 and 21% in round 2 – and rising to 50% of respondents reporting this barrier in the northern macro-region.

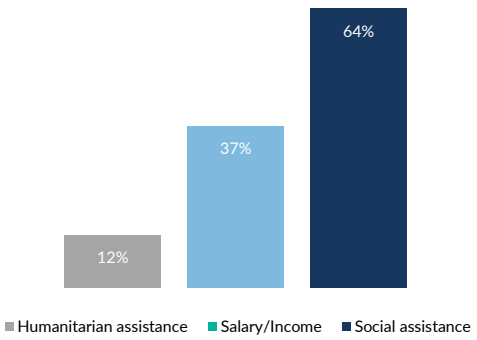
Access to social protection

Elevated displacement-specific socio-economic vulnerability

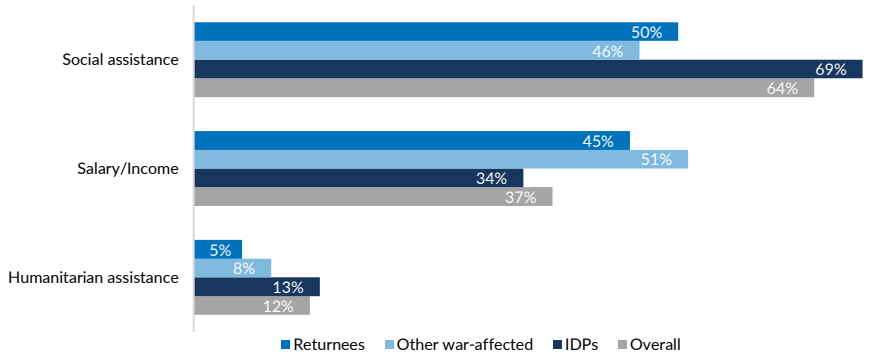
- Among IDPs, 59% are of working age with 21% reporting to be without a job, slightly elevated compared to returnees (21%) and other war-affected respondents (17%).
- In terms of income sources, IDPs rely at 34% on salaries, 3% less than the overall response. At the same time, IDPs show a greater reliance on social assistance (69%) and humanitarian assistance (13%) as main income sources. Among IDPs in collective sites, unemployment rises further to 24% and reliance on social assistance to 79%. Among the displaced, older IDPs with specific needs exhibit greatest socio-economic vulnerability.
- IDPs also have the greatest reliance on social services, reported at 13% in the year in review. This rises to 19% among IDPs in collective sites.
- Despite the greater reliance on the social protection system, IDPs also face higher barriers than others in accessing it.
- Compared to war-affected respondents without a displacement experience, returnees show greater economic vulnerability indicated by higher reliance on social protection payments and lower possibility to fall back on salaried income.

Reliance on social assistance is the foremost source of income for nearly two thirds (64%) of the 13,000 respondents, while 37% rely on salaried income and 12% on humanitarian assistance as the top three income sources (multiple response options possible). The prevalence of specific needs significantly increases the reliance on social assistance to 78% - 26% more than respondents without specific needs. Respondents over 60 years report reliance on social assistance at 95%, further rising to 97% where specific needs are prevalent. This high reliance is largely due to dependence on pensions to sustain their livelihoods, limiting their financial autonomy and ability to absorb shocks.

Top three soures of income (overall)



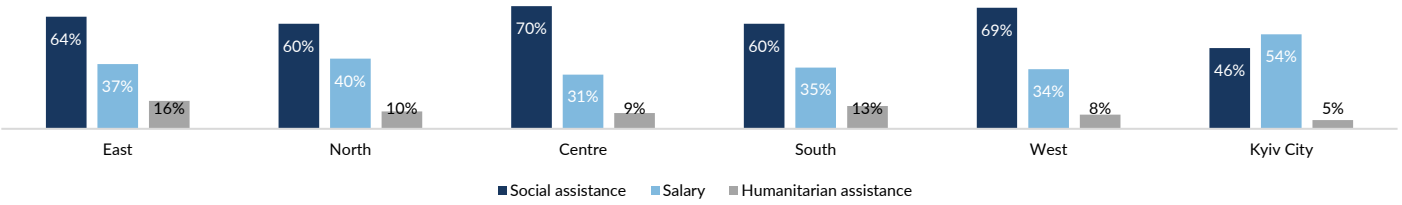
Main sources of income by displacement situation (overall)



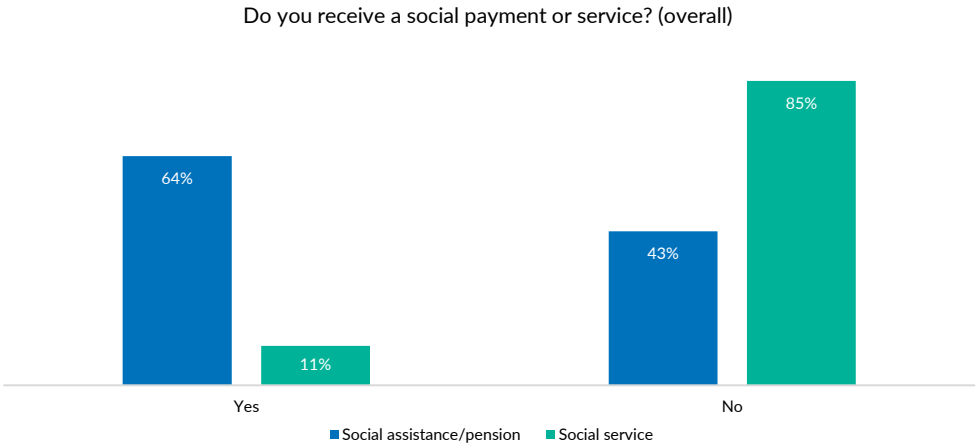
Across all macro-regions and Kyiv city, social protection payments and salary are the two main sources of income.

- IDPs in Kyiv city have the highest reliance on salaried income, reported at over 54%. In the five macro-regions, reliance on salaried income ranges from 31% to 40%.
- IDPs in the centre and west have the greatest reliance on state social protection payments, reported at 70% to 69%. Reliance on social protection payments is lowest in Kyiv, reported at 46%.
- Reliance on humanitarian assistance is highest in the eastern and southern macro-regions at 16% and 13%, while it is 10% and less elsewhere, with lowest reliance reported in Kyiv city.

Main sources of income by macro-region (overall)



64% of the overall respondents have received some form of social protection payment (benefit or pension) from the state in the year under review, while 11% of respondents received at least one social service. This finding primarily reflects the imbalance between cash benefits and care-related social services inherent in the state social protection system. As a systemic challenge, it cuts across all macro-regions and Kyiv city. As such, this is indicative of low availability and development of social services at local levels, rather than of need. Respondents in central and western regions report highest levels of reliance on the state social protection system for payments, while for social services respondents in the South reported highest levels of reliance at 16%, followed by the western (12%) and central regions (11%). Variations between rounds are linked to the respondent profiles as reliance on the social protection system is driven by age and prevalence of specific needs.



Of the 64% of respondents who receive social payments, the main three types of assistance are IDP allowance (66%), old-age pension (52%) and disability pension (22%). Of note is the rise in respondents receiving a disability pension in round 3 of the protection survey, increasing by 10% and 9% respectively from round 1 and round 2. At the same time, a gradual decrease in IDPs receiving subsistence allowances is observed from 82% in round 1, to 78% in round 2 and 76% in round 3.

IDPs, older people and people with specific needs have a higher reliance on social protection payments. This is due to the specific social benefits for IDPs as well as pensions related to old age and disability.

- 69% of IDP respondents have received social protection payments in the year under review.
- 91% of respondents above 60 years receive social protection payment.
- 78% of households with a family member with specific needs have received a social protection payments, notably older persons at risk as well as persons with a disability.

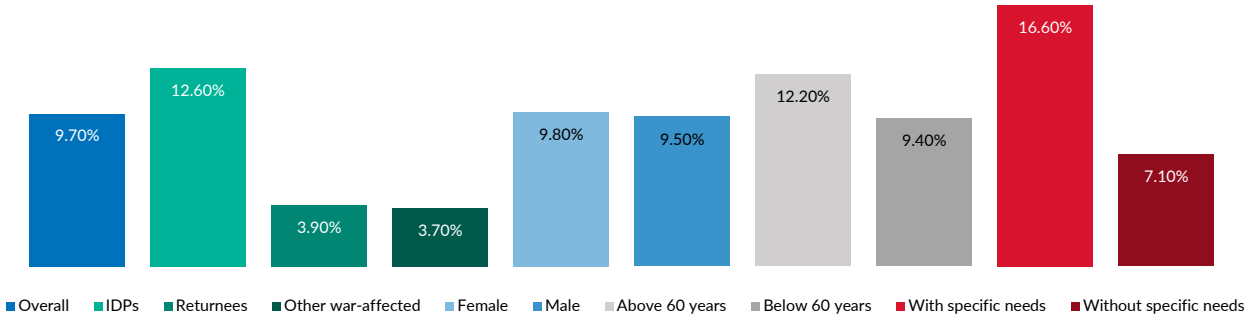
IDPs, older people and people with specific needs also have a greater reliance on social services.

- 13% of IDPs have received a social service during the year in review. This is elevated among IDPs in collective sites (19%). In contrast, returnees and non-displaced report receiving social services at 5% and 6% respectively.
- Almost 15% of respondents above 60 years have received social services, while younger respondents have received services at 9%
- 12% of households with a family member with specific needs currently receive social services. It is further elevated for persons with disabilities (13%), and particularly for older people at risk (20%), but only 10% for single-headed households.

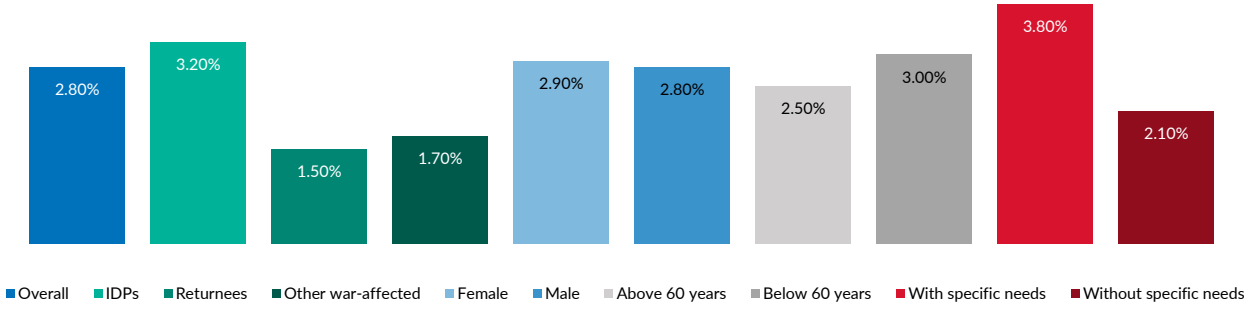
Of those not receiving state social protection support, 13% of respondents face barriers to access the state social protection system. Of those, 10% face challenges in accessing social protection payments, and 3% have impediments to receiving social services. These barriers differ depending on displacement situation, age, gender and the prevalence of specific needs, and are also affected by above noted imbalance between cash and care, and related availability and capacity gaps for social services at local levels.

Barriers to social services have remained stable overall across the three survey intervals, while barriers to social payments slightly increased by 1% during the year under review. This is largely driven by IDPs reporting growing barriers rising from 12 to over 13% during this year.

Barriers to Social Payments (overall)



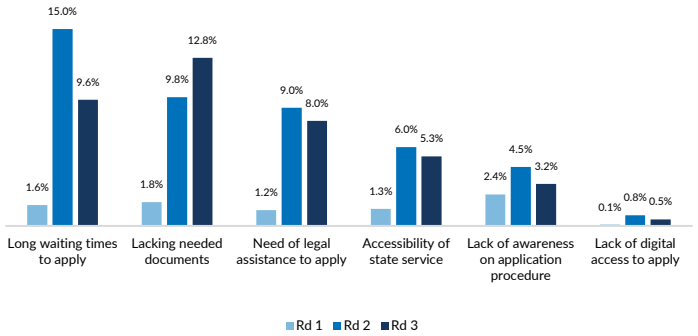
Barriers to Social Services (overall)



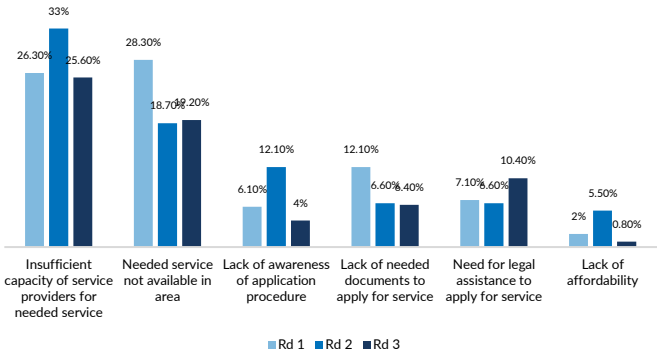
- IDPs with specific needs exhibit significant barriers to accessing social payments at over 21%. This further rises to 28% among female single-headed households.
- IDPs with specific needs also face more significant barriers to accessing social services at over 4%. This further rises to 14% for single-headed households among them.

Apart from eligibility-related barriers, the following are the main types of barriers people report when attempting to access the state social protection system:

Social payments: Main types of barriers (by round)



Social services: Main types of barriers (by round)



- Old age and the prevalence of specific needs influence barrier levels to social payments the most. Nearly 14% of older people with specific needs report not having documents needed, 9% each lack awareness of how to apply and struggle with the long waiting times. Nearly 6% of older respondents note the need for legal assistance to access social benefits or pensions.
- Insufficient social service capacity for the service required is a higher barrier for older people and people with specific needs, reported at 36% and 34%. Awareness and documentation barriers are also higher among these two groups, and especially among older respondents reporting these two barriers at 10% and 12% respectively.

- Of the 476 key informants across 51 hromadas, 17% confirm that all 18 basic social services are activated in their hromada, and an additional 61% noted that nearly all of them are activated. 19% of key informants said that only some or none of these required basic services are activated in their hromada. The 118 respondents in frontline hromadas note at 36% that only some of the required social services are activated.
- Among the frequently mentioned social services that are not activated are assisted living, sign language, temporary accommodation, social adaptation, home-based care and day care services, physical support to persons with disabilities, mediation as well as childcare services close to family.
- Lack of adequate premises, absence of needed human resources and capacity/experience for certain social services, and insufficient resources are mentioned as main reasons for not activating certain social services. Key informants also note that there is too little need for some of the services in their hromada and it is easier to refer to a neighbouring hromada. In some frontline hromadas, the security conditions also do not permit the provision of certain social services.
- According to key informants, the two main groups impacted by these limitations to social service provision are people with disabilities (51%) and older people (44%).

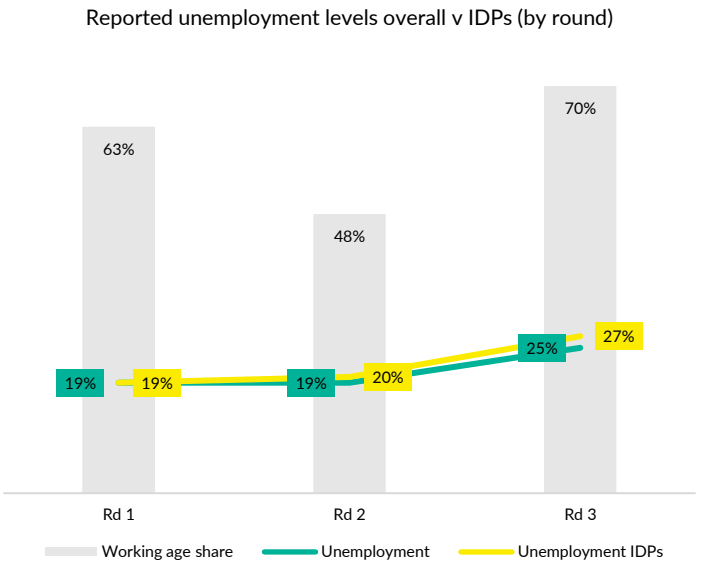
Good practices addressing social services capacity challenges:

- Formation of mobile teams to better reach the most vulnerable members in the community, even with limited capacities.
- Leveraging the role of the community and community members, including family members and volunteers – such as social facilitators - in providing basic social support on a non-professional basis.
- Small grant programmes for community-based organizations in a community to extend additional social support were considered useful.
- Social taxi services are mentioned frequently as particularly valuable as it enables people with limited mobility to access available services, including through referrals.
- Close cooperation between state services as well as non-governmental organizations.

Access to employment

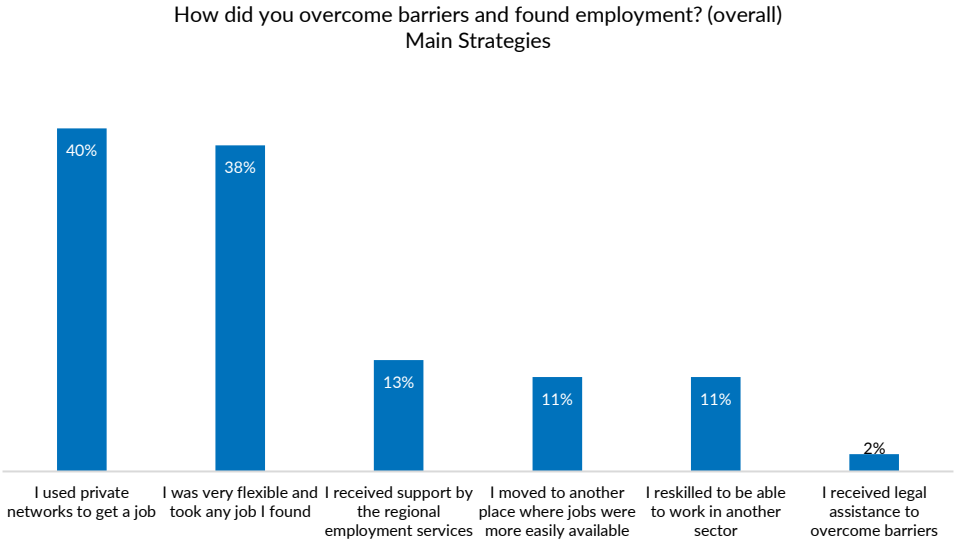
61% of the 13,000 respondents are of working age. Of those, 35% reported to be employed at the time of the respective survey (27% full-time, 4% part-time, 4% self-employed) while 21% reported to be without a job with the majority of 81% not registered with the state employment service. The low registration rate with the employment service has remained consistent throughout the three survey rounds.

- 65% of female respondents are of working age, and 56% of male respondents. Among female respondents, nearly 24% are without a job, while it is 6% lower for male respondents (18%).
- 50% of respondents in households with a person with specific needs are of working age. Of those, over 21% are without a job, and among respondents with a disability even 23%.
- IDPs and returnees are more often without a job (21% each) than non-displaced respondents (17%). IDPs' unemployment has also risen during the year in review from 19% to 27%. However, this trend should be interpreted cautiously because round 3 included a larger share of working age respondents. In addition, among IDPs with a job, they have a lower full employment rate (25%) compared to returnees (33%) and non-displaced respondents (39%). Returnees and non-displaced war affected respondents have a lower registration rate with the employment service (88% are reportedly not registered) than IDPs (80%).



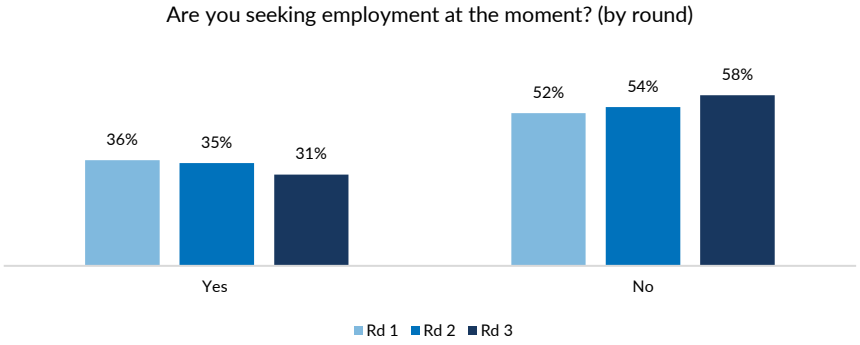
Of the 35% of respondents with employment, 11% report that they faced barriers when trying to find employment. Such barriers were slightly lower for males (10%). IDPs (12%) and respondents with specific needs (13%), especially single-headed households (22%) and those with chronic illnesses (14%) said they faced higher barriers.

Flexibility and private networks were most helpful to overcome these barriers and find employment. For others, moving elsewhere, support of regional employment service, reskilling and even legal assistance helped in overcoming the barriers to employment they faced.



Of the 21% of respondents who are currently without a job, not all are looking for employment. Over half, 55%, are currently not looking for a job, while 34% are. Others were unsure or preferred not to reveal.

In the year in review, a 5% decline in jobseekers among the respondents without a job is observed. Respondents not seeking a job are on average 45 years old and have a two-to-three-person household. Among them are more men than women – however due to different reasons. For women, care responsibilities are the overriding factors, while for men health conditions or disabilities prevent them from looking for a job.



Not looking for a job (55%)

- Main reasons for not looking for a job are care responsibilities for children and others in need of care at 36%. Female respondents are not looking for a job due to care responsibilities at 51%, while 11% of males are prevented to look for a job for that reason.
- 29% are not looking for a job due to health conditions, which is heightened for male respondents at 41%, while it stands at 22% for women. Some 8% of respondents note that they are not looking for a job as they would not be considered due to age, while 11% have a disability that prevents them from working. Disability-related reasons are nearly double as high for male respondents at 20%.
- 3% said they are just waiting until they can return home, while 4% are not seeking a job due to fear of mobilization (11% among male only respondents). One per cent is not looking for a job due to mental health problems or as they are overqualified for the jobs available.

Looking for a job (34%)

- In terms of barriers to employment, 46% say that there are simply no jobs available. 17% said they don't have the needed work experience and skillset for the available jobs.
- For over 26% of respondents, it is difficult to find a job that provides needed flexibility to accommodate caretaking responsibilities. Female respondents face this barrier at 33%, while it stands at 12% for male respondents.
- 12% need help to find a job and don't know where to get it, and 7% don't know where to get information on available jobs.
- 5% of respondents report exclusion and discrimination and 2% face legal barriers to find a job. Only IDPs and returnees report facing these barriers to finding a job, and exclusion is elevated for IDPs over returnees, and rises to 7% for IDPs staying in collective sites.

- Gender-related factors influence whether or not someone without a job is looking for employment, and shape the barriers, for example care responsibilities, health conditions, disability and mobilization-related concerns, faced by those actively job-seeking.
- Reported exclusion and discrimination as barriers to finding a job is displacement-related and is not reported by non-displaced respondents.

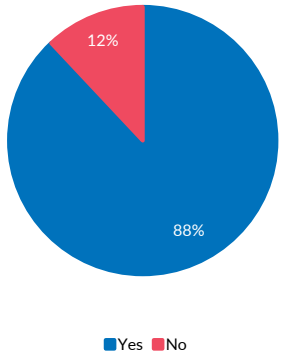
Comparing results between survey rounds, 5% more people report on unavailability of jobs, while the percentage of those reporting lacking jobs with flexibility for care responsibilities decreased from round 1 to round 3 by 8%. Those reporting needing help to find a job or lacking information on available jobs increased by 4% each since the first round of the Protection Survey.

Access to financial providers & digital access

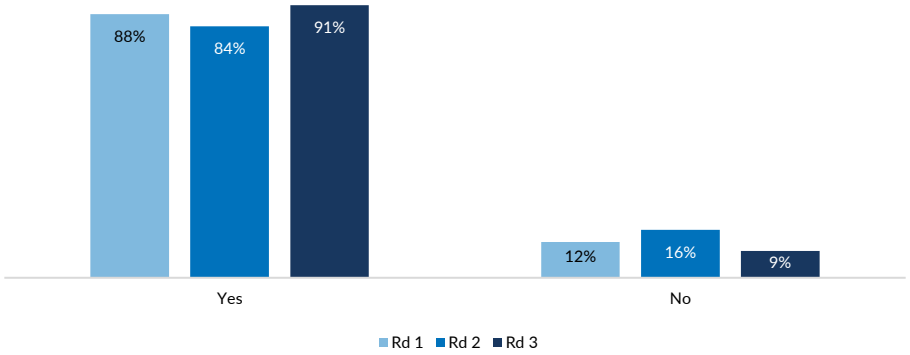
Digital access

Overall, 88% of respondents report having a digital device, while 12% don't. A slight improvement by 3% in access to digital devices is observed from the first Protection Survey, although access to these devices remains highly profile dependent. Gaps are most prevalent among respondents in the central (14%) and southern (13%) macro-regions.

Do you have a digital device? (overall)

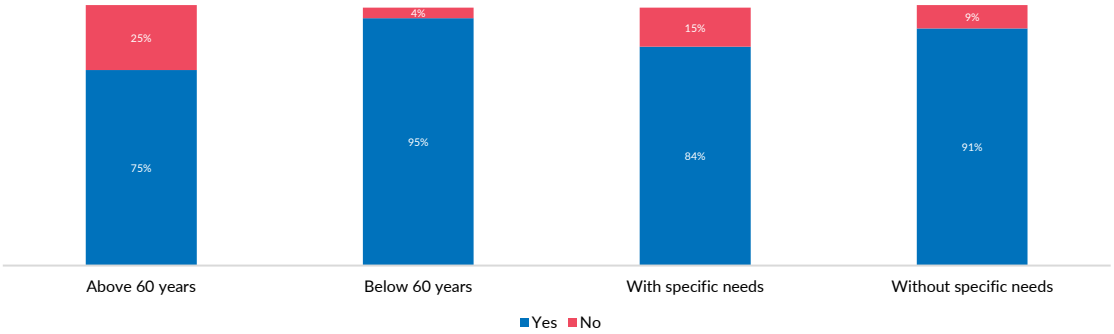


Do you have a digital device? (by round)



- The lack of a digital device is elevated for IDPs (12%) compared to returnees (9%) and non-displaced respondents (10%).
- Male respondents more often report lacking a digital device (13%) compared to female (11%).
- Respondents above 60 years (25%) as well as those with specific needs (15%) have least access to a digital device.

Do you have a digital device? (overall)
Age and specific needs considerations

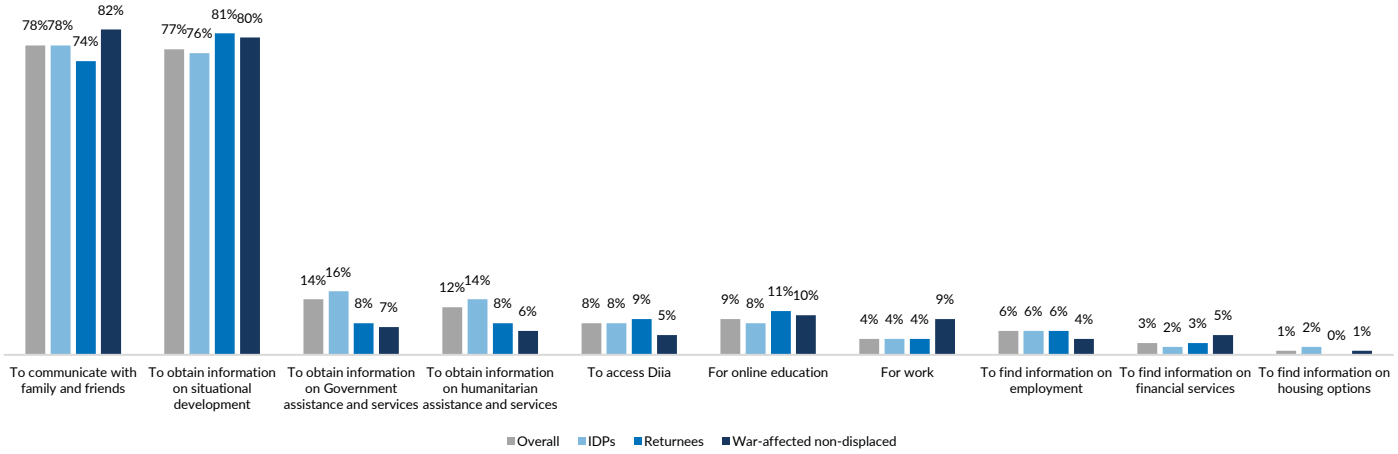


- The vast majority of those with a digital device have good or at least medium-level connectivity, with only 2% reporting insufficient connectivity to make proper use of their digital device. Such connectivity difficulties are higher in the northern and southern macro-regions at 3% to 4%.
- 90% of those with a device have no problem using it. 10% report some or even a lot of difficulty due to limited literacy and disability. Older people above the age of 60 years report increased difficulties in the use of their digital device more than twice as much, at 22%. Respondents with specific need also report elevated challenges at 12%.

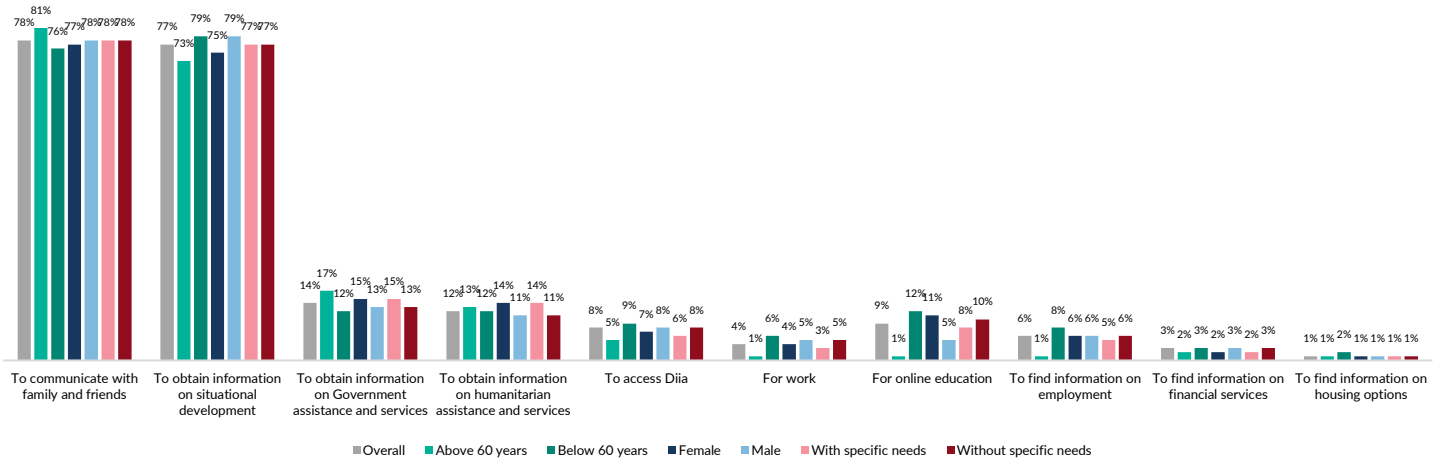
Older age is the factor most strongly associated with reduced digital access. Among people aged over 60 with specific needs, with 27% reported no access to a digital device, rising to 28% if they are also internally displaced.

The use of a digital device to communicate with friends and family as well as to obtain information on situational developments are the two main purposes across all groups, albeit slightly elevated among non-displaced respondents. IDPs reportedly use their digital device more often than others for information on Government and humanitarian assistance. Returnees use their digital devices more often for online education and to access the Diia app than others, while non-displaced respondents use their digital device significantly more often than others for work and information on financial services.

Use of digital device: Main purposes - by displacement situation (overall)



Use of digital device: Main purpose - by age, gender, specific need prevalence (overall)



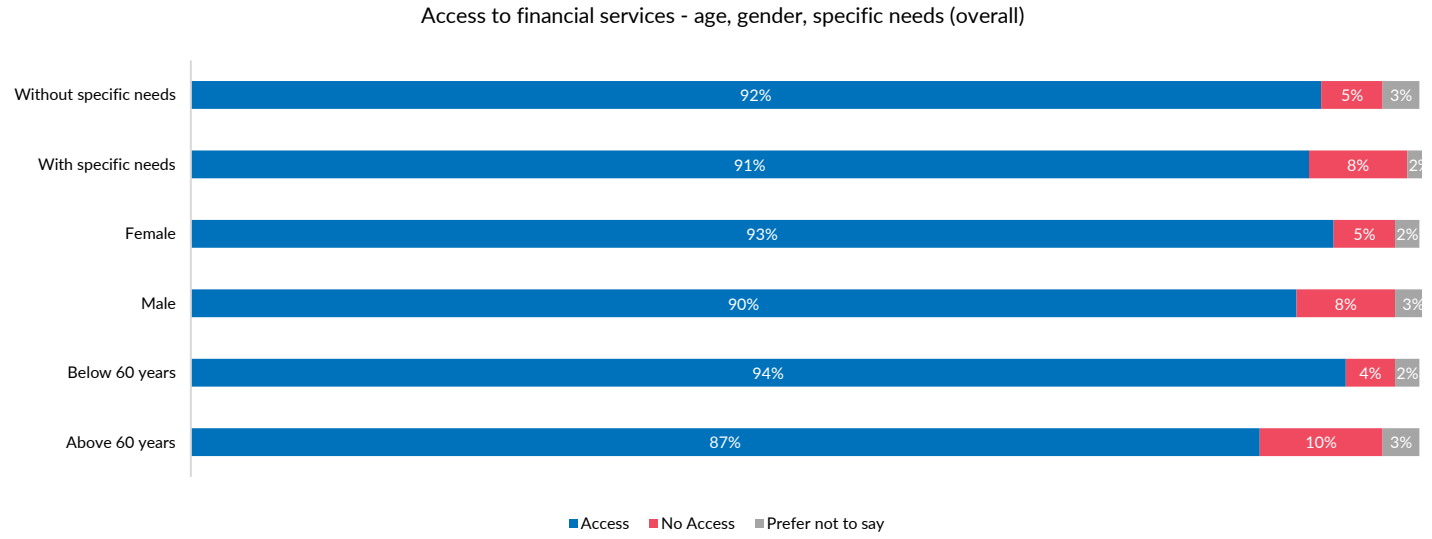
- Age-related differences in the use of digital devices lie in their use for obtaining information on Government and humanitarian assistance and services, which is heightened for respondents over 60 years. Younger respondents tend to use digital devices more often to access the Diia application, for work and online education as well as to find information on employment. While older people use their devices more often for communication, younger respondents use them more to follow situational developments.
- Gender-related differences: Male respondents use their digital devices more for information on situational developments and for communication, as well as to work and access the Diia application. Female respondents have an elevated use of digital means to obtain information on Government and humanitarian services, as well as for online education.
- Differences related to specific needs: Respondents with a specific need also use their digital devices more to seek information on available assistance and services from Government and humanitarian organizations.

Overall, there is a noticeable decrease in the reported use of digital devices to obtain information on available support by Government and humanitarian assistance and services by 5% and 2% respectively during the year in review.

Access to financial services

Overall, over 91% of respondents have access to financial services, such as through banks, post services or online channels, while 6% don't. Little variation between survey rounds is observed, with 5% reporting no access in round 1, 7% in round 2 and 6% in round 3.

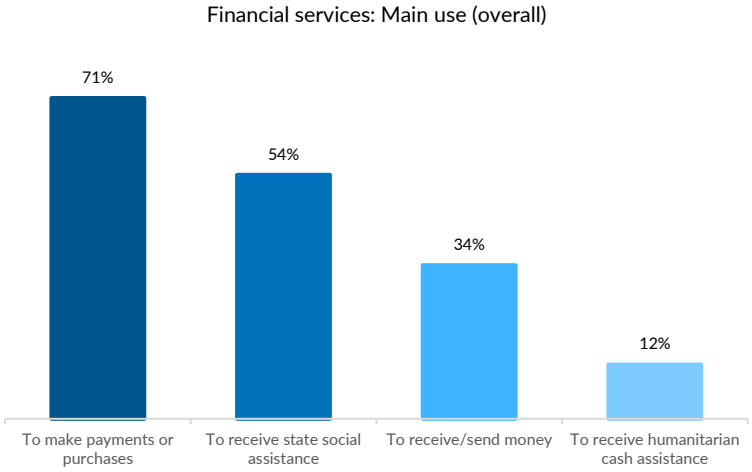
- Female respondents report a 3% higher level of access to financial services than male respondents.
- Age-related differences are even more significant, with nearly 10% of respondents above the age of 60 years reporting no access to financial services, 6% more than younger respondents (4%).
- Respondents with specific needs in their household report lacking access to financial services at 8%, while it stands at 5% for others. Older persons at risk report a particularly high lack of access to financial services at 11%.

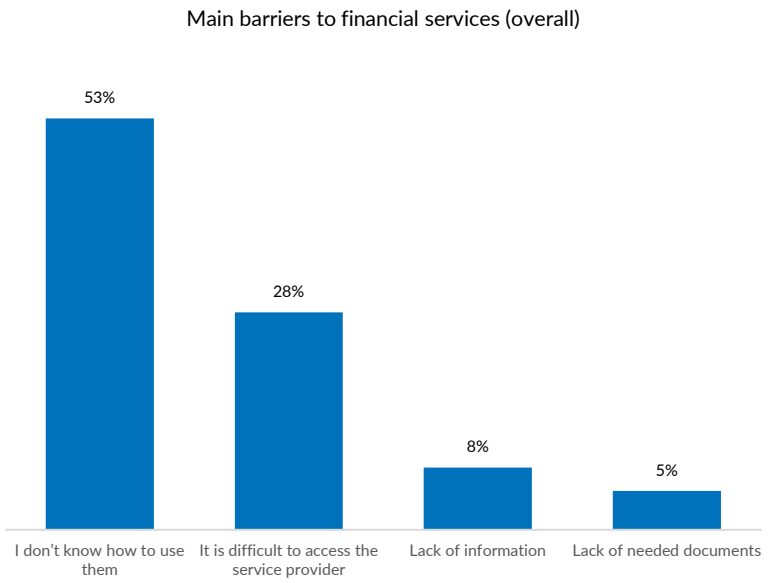


Displaced older persons at risk, i.e. above 60 years old typically living without social support structures, have least access to financial services, with over 15% reporting lacking such access. This rises to over 17% for male respondents of such a profile.

Respondents with access to financial services use it mostly to make payments or purchases (71%) and to receive social assistance or pensions (54%). Other common uses of financial services are to receive or send money (34%) or to receive humanitarian cash assistance (12%). Comparing survey rounds, the use of financial services to send or receive money has increased by 5% within the year in review. Other differences are mostly profile-related, rather than indicative trends over time.

- Returnees and war-affected, but non-displaced respondents demonstrate similar patterns in using financial services, primarily to make payments or purchases or to receive or send money. IDPs on the other hand use it 20% more than others to receive social payments form the state and nearly twice as often to receive humanitarian cash payments.
- Respondents above 60 years have a greater reliance on financial services to receive state social assistance at 77%, as do respondents with specific needs at 66%. No significant differences between male and female respondents were observed.





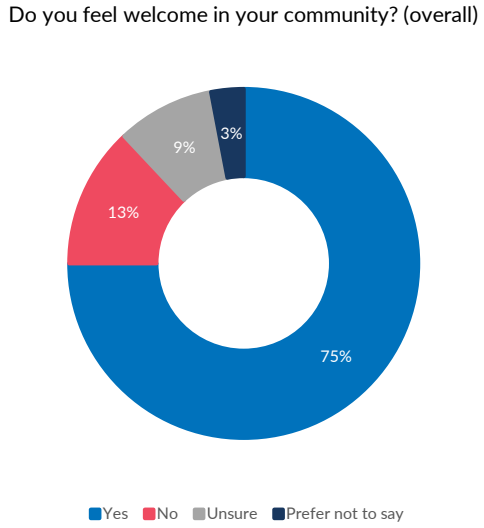
For the overall 6% of respondents with no access to financial services, the main barriers are the lack of knowledge on how to use them (53%), physical access constraints to service providers (28%), lack of information on financial services (8%) as well as lack of needed documents (45%).

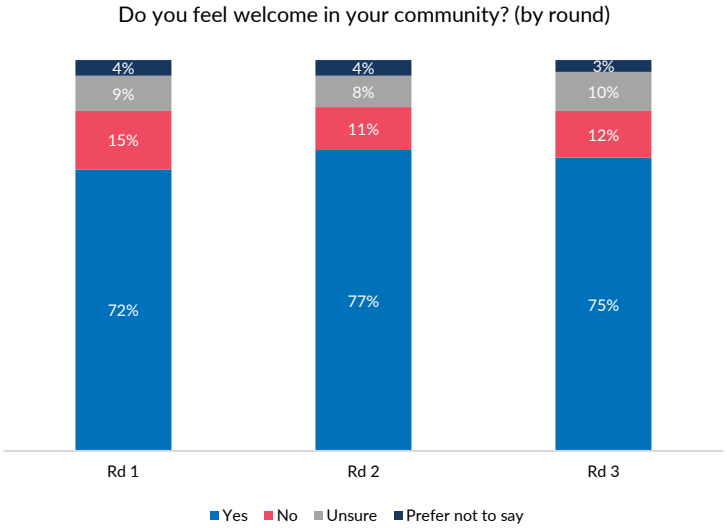
In the year in review, a notable improvement in awareness on how to use financial services is observed, reducing this barrier from 61% to 45%.

Respondents above 60 years report more frequently that they have no access to financial service providers because they don't know how to use them (68%). Respondents with specific needs report greater physical access barriers to financial services at nearly 35%, rising to over 40% among female respondents. IDPs face slightly elevated documentation barriers to access financial services (6%).

Social cohesion and integration

Of all IDPs surveyed in the three rounds throughout the year, 75% of displaced respondents say they feel welcome in the community in which they live. Overall, some 13% of IDPs say they faced some social integration challenges upon displacement, although 5% of them said that it improved over time. Others were unsure or preferred not to reply. IDPs living in collective sites report the highest social integration challenges at nearly 18%. IDP respondents in the western macro-region reportedly face higher social integration challenges at 20%, although half of them noted that it improved over time. Reported improvements between round 1 to round 2 of the survey appear to have partly reversed in round 3, although overall variation between rounds remains small.





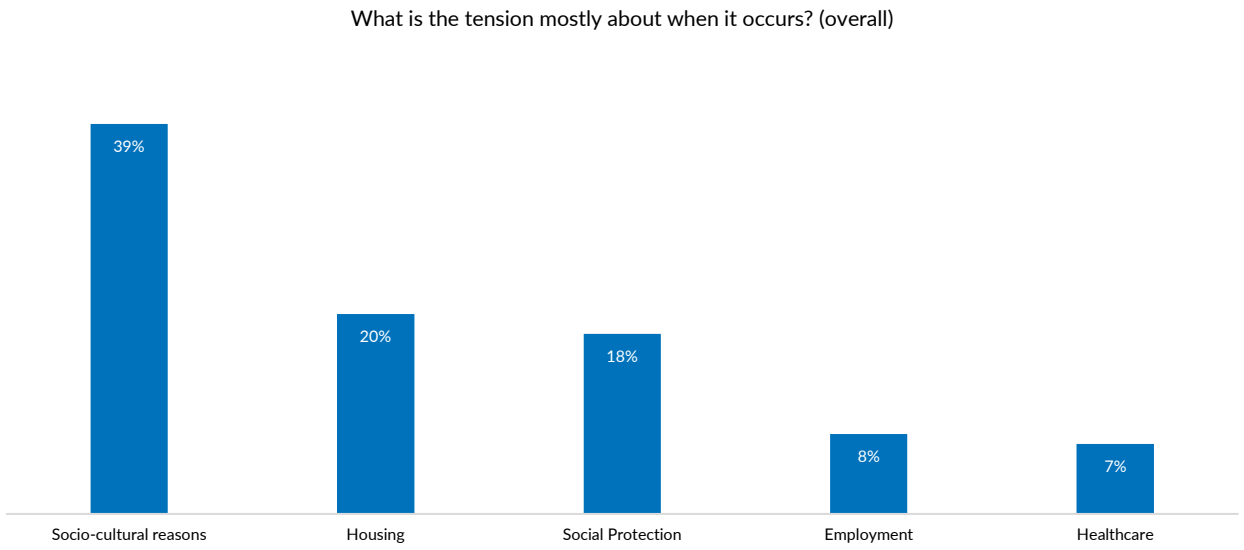
Overall, 90% of returnees say that they feel welcome in the community into which they returned. Only 2% report some reintegration challenges. Reintegration challenges are more frequently reported by male returnees (5%), as well as by returnees with specific needs (4%). The rest was unsure or preferred not to answer. In round 2 of the survey, fewer returnees said that they were welcome, while more were uncertain or preferred not to answer. No other significant variation between survey rounds was observed.

Are there tensions in your community?

Generally, returnees and non-displaced war-affected respondents report fewer tensions in the community than IDPs, with little variation between survey rounds observed.

- 84% of the overall displaced respondents say that there are no tensions in the community in which they live. 12% of displaced respondents report that some level of tension has occurred. IDPs in collective sites report the occurrence of tensions at 18%.
- 93% of returnees report no tensions in the community, while less than 3% report some level of tension occurring at times.
- Among non-displaced respondents, 91% say that there have not been any tensions while 5% report that tensions occur at times.

When and where tensions occur, according to IDPs, these tend to be most commonly for socio-cultural reasons, followed by tensions emerging related to access to housing and services.



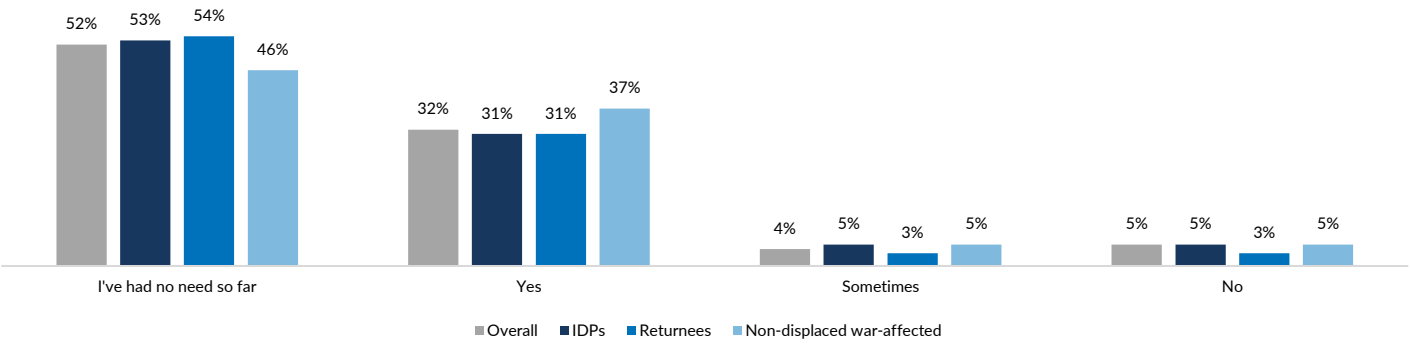
- 8% of key informants confirm that there is some level of tension in their community that affect the relations between IDPs and other residents. Key informants in frontline hromadas report less such tension at 4%. 4% of key informants note that there were specific incidents affecting the social cohesion.
- As reasons for such tensions and for related incidents, key informants mention cultural differences, notably differences in the use of language, and related misunderstandings, reluctance of IDPs to socially interact and integrate in the community, as well as actual or perceived preferential treatment of IDPs, e.g. in the distribution of humanitarian assistance.
- 28% of key informants highlight that there are mechanisms in their hromadas that help mitigate against such tensions. These include mediation, dialogue, communication and the organization of joint events as well as joint initiatives to enhance mutual understanding. Several respondents also said that local authorities, multi-functional teams and psychologists in particular, and IDP Councils play an important role in this regard.
- Overall, reported tensions remain limited, but localized tensions linked to housing, services, assistance and socio-cultural factors require preventive engagement.

Participation in local public affairs & access to justice

32% of respondents can fully **participate in local public affairs** and can raise concerns and ideas with local authorities in their hromada. 9% are not or only sometimes in a position to do so. Others had no need to do so thus far or preferred not to respond. Of those who say they cannot raise concerns or ideas with local authorities, 33% think they are not welcome to do so, while nearly one quarter (24%) do not know how they could raise issues with local authorities.

Non-displaced respondents report a lesser need to engage with local authorities compared to IDPs and returnees, while also reporting more often to be able to do so if they need.

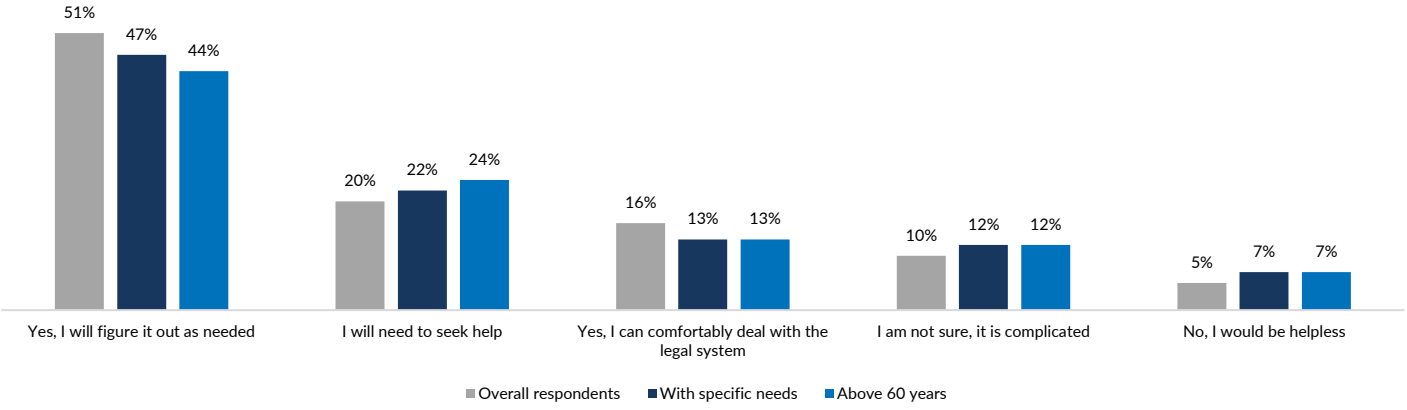
Participation in public affairs (overall)
Are you able to raise concerns/ideas with local authorities?



Overall, 66% of respondents can either comfortably **navigate the justice system** or are confident that they will figure it out if needed. Nearly 20% will need to seek help, while 5% would be helpless and 10% were unsure whether they could navigate the system due to its complexity.

- Both male and female respondents say they would need to seek help to navigate the justice system at 19% and 20% respectively, and 5% each would be helpless.
- Returnees reportedly navigate the justice system most easily at 71% as opposed to 65% among IDPs and non-displaced respondents.
- For respondents above 60 years and with specific needs, the justice system is most complex to navigate, with nearly 24% and 22% respectively saying they would need help. 7% each say they would be helpless if they had to navigate the system.

Ability to navigate the justice system - age and specific needs consideration (overall)



Methodological note

The methodology entails two complementing components – a household (HH) survey and a key informant (KI) survey considering people's and authorities' perspective – that are joined at the analytical stage. In three rounds, conducted in intervals between April 2025 and April 2026, a total of 13,029 HHs were surveyed reflecting a response rate of 88.5%. Of those, 31% of interviews were conducted in Round 1 and Round 2, while the sample was increased in Round 3 to 38% of the total (4,905 interviews) to increase the representativeness of findings for returnees and war-affected groups. The confidence level for all rounds stands at 95%, with margins of error at 1.54% for round 1 and round 2 and 1.4% for round 3. For the overall response, the margin of error stands at 0.86%. The HH-survey was implemented through a combination of phone and face-to-face surveys using a geographically stratified sample for representative findings at country, macro-regional and oblast levels. This included 2,563 face-to-face interviews with respondents in collective sites to enable an analysis specific to their situation making up 17.4% of the overall sample. A hromada-level semi-structured KI-survey complemented the HH-survey and was implemented in 51 hromadas, equally distributed across 5 macro-regions, and prioritized hromadas with high IDP hosting numbers compared to the resident population. Of the total 476 interviews conducted, 36% were conducted in round 1, and 32% each in round 2 and 3 of the survey. In the analysis, commonalities and differences between macro-regions as well as 'frontline' and 'non-frontline' areas were considered as relevant.

Scope

- Geographic scope: The survey was carried out country-wide except areas under temporary occupation or with active hostilities that are either not accessible and/or not suitable for data collection.
- Temporal scope: The survey is a snapshot in time reflecting responses provided at the time of the data collection. Data collection periods were as follows: Round 1 – March/April 2025, Round 2 – August/September 2025, Round 3 – March/April 2026. In Protection Survey 3, cumulative analysis utilizing the data collected throughout the year as well as comparisons between findings of the three rounds are made to indicate trends and patterns.
- Personal scope: Respondents to the HH-survey included primarily IDPs and returnees, as well as non-displaced people that may be otherwise war-affected, while representatives of local authorities and territorial departments and centres for service provision as well as workers in the social sphere at hromada-level contributed to the KI survey. Respondents were above the age of 18 years.
- Material scope: The survey uses a human rights-based analytical framework covering safety and security, including psychological safety, freedom of movement, family unity, housing, land and property rights, access to basic services (education, health), access to basic needs (energy, food, water), access to state social assistance and services, access to employment, digital access and access to financial service providers, social cohesion and integration, as well as certain aspects related to participation in public affairs as well as access to justice.

Limitations

- The geographic scope of the survey is limited and excludes areas under temporary occupation or with active hostilities. This has implications on the type and prevalence of certain risks therefore limiting the analytical findings to profiles within the geographic scope of the survey.
- The sample for the HH-survey largely includes recipients of humanitarian assistance and services, including those living in collective sites. Enumerators are largely employees of humanitarian organizations. This can influence results. In particular, to reduce over-representation of views of IDPs in collective sites, the analysis was weighted.
- The analysis is based on self-reported data by respondents and the veracity of the statements obtained through the HH- and KI-survey is not further verified. As the survey is not designed as a needs assessment and counselling is provided at the outset of the survey, this mitigates against the tailoring of responses to obtaining assistance and services.
- The sample includes a smaller proportion of non-displaced and non-returnee households, i.e. nearly 23% - 8% non-displaced war-affected respondents and almost 15% returnees. The margin of error for these two groups together is higher at 1.81%, and individually 2.25% for returnees and 3.06% for non-displaced war-affected respondents.
- The HH-survey is carried out with respondents above the age of 18 years. Information on the situation of children is obtained through responses of caregivers only. For the purpose of this survey, the term 'children' is used for a person under the age of 18 years.
- The key informant nature of the hromada-level survey does not allow for statistically relevant statements on local capacity but provides relevant qualitative information complementing the HH-level survey.

Round 3 of this survey incorporated learnings from previous surveys. Feedback sessions with enumerators as well as an analytical workshop with contributing partners were held to identify areas of improvements to the methodology, including survey questionnaires, to the sampling strategy, and the data collection process to address shortcomings identified. These changes need to be considered when comparing results of the survey rounds.

The following UNHCR partners and members of the Protection Cluster contributed to this survey and analysis:

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