



# CARE Rapid Gender Analysis: Ukrainian Refugees in Georgia

9 May 2023, final version

## Acknowledgments

The independent evaluation team would like to thank all who contributed to this Gender analysis, the staff of CARE Caucasus offices: Sofia Kamushadze, Lana Ichuaidze and Natia Katsia. This RGA has benefitted from the valuable contributions from CARE International colleagues, especially Zeynep Topalan and Isadora Quay.

We would like to express special thanks to all the stakeholders from Georgia, in particular Government Representatives, International Organizations, Non-Government Organizations and Ukrainian Community who were consulted and interviewed during the study, giving freely of their time and opinions.

The views in this RGA are those of the author alone and do not necessarily represent those of the CARE or its programs, or the Austrian Government/any other partners.

## Funding

The document is developed under the project „Support to Ukrainian Refugees in Georgia”. This project is funded by Nachbar in Not (Neighbor in Need) and is implemented by CARE Caucasus with support from CARE Austria.

Cover page photo by: CARE Caucasus

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## Abbreviations

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CRSV	Conflict-Related Sexual Violence
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CwD	Child with Disability
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEL	Georgian Lari
HH	Household
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
LGBTQIA	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and Agender
KI	Key Informant
KII	Key Informant Interview
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OOP	Out-of-Pocket
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
PwD	Person with Disability
RGA	Rapid Gender Analysis
SCA	State Care Agency
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

## Executive Summary

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Since the launch of the Russian military offensive in Ukraine on 24 February 2022, more than 7.8 million refugees have been forced to flee to neighboring countries, while a further estimated 6.5 million people have been displaced internally within Ukraine. Alongside numerous other nations, Georgia became a shelter for many Ukrainian refugees. As of December 2022, in total 197,435 Ukrainians had entered Georgia, out of which 46% were women and 54% men. The vast majority of Ukrainians (87%) however left the country, with 25,101 still remaining at the end of 2022.

CARE consequently carried out a Rapid Gender Analysis (RGA) for an in-depth assessment of the needs and priorities that community members have across various diversities. The foremost objectives of which were to (1) identify the main needs, concerns, and priorities of different Ukrainian community members; (2) explore the division of gender roles, relationships, and the transformation of power relations; and (3) understand the different coping strategies, opportunities, and aspirations of those Ukrainian community members staying in or transiting through Georgia.

The study was carried out by utilizing a desk review, together with a qualitative and quantitative methodology: (1) the desk study involved an assessment of the literature provided by CARE Caucasus; (2) the qualitative method utilized ten Key Informant Interviews (KII) and ten Focus Group Discussions (FGD); and (3) the quantitative survey included a total of 100 face-to-face interviews with Ukrainian men and women (18+ years old).

### *Key findings:*

- The findings suggest that the composition of gender and age in Ukrainian households significantly affects the pattern of decision-making. Specifically, changes in these patterns are visible in women-headed households and those with dependents (young children, many children, the elderly, etc.), whereas they are absent or less visible in nuclear families.
- The results reveal that the “burden” on decision-making and familial responsibilities increases in female-headed households, and that a lack of childcare support leads to risks or concerns towards adolescent employment.
- The findings illustrate that various services and programs are available to the Ukrainian community in Georgia, including cash transfers, psycho-social support services, in-kind assistance, healthcare, education, gender-based violence (GBV) services, State Care Agency (SCA) services for children with disabilities (CwD), etc. Accommodation assistance is also offered by a small proportion of actors, although it is not fully accessible as it is costly, thus its focus is placed on the most vulnerable groups.
- Psycho-social support services are available, but the severity of economic problems and the lack of information on the available programs (public/NGOs) might limit access to these services.
- In-kind assistance is offered to Ukrainians by non-state actors. However, this assistance does not reflect the needs of Ukrainian men or families with young children. For instance, the addition of sanitary items (razors, foam, etc.) could be helpful for Ukrainian men. While Ukrainian families with new-borns find it difficult to afford supplementary nutrition and are eager to include infant formula within this in-kind assistance.
- Access to healthcare services appears dependent on the status of the individual – those with refugee status have access to services akin to Georgian citizens, while those with visitor status have a limited number of services provided by the government or private hospitals. The absence of international

travel documentation, children's birth certification stamps (for border crossing), the lack of awareness regarding the free services available to Ukrainians, and language barriers are all major obstacles interrupting access to healthcare services. As a result, out-of-pocket (OOP) expenses are significantly higher for the Ukrainian community, and this proves to be a notable burden when obtaining treatment for oncological patients, pregnant women with complications, women with endocrinological problems, disabled patients and their families, and those affected by chronic diseases.

- School and preschool education is available to Ukrainians; however, some individuals cannot access preschool education due to insufficient places (quotas) in kindergartens or tracking a child's vaccinations status. While at the school level, the findings suggest that approximately half of Ukrainian adolescents are continuing education online and only half are registered in Georgian schools. The main barriers for accessing school education appears to be the absence of a Russian or Ukrainian language sector in their location, other language barriers, and access to transportation. The findings also suggest that Ukrainian families are moving from bigger cities to smaller urban and rural settlements, which significantly reduces access to education.
- The study found that education in the Georgian language is only available in Batumi and Tbilisi, where the largest share of Ukrainians are concentrated. Those residing in other locations may have an interest in learning Georgian, although geographically they cannot access the education.
- GBV services are fully available to Ukrainians, irrespective of their legal status or if they have been granted GBV survivor status. However, disclosing GBV is often difficult in the community, because Ukrainian women commonly lack economic independence and do not have accommodation or employment, which makes them prone to withholding GBV experiences and remaining silent. Consequently, cases of SGBV are often underreported within the Ukrainian community.
- SCA services and programs are available to Ukrainians, yet the findings underscore that certain Ukrainian CwD were unable to access the relevant programs due to the absence of refugee status.
- The findings indicate that legal assistance is available. Demand on such assistance is also expected to increase because many Ukrainians wish to discover how to continue staying legally in Georgia, and thus to define the benefits and disadvantages of each possible option (residency permit, leaving the country and re-entering, taking refugee status). Moreover, Ukrainians require legal assistance when registering businesses locally as they often experience numerous obstacles during this process. The absence of a legal address, language barriers, the lack of precise or correct information, and bureaucratic and incorrect procedural responses from the authorities have each been identified as core difficulties in business registration.
- Levels of information are relatively high in the Ukrainian community, nevertheless it is often not saturated, and the majority of Ukrainians still require more information on the services available (medical provisions, accommodation, education, transportation, etc.). Online communication channels – Telegram (80%) and Facebook (63%) – are considered the most effective tools to increase the level of information within the Ukrainian community. An analysis by gender shows that Ukrainian men are generally one of the most vulnerable groups in the community because they are isolated, avoid external interactions, and as their voices are rarely heard. The findings also reveal that men use inner networks, such as volunteer groups or communicating with Ukrainian women, to receive information on assistance programs. This suggest that Ukrainian civil society organizations and volunteer groups are a significant source for expanding the outreach to Ukrainians, particularly men.
- Feedback and complaints mechanisms are available to Ukrainians to assess their satisfaction levels on the programs delivered. The evidence highlights that community members typically issue positive feedback to humanitarian actors, with singular cases of complaints being reported. However, the

language barrier and the fear of losing assistance may cause hesitancy when sharing critical assessments with humanitarian actors. Additionally, the feedback and complaints mechanisms appear, relatively, less accessible to Ukrainian men because they are caught in an information gap.

- The majority of Ukrainian women and men do not participate in community decision-making processes (public meetings, discussions, etc.) in Georgia. Involvement is particularly challenging for women with multiple children due to the absence of at home childcare support.
- The study suggests that Ukrainians in the country positively assess the safety of environment and believe that there are no protection concerns facing Ukrainian men and women, or adolescent girls and boys. However, it also found that 14% of the Ukrainians sampled had heard of individual incidents of GBV against Ukrainian women in Georgia, while 13% believe that the war has increased cases of GBV against women within the Ukrainian community. In addition, details gathered from the KIs expound on the growing amount of SGBV against Ukrainian women, harassment from taxi drivers, and the risks of prostitution (or offering shelter in exchange for intimate relationships).
- The findings indicate that awareness of the GBV response mechanism is extremely low within the Ukrainian community. Awareness is particularly low among Ukrainian men due to their isolation and lack of external communication.
- The study shows that Ukrainian adolescent girls and boys have experienced different levels of treatment from their peers and members of school staff (positive or negative discrimination, harassment, etc.) particularly in Batumi.
- Ukrainians have not experienced notable changes in their prominent needs over the course of the last six months, with their uppermost requirements still being money (62%), access to healthcare services (45%), food (36%), medicine (33%), and accommodation (33%). The other needs revealed within the RGA are documentation, employment and livelihood support, the provision of psychological support services, and access to the available assistance programs. The findings identify that adult Ukrainians aspire to employment or self-employment, while adolescents seek engagement in extracurricular activities (those beyond school), each of which are challenging due to financial and language barriers.
- The majority of Ukrainians have reduced their spending on healthcare (67%), taken credit or borrowed to purchase necessary items (27%), skipped rent payments to meet other needs (14%), moved to less adequate accommodation (12%), applied to as many assistance programs as possible, and attempted to gain employment or earn additional income to manage their most prominent needs. Furthermore, the study discerned that certain Ukrainian groups organize cultural events for community members to maintain their cultural ties and satisfy their psycho-social needs by sharing emotions and speaking in their mother tongue.
- The work of interagency coordination groups is generally assessed positively by the KIs. Some regional organizations are eager to become more involved in coordination mechanisms and to receive further information regarding other actors and their programs.



## Key recommendations

Based on the core findings of the study, a package of recommendations has been elaborated to improve future project designs and to enhance compliance between interventions and the actual requirements of the Ukrainian community in Georgia:

### *For non-governmental organizations:*

- Plan appropriate **prevention and response mechanisms for SGBV** against Ukrainian women and adolescent girls.
- **Raise awareness** among both Ukrainian men and women about SGBV and the available response mechanisms. Moreover, use information which is tailored towards the needs of adolescent girls and boys.
- Create **employment or self-employment opportunities for Ukrainian adults** by improving their employment skills, offering or financing professional courses, and launching small-grant programs for starting businesses in Georgia.
- **Reduce adolescent employment** by strengthening familial and parental employment and self-employment.
- In future employment programs, **consider and address the increased care burden** among women, and consequently factor their needs, time, and availability into these programs.
- **Ensure the inclusion** of both women and men in awareness raising campaigns, information access, and other areas, while also considering the specificities of each gender when accessing information.
- **Provide support for Ukrainian children** by increasing their access to extracurricular activities, thereby changing their daily routines, providing stress relief, and encouraging integration into local communities. Moreover, when planning interventions for children and youths, consider the safety and security of adolescent girls and their specific needs.

### *For donors:*

- **Continue supporting humanitarian actors** working with Ukrainian community members in order to reduce the severity of the issues and challenges that they face.

### *For the Government of Georgia:*

- Increase the geographic coverage of **language education to Ukrainians**. Additionally, it is important that this education be tailored towards the needs of refugees, for instance by **offering online Georgian language classes** to accommodate women with children.
- **Increase access to healthcare services**, including reproductive health, by expanding the free services available, including primary health care services, and by the application of international protection to Ukrainians.



# Introduction

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## Background information

Since the Russian Federation launched a military offensive against Ukraine on 24 February 2022, more than 7.8 million refugees have been forced to flee to neighboring countries, while a further estimated 6.5 million people have been displaced internally within Ukraine.<sup>1</sup> Alongside numerous other nations, Georgia became a shelter for many Ukrainians. Georgia was chosen as a target location by these refugees due to (1) ties with family or friends; (2) being Georgian or mixed ethnicity; and (3) close cultural bonds.<sup>2</sup> Notably, Georgia is one of the only exit routes for Eastern Ukrainians coming from occupied territories, therefore around half of these men and women, adolescent girls and boys, and children have fled from areas in Eastern Ukraine that have been destroyed or that are still under occupation.<sup>3</sup>

As of December 2022, 197,435 Ukrainians had entered Georgia, from which 77,913 (46%) were women and 90,614 (54%) were men. The share of male Ukrainians has slightly increased recently, and they now represent more than half the total number of entries. The statistics reveal that 28,908 of the 197,435 Ukrainians were underage children (up to 18 years old), while the remaining 168,527 individuals were adults, where approximately one tenth of arrivals were over 60 years old. The statistics also suggests that the vast majority (87%) have since left Georgia (172,334 out of 197,435) for more developed countries, with 25,101 remaining in the country.<sup>4</sup>

Under Decree N.387, adopted by the Georgian government in 2022, the original arrivals from Ukraine were accommodated throughout various hotels and hostels across the entire country. At the time, several thousand Ukrainians were granted free accommodation until the end of July-August 2022. It is also notable that since the beginning of the war, the government has provided the Ukrainian community with various services, including access to education for school- and preschool-age children, access to healthcare services, and cash transfers equivalent to those for IDPs from Abkhazia and South Ossetia.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, two public referral mechanisms operate in Georgia – for GBV and child protection. The Law of Georgia On Violence Against Women and/or Elimination of Domestic Violence, Protection and Support of Survivors of Violence<sup>6</sup> establishes grounds for the GBV referral system and it determines the role of various actors. Additionally, governmental Decree N.437 – On Approval of Child Protection Referral Procedures – remains the fundamental document for the protection of children from violence, and that which determines the child referral mechanism in cases of violence.<sup>7</sup> The official state position proposes that these services are available to Ukrainian women and children, irrespective of their legal status.

Besides the state response, other humanitarian actors from international and non-governmental organizations have also been engaged to enhance the current response to the crisis. Significantly, CARE Caucasus has been one of the most prominent actors, alongside several local and international organizations, to have reinforced and strengthened the overall response to the Ukrainian crisis.

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<sup>1</sup> UNHCR Georgia & World Vision Georgia. (2022). *Ukrainian Refugees in Georgia: Profile, Intensions and Needs*.

<sup>2</sup> CARE Caucasus. (2022). *Post Distribution Monitoring, Ukraine Invasion - Supporting Ukrainian Refugees in Georgia*.

<sup>3</sup> UNHCR. (2022). *Ukrainian Refugees in Georgia*.

<sup>4</sup> UNHCR. (2023). *Ukraine Situation in Georgia: Update No27*.

<sup>5</sup> UNHCR. (2022). *Ukrainian Refugees in Georgia*.

<sup>6</sup> <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/download/26422/10/en/pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/3394478?publication=0>

## Objectives of the Rapid Gender Analysis

The main objectives of the Rapid Gender Analysis (RGA) are as follows:

- To explore the main needs, concerns, and priorities of the Ukrainian women and adolescent girls, men and adolescent boys, across different age ranges, who are staying in or transiting through Georgia (including communication channels and access to information, availability of services, protection and security concerns, and economic impacts, among other factors).
- To explore how gender roles, relationships, and power relations have changed, if at all, since escalation of the war.
- To understand the different coping strategies and the aspirations of women, men, boys, and girls across the demographic diversities.

## Methodology

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This Rapid Gender Analysis (RGA) provides information regarding the differing needs, capacities, and coping strategies of women, men, and adolescent boys and girls in a crisis. The RGA was developed progressively: using a range of primary and secondary information to better understand gender roles and relations, and how they may change during a crisis. It moreover provides practical programming and operational recommendations to help meet the distinct needs of all those affected, and to ensure we 'do no harm'. The analysis uses the tools and approaches from the Gender Analysis Framework and adapts them towards tight timeframes, rapidly changing contexts, and insecure environments, those which so often characterize humanitarian interventions.

The analysis was undertaken between January and March 2023. While the study itself utilized desk research, and both qualitative and quantitative survey methodologies. The qualitative survey was carried out with KII and FGD techniques, where:

- **The desk study** reviewed the research, literature, and documents provided by CARE Caucasus.
- **The quantitative survey** was carried out using Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI), with 100 face-to-face interviews with Ukrainians in Georgia (88 women, 12 men).
- **Five individual stories** were covered within the study.
- **Ten KIIs** were employed with various stakeholders engaged in the humanitarian response plan, where the average interview lasted 60 minutes.
- **Ten FGDs** were carried out with Ukrainian women, men, adolescent girls and boys across the largest cities in Georgia – four FGDs with women, three with men, and three with adolescent girls and boys. Eight of the ten were face to-face discussions, while two were organized online. In total, the FGDs involved 33 Ukrainian women, 19 men, and 22 adolescents (15 girls, 7 boys). A detailed description of the composition for each FGD is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Details of the FGDs

Group No.	Target group	Location	Form
Group 1	Ukrainian women (9 participants)	Tbilisi	Face-to-face
Group 2	Ukrainian women (10 participants)	Tbilisi	Face-to-face
Group 3	Ukrainian women (10 participants)	Kutaisi	Face-to-face
Group 4	Ukrainian women (4 participants)	Batumi	Face-to-face
Group 5	Ukrainian men (6 participants)	Tbilisi	Face-to-face
Group 6	Ukrainian men (7 participants)	Mixed	Online
Group 7	Ukrainian men (6 participants)	Mixed	Online
Group 8	Ukrainian adolescent girls (8 participants)	Batumi	Face-to-face
Group 9	Ukrainian adolescent girls (7 participants)	Kutaisi	Face-to-face
Group 10	Ukrainian adolescent boys (10 participants)	Batumi	Face-to-face

Prior to the fieldwork, the research team elaborated guidelines for the KIIs, the FGDs, and the quantitative survey instruments. The final approved versions of the applied study instruments can be found in Annexes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

#### Study limitations

The present research reviewed various forms of diversity in order to compile a segregated analysis of the varying needs of community members. The original study plan and methodology aimed to include diversity among the ages, locations, and vulnerabilities within the sample of interviewees, however it is not representative of every diverse group.

Firstly, **Ukrainian men are underrepresented within the quantitative survey due to the high non-response rate from male community members.** Nevertheless, separate FGDs were thereafter organized with Ukrainian men to reflect their views towards the key research questions and to discern their needs, concerns, and priorities. Additionally, **LGBTQIA+ individuals were not covered or specifically targeted by the RGA**, and other studies may be required to focus on exploring their needs and priorities. Furthermore, **the needs of adolescent girls and boys from Ukraine were only studied within the qualitative survey** and their opinions were not assessed under the quantitative survey.

# Demographic profile

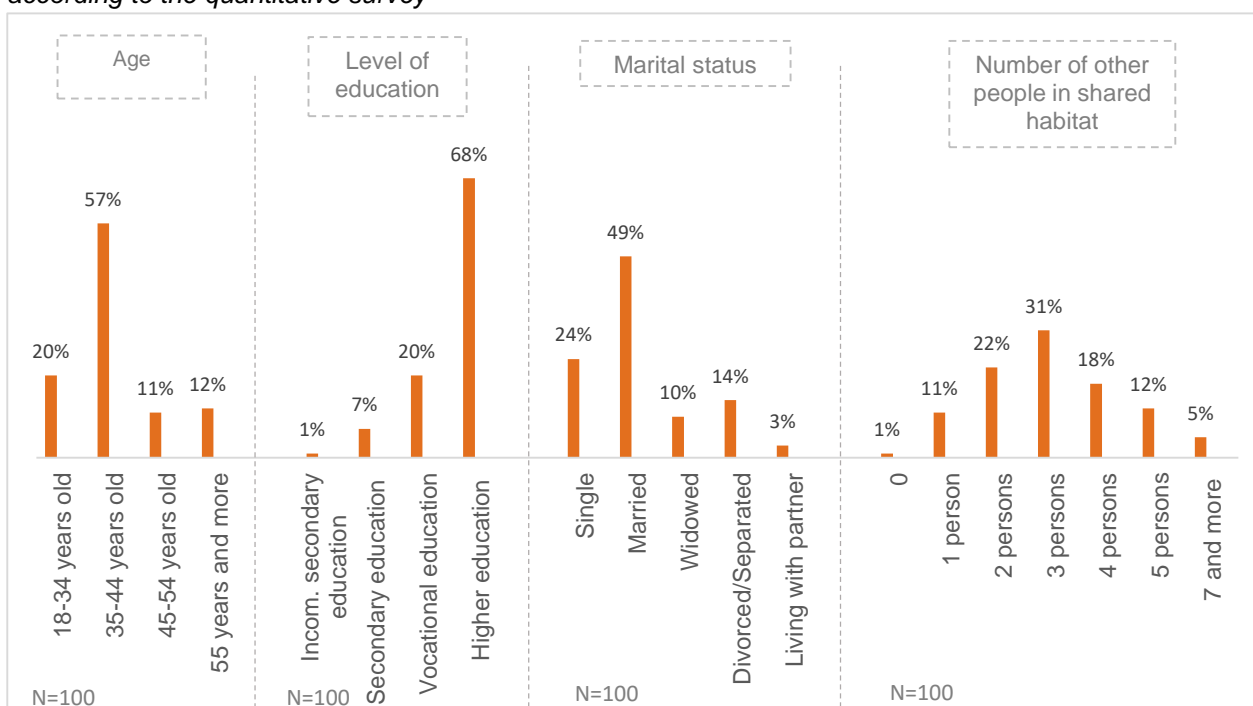
## Description of the sample

The quantitative survey covered 100 Ukrainians in Georgia, those who have entered the country since the onset of the war in Ukraine. The regional distribution of the sampling demonstrates that the majority of the Ukrainians interviewed live in the capital, Tbilisi (59%); a quarter of them (25%) reside in Batumi, Adjara; a tenth (10%) settled in Kutaisi, Imereti; and a minor proportion reported living in Kvemo Kartli, in the city of Rustavi (6%). The majority of respondents are women (88%), while every tenth respondent is a man (12%).

This sample represents various age groups and different demographic characteristics, which enables an assessment of these demographics and necessities from various perspectives. By age, the results suggest that more than half of the respondents (57%) are 35-44 years old, with the share of adult respondents younger than 34 (20%) or older than 44 (23%) being significantly smaller in the overall sampling (see Chart 1). As the results suggest, a pronounced majority of the Ukrainian respondents (88%) have a post-secondary education; including 68% with higher education and 20% with professional or vocational education (see Chart 1). The respondents also have different marital statuses, where around half are married (49%) or living with a partner (3%), a quarter are single (24%), 10% are widowed, and 14% are divorced or separated (see Chart 1).

The survey also gathered information regarding the composition of respondents' households (HH). As indicated, only one female respondent lives alone in Georgia, while the remaining participants have at least one other member in their household. The results further illustrate that 33% of respondents share their abode with one or two individuals, a third (31%) share their space with three others, and 30% reside with four or five other people. The findings also specify that the proportion of respondents within the overall sampling who share a living space with seven or more people is not prominent (5%), however these families do exist and their needs and priorities might well be completely different from any of the other groups (see Chart 1).

Chart 1. The age, level of education attained, marital status, and number of people in an abode, according to the quantitative survey



The quantitative survey also assessed the existence of preschool- and school-age children as well as adults within these households. Namely, the quantitative data identifies that:

- 32 out of the 100 respondents live with preschool-aged children (aged from 0 to 5); a total of 37 pre-schoolers live in these homes (17 girls and 20 boys). By gender, 16 respondents have one preschool-aged boy, and two respondents have two boys in their homes; while 17 respondents have one preschool-aged girl (see Table 2).
- 71 respondents live with at least one school-aged child, with the number ranging from 1 to 6 children. The majority have one or two school-aged children, though five female respondents report to having three or more children in their homes. In total, the respondents share their space with a total of 109 school-aged children – 58 girls and 51 boys (see Table 2).
- 94 respondents share their living space with 171 adults, out of which 117 are women and 60 men (see Table 2).

*Table 2. The number of preschool- and school-aged children and adults in respondent households*

<b>Female - breakdown by age</b>				
	<b><u>Age 0-5</u></b>	<b><u>Age 6-18</u></b>	<b><u>Age 18 and up</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>
<b>Number of persons</b>	17	58	117	192
<b>Male - breakdown by age</b>				
	<b><u>Age 0-5</u></b>	<b><u>Age 6-18</u></b>	<b><u>Age 18 and up</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>
<b>Number of persons</b>	20	51	60	131

According to the statistical information, one female respondent is currently pregnant or breastfeeding. While 14% have at least one HH member with a disability, and 27% have a family member with a chronic condition requiring continuous treatment or medical supervision.

The survey also discerned the time of the respondents' arrival in Georgia and their future plans. Almost all the Ukrainians who were questioned arrived in 2022, and the vast majority do not currently plan to leave Georgia (94%); only 5% state that two or three members of their household have plans to leave the country in the future.

## Findings and analysis

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The study explored the needs, concerns, and priorities of Ukrainian women, men, adolescent girls and boys, and children in Georgia. The survey thus investigated various topics and issues in order to comprehensively reflect on the community's key core needs and priorities. The chapters below provide a summary of the key issues and necessities for Ukrainians living in Georgia in terms of gender roles and responsibilities; access to services and information; feedback and complaints mechanisms; participation and decision-making; the safety and security of the environment; the main requirements and aspirations; the overall capacity and coping mechanisms; and the current state of coordination on the humanitarian response plan.

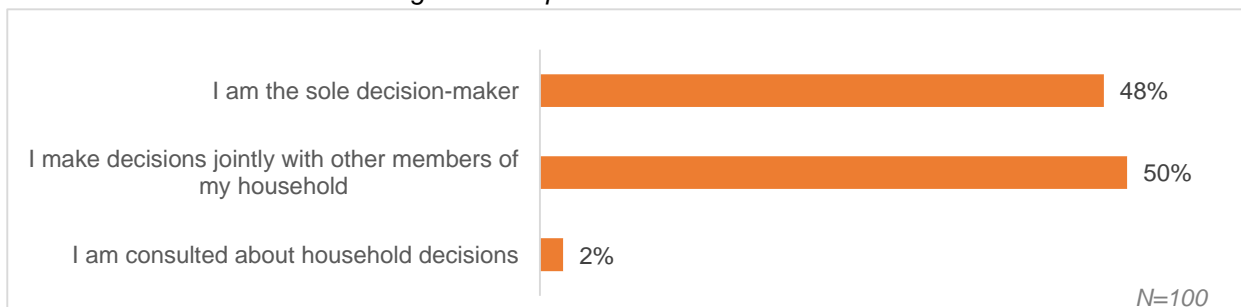
### Gender roles and responsibilities

The qualitative and quantitative surveys analyzed gender roles, the division of responsibilities, and decision-making in Ukrainian families. It also assessed how responsibilities were divided within families prior to the invasion and how the war has affected decision-making and family relations.

#### Decision-making within the household

The qualitative and quantitative surveys reveal interesting insights into the pattern of decision-making within Ukrainian households in Georgia. The findings suggest that **Ukrainian families have different compositions, and the HH structure by gender or age significantly influences the pattern of decision-making within these families**. The FGDs carried out with Ukrainian women and men, and adolescent girls and boys demonstrates that changes in decision-making are visible in separated households, those in which the women arrived alone (with children) while their partners or husbands remained abroad. Whereas, change are absent or less visible in nuclear families, where the adults arrived together. Notably, 48% of the sampled respondents are considered the sole decision-maker in their household, and almost all of them (45 out of 48) are women (see Chart 2). In addition, the statistics reveal that the largest proportion of respondents (55%), including adult men (58%) and women (55%), state that the war has not changed the decision-making powers in their HH, and that they maintain the same roles as beforehand. While more than a third of respondents (39%) report having more or somewhat more influence over decisions made in their households. The results further indicate that the Ukrainian women who arrived alone with their children believe that they shoulder the entire burden of care and decision-making – they care for their families unaided, have to think about income and accommodation, while being in full control is also often emotionally exhausting. The emotional state of women is particularly volatile in separated households with young children, as they require constant support and attention from their parents. Nevertheless, changes in decision-making were not observed in the nuclear families that participated in these FGDs.

*Chart 2. Pattern of decision-making within respondent HHs*



Regarding gender roles and the division of labor in the home, the study showed that the war has changed these roles in some Ukrainian households; for instance, women are now more occupied with household affairs and childcare, whereas their external activities have become more limited due to the objective reality. Ukrainian men also report that they are capable of earning more than their wives, as heavy physical jobs are available in Georgia. Therefore, their roles have been divided so that men are the breadwinners in nuclear families, while women have become more occupied with household chores and childcare. Significantly, the division of gender roles is a novelty for some nuclear families, where women were once employed and engaged in diverse activities in Ukraine.

*“My role in decision-making has changed. As you say, you are a man and a woman here, it cannot be otherwise.... Of course, my elder daughter helps me a lot: she takes her younger siblings to school, when I am at work and brings them from school. She attends online school and helps me a lot too.”*

*Female, 39 years old, Batumi FGD*

*“I have the same situation; my wife takes care of children. Of course, I also participate, but I pay more attention to my work.”*

*Male, 50 years old, Tbilisi FGD*

Nevertheless, some Ukrainian men and women report that they held similar roles in Ukraine and that there is presently no notable change. Significantly, Ukrainian men are seemingly willing to participate in childcare and to support or assist their wives fully, but due to long work hours they simply do not have time left for their families, which is also a concern.

Interestingly, the FGDs carried out with Ukrainian adolescent girls and boys highlight that the war has increased their level of engagement and decision-making in the household. Certain adolescents (aged <16) in the FGDs report that they work full-time, part-time, or seasonally to help their families' subsistence needs. Some have even switched to Ukrainian online education or left schools in Georgia in order to make their educational schedule more adaptable to their employment. Moreover, various adolescent girls report that they support their mothers, care for younger siblings, and complete household chores and other activities more so than in the past. These results are potentially alarming as the employment of individuals younger than 16 is illegal. Furthermore, it is not in compliance with the best interest of children, it significantly affects their quality of life, and it reduces their development opportunities in Georgia (socialization, education, good performance at school, etc.). It is therefore important to reach out to such families and support them so the risks of adolescent employment are minimized, children's rights are fully protected, and to provide a life that serves the best interests of children.

## **Control of resources**

The survey also assesses the possession and control of financial resources among the respondents questioned. The statistical estimates suggest that **the majority of Ukrainian men and women sampled (62%) do not have money which they solely decide how to use, while 33% have financial resources purely for their own usage.** A gender analysis demonstrates that there are no statistically significant differences among the responses of men and women (see Annex 6, Table 2.5). Under these estimates, **a pronounced majority (83%) report that they have control over their family resources.** An analysis by gender reveals that 82% of women consider themselves in control of their resources (72 out of 88), whereas only 16% of their male partners manage the resources. While 11 out of 12 of male participants also state that they are in control of resources, and that in half of these households (6 out of 12) their partners also have access to resources (see Annex 6, Table 2.4).

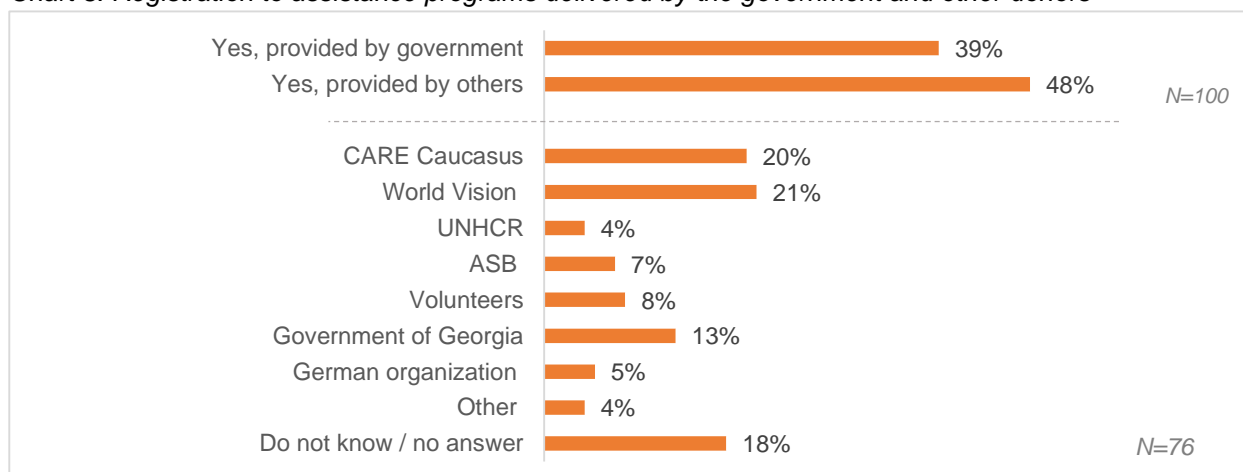
The quantitative survey also measures the possession of phones within the Ukrainian households sampled. It appears that almost all household members possess mobile phones equally and that no particular pattern can be discerned relating to ownership.



## Access to Available Services

The qualitative and quantitative findings all illustrate that various actors provide different forms of assistance to Ukrainians at the central, municipal, and organizational level. The research identifies the available programs and the engagement experiences, and it notes how accessible they are for people from Ukraine. The results reveal that **87% of the adult Ukrainians sampled are currently registered for assistance programs in Georgia**, whether provided by the state, donors, or other actors. **The greatest proportion of respondents are currently registered for assistance programs offered by CARE Caucasus (20%), World Vision (21%), and the Georgian government (13%)** (see Chart 3 below). Notably, these organizations are also identified as the key providers of humanitarian assistance over the last six months (see Annex 6, Table 3.14), which may indicate that they have the highest capacity to provide humanitarian aid to Ukrainians, and that the assistance they provide is urgently required and in compliance with the key necessities, or that their activities have greater visibility resulting in higher engagement rates. Specifically, from the 63 Ukrainians to have received aid in the course of last three months, the majority received **food assistance (78%), cash transfers (72%), and vouchers (61%)** to purchase items for their households (see Annex 6, Table 3.4).

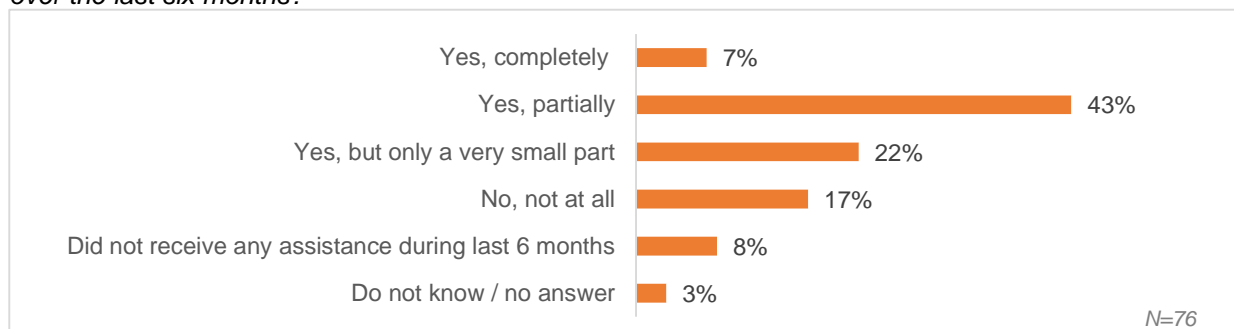
*Chart 3. Registration to assistance programs delivered by the government and other donors*



The study suggests that the **timeliness of this assistance is positively evaluated by Ukrainian women and men**. The statistics show that 56 of the 76 respondents (74%), of those who received humanitarian assistance in the course of the last six months, report that assistance was always provided on time or largely on time, with some negative exceptions (see Annex 6, Table 3.13). In contrast with timeliness, the analysis highlights that **dependency on assistance is significant within the Ukrainian community, and that the food and money provided act as a substantial source of income or a provision of livelihood**. The majority of HHs receive humanitarian assistance (55 out of 100), and it is the primary source of income for 20 respondents and the secondary source for 35 of the participants. In addition, there is notable dependency on the delivery of food products – where 62% received food from humanitarian actor, and it is the primary source of sustenance for 34 and the secondary source for 28 of the respondents (see Annex 6, Tables 10.8, 10.9, 10.10, 10.11, 10.12, & 10.13). As the qualitative study identifies, dependency on assistance is particularly high within female-headed households with minors. Lone mothers with children face difficulties gaining employment and with the lack opportunity to generate additional income, therefore they are economically one of the most vulnerable groups in the Ukrainian community. As a whole, **members of the community unanimously agree that all the efforts have had a positive impact on their lives, however the analysis also underscores that the assistance provided is not fully sufficient for their families and that it does properly cover their basic needs**. The statistics demonstrate that half of the respondents (41 out of 76) note the delivered assistance to be somewhat or completely insufficient, whereas fewer than half (35 out of 76) believe that this aid is either sufficient or somewhat sufficient (see Annex 6, Table 3.12). In addition, both personal and household needs are regarded as met by humanitarian

aid within 38 of 76 HHs (50%), in contrast 30 of these respondents state that the assistance does not cover or only covers a small part of their needs (see Chart 4).

*Chart 4. To what extent have personal and HH needs been met as a result of humanitarian assistance over the last six months?*



Various assistance programs from state agencies, NGOs, international organizations, volunteer groups, and private companies are available to Ukrainians. However, the study revealed that Ukrainians have had different experiences accessing these programs, thus certain barriers and insightful conclusions were consequently discerned.

### **Cash transfers, accommodation, and in-kind assistance**

The qualitative and quantitative results indicate that Ukrainians have access to central and municipal programs offering cash benefits for livelihood, accommodation, or in-kind assistance. Within the sample, a **total of 46 community members received cash transfers** over the course of the last three months. The amount ranged from 200 to 1500 GEL, with a statistical mean of 488 GEL for the men and women surveyed. The organizations each have different durations for assistance delivery, therefore the frequency of transfers varies from 1 to 5, how many times they have received humanitarian assistance. Overall, each of the inquired respondent had received cash transfers, on average, three times over the course of the last three months.

The Georgian government is one of the biggest providers of cash transfers to Ukrainians, and such transfers are identical to the assistance provided to IDPs from Abkhazia and South Ossetia (300 GEL for rent subsidies and 45 GEL for subsistence allowance). According governmental data, a total of 4,881 Ukrainians have received these transfers and more than 3 million GEL was spent on assistance for Ukrainians in 2022. Under the inclusion criteria, monetary transfers have been given to Ukrainians arriving in Georgia since 1 February 2022. Two specific groups are excluded from this assistance: (1) rent subsidy is not offered to Ukrainians with private property in Georgia; and (2) cash transfers are not provided to Ukrainian men aged 18-65 without a family or the status from having a disability. Notably, although cash transfers are available to most Ukrainians, some community members cannot access this program due to these inclusion criteria.

In addition to monetary transfers, Ukrainian families have access to accommodation programs provided by governmental and non-governmental actors. Of the quantitative survey participants only **a small number (16 out of 100) received accommodation funding within the last three months**. The frequency of receiving accommodation funds ranges from 1 to 3 times, and each Ukrainian surveyed, on average, had received an accommodation allowance three times over the last three months. As the majority of Ukrainians live in rented property and accommodation prices are high, this is one of the most requested services in their community. While such assistance is available to Ukrainians, due to high rent and the limited financial capacity of the various donor organizations, these programs are restricted to those considered the most vulnerable (for example families with children).

The survey demonstrates that various types of in-kind assistance are provided to Ukrainian families. For instance, the descriptive statistics underscored that **49 respondents received food assistance** in the course of the last three months. The frequency for such aid ranges from 1 to 90 times and only one respondent reported that they had received food assistance 90 times over the last three months. The statistical analysis shows that each Ukrainian surveyed had received food assistance on average five times in the course of the last three months. Moreover, **39 respondents received vouchers to purchase necessary household items**. The amount of each voucher ranges from 50 to 900 GEL, with the statistical

*“Products are not given in Rustavi... I go to Tbilisi for products... If we were not given products, I do not know what would happen... I have started working at a construction site. The salary is low here. I receive 1200 GEL, and an apartment with utility bills costs me 1600 GEL. All my income goes to rent and food. We eat buckwheat and rice, sometimes we want to eat meat... Volunteers give us soap, but no one gives us shaving foam, aftershave lotion, razors - we need to buy them.”*

*Male, 53 years old, Rustavi FGD*

mean equalling 283 GEL across the respondents. The frequency of receiving voucher varies from 1 to 3 times, and they were received on average once over the last three months. Additionally, **ten respondents received medicine for chronic conditions** over the last three months. The frequency of receiving medical assistance fluctuates from 1 to 12 times, and each respondent had received medicine for chronic patients four times during the last three months. The figures reveal that the referral and use of in-kind assistance is

significant, which implies that demand for this support is high within the community. As the qualitative findings show, in-kind assistance is only available in larger cities, and it is thus inaccessible to Ukrainians in smaller settlements because its delivery requires a physical presence. The study also exposed the need for two particular aspects of additional in-kind assistance; namely, **Ukrainian men think their hygiene items do not include necessary features** (razors, shaving foam, etc.); and families with babies note that their infants require special nutrition, which is costly. Specifically, **diapers are provided to certain families, although it would be helpful if infant formula were also added to this in-kind assistance**. Consequently, it might worth reviewing in-kind assistance packages and making this support more reflective of the needs of various community members.

### **Psycho-social support service**

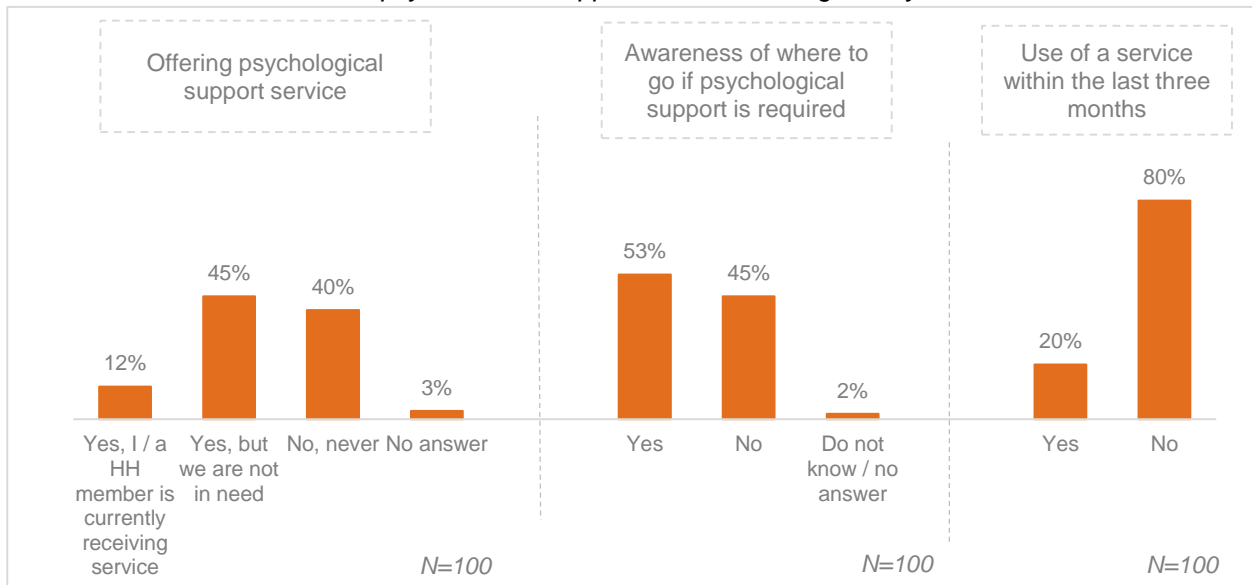
The study shows that psycho-social support services are provided by various organizations to Ukrainians in need – they are also one of the most demanded services because the war and numerous interrelated experiences have caused community members significant physiological trauma, stress, anxiety, PTSD, and other mental health problems. The findings emphasize that the ongoing war has had the strongest impact on **Ukrainian children** and has caused various behavioral disorders; for instance, involuntary behaviors, unexpectedly removing clothes, difficulty speaking, problems with sleep, enuresis, increased anxiety, disruptions to daily routines, etc. The key informants (KIs) report that parents of children are also extremely confused, and often do not know how to react or how to handle these situations. The findings further point out that **Ukrainian men** have doubled their stress levels, although they do not want this to be acknowledged. The FGDs moreover emphasize that some of these men are capable of fighting, yet they are in Georgia, and this has significantly affected their psycho-emotional state. For example, they wonder how they could return to Ukraine or how their country would receive them.

The qualitative findings further show that **female-headed and single parent households** are particularly vulnerable to stress and anxiety. In these cases, a single person has to fulfill the roles of both mother and father for their children, take care of household chores, and think about earning additional income. The KIs also suggest that the ongoing war is significantly affecting **young people**, adolescent girls and boys, as they are losing the most productive years of their lives and this causes further concern. Some informants believe that the war has particularly affected **Eastern Ukrainians**, those who entered Georgia directly through the Russian Federation or from filtration camps. The KIs report that stress and anxiety levels are

particularly high among this group, and that many of whom have severe PTSD due to the violence, war, and psychologically damaging experiences they have undergone – such issues which require rehabilitation and specialized support.

Considering community needs and necessities, the quantitative survey gathered information on the awareness and use of psycho-social support services. More than half of the sampled Ukrainian respondents (53%) are aware of where to go if psychological support is required for themselves or HH members (see Chart 5). In addition, 20% have used psycho-social support services within the past three months, 12% are currently receiving treatment, and 45% were offered psychological support services, although it was not required (see Chart 5 below).

Chart 5. Awareness and use of psycho-social support services among surveyed Ukrainians



The survey findings indicate that psycho-social support services are accessible to Ukrainians living across Georgia, as organizations provide community members with both face-to-face and online consultations. However, some individuals in need of psycho-social support may not access these programs due to the lack of awareness about their availability. In addition, as Ukrainian households are economically vulnerable and struggling to survive on a daily basis, they seem to be focused on satisfying their primary needs, like accommodation, food, income, etc., and thus may not be able to think about psycho-social necessities. Therefore, the severity of economic problems and the lack of awareness on available psycho-social support programs could limit Ukrainian access to these services.

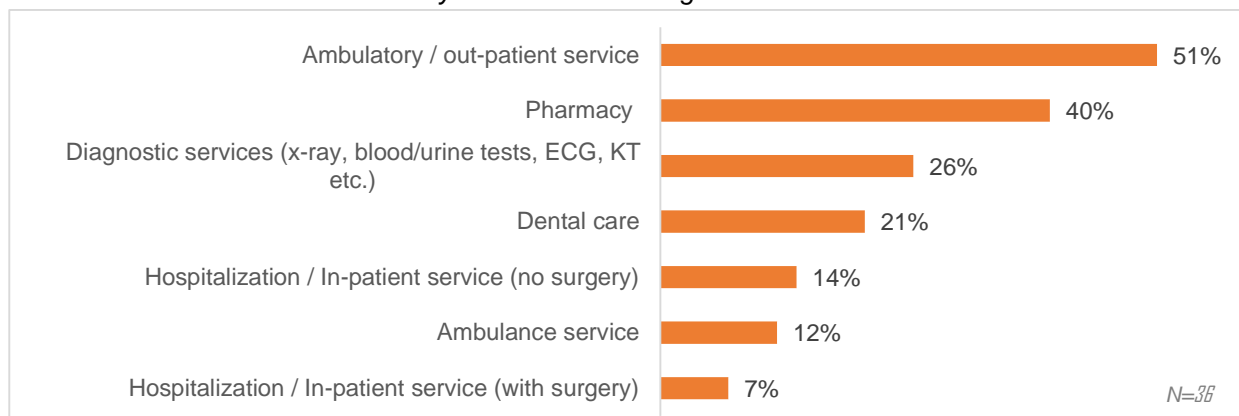
### Healthcare service

The qualitative survey discerns that access to healthcare represents one of the most prominent challenges that Ukrainians face. The major findings identify that **access to healthcare services is strongly connected to the legal status of Ukrainians on arrival in Georgia**. Those people with refugee or international protection status have access to healthcare services at a level akin to Georgian citizens, while Ukrainians with visitor status only benefit from private hospital discounts or those services offered free of charge by governmental decree (Decree N.1215).<sup>8</sup> Ultimately, the findings emphasize that the **absence of humanitarian statuses significantly affects the accessibility of healthcare programs; where those Ukrainians with refugee status have access to a more comprehensive healthcare package in Georgia**.

<sup>8</sup> UNHCR. (2022). *Ukrainian Refugees in Georgia*.

As the quantitative data shows, a total 50 of 76 respondents were sick or in need of medical assistance within the last 30 days. From these individuals, 14 out of the 50 did not apply for any healthcare services for a variety of reasons; including five respondents that state they cannot afford medical services, while the remaining nine considered the illness mild and able to be managed at home. Interestingly, there is a contrast between the qualitative and quantitative findings at this stage. Namely, the quantitative results imply that it is **easy or somewhat easy for almost all respondents to access healthcare programs** (see Annex 6, Tables 5.5, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, & 5.10). Whereas the qualitative survey elucidates the particular obstacles limiting access to the existing medical services. In regard to private hospitals, certain clinics provide medical services free of charge or at preferential price, however companies frequently change their service provisions and it becomes difficult to obtain advance information on whether previous offers are still in force. Concerning the medical services offered under the governmental decree, the findings suggest that the services listed may not fully comply with the real needs of the Ukrainian community; as it predominantly covers inpatients, while the demand is much greater for outpatient services. As Chart 6 illustrates, the most significant share of patients are referred to outpatient care (51%) and pharmacies (40%), while referrals to outpatient services are markedly lower.

*Chart 6. Medical services received by Ukrainians in Georgia*



The KIs also report that **there is incompatibility between the regulations, which ultimately restricts Ukrainian access to a limited number of available healthcare services**. The state program is presently available for Ukrainians who arrived in Georgia before 15 November 2022 and have not crossed any Georgian borders since that stage. Yet, according to the informants, Georgian legislation requires **Ukrainians entering with their own cars to cross the border every three months, which make them ineligible for the state healthcare program**. Besides car owners, some Ukrainians also cross the Georgian border for personal reasons, thus this restriction is very problematic.

Alongside program and status specific findings, the qualitative survey additionally explored the general obstacles obscuring Ukrainian's access to healthcare services. As identified by the female FGDs, **an absence of international travel documentation (passports) was found to be a challenge when receiving free healthcare services**. According to the discussants, certain Ukrainians have entered Georgia without a passport, while others have applied for international protection, and do not have international documentation, and thus are taken by the migration department. The respondents suggest that some hospitals only accept passports, and if one cannot be provided, they request out-of-pocket payments to cover healthcare. Regarding documentation, some respondents mention that **underage children have not been able to receive inpatient medical services on time due to the absence of stamps on their documentation (birth certification) confirming a border crossing**. These participants report that stamps are usually placed within a passport, but if a child crossed a border using a birth certificate, a stamp is often not given. Nevertheless, hospitals refuse to place children within inpatient care without proper documentation. Moreover, the qualitative findings identify that **certain state facilities are hardly aware of the services offered free of charge to Ukrainians and that some facilities request**

**out-of-pocket payments for services that should be free.** Additionally, both the FGDs and KIs report that **at times Ukrainians pay higher prices for healthcare services than Georgians:** “*some hospitals charge foreigners more compared to the local population.*”

Due to the inaccessibility of comprehensive healthcare packages, the absence of health insurance, and the aforementioned obstacles accessing the limited number of available services, **OOP payments are particularly high for the Ukrainians surveyed.** Of those who applied for healthcare services, 27 out of 36 (75%) paid out-of-pocket for their medical expenses, while just eight individuals state that they received a full or part reimbursement (see Annex 6, Table 5.14).

The study revealed that certain community members are particularly affected by these barriers and are in immediate need of medical support. Specifically, (1) **access to healthcare services is a particularly notable challenge for oncological patients**, as they require extensive and expensive treatments, which not always available to them; (2) **pregnant Ukrainians can utilize the state program, however some women require additional examinations that are not covered and thus require OOP**; (3) **women with endocrinological problem particularly struggle to receive healthcare services**, as hormonal tests are costly and they are not covered by the existing programs – as they are is not considered to be life-threatening, some women also avoid treatment and examination; and (4) the respondents state that some **families with members affected by chronic diseases or disabilities are not also capable of receiving healthcare services as none of the relevant services are free.**

### Education service

The qualitative and quantitative surveys highlight that education services are available to Ukrainians in Georgia. According to the major findings, school and preschool education is accessible and Ukrainians can register their children in schools and kindergartens (under the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, amendment of Order N39/N, simplified access to education was provided to all Ukrainian children),<sup>9</sup> while municipalities have also granted Ukrainians free access to kindergartens. The findings however suggest that **although Ukrainians are able to register their children in kindergartens, they experience some difficulties with access due to quotas and insufficient places, the absence of form 11, or information about a child’s vaccination status.** It is also noted that Ukrainian children can only access Georgian-language kindergartens, thus these children lack the opportunity to speak in their mother tongue. Certain key informants believe that the introduction of Ukrainian language into kindergartens would additionally be helpful for children to satisfy their psycho-social needs during the daytime.

In terms of schooling, the qualitative survey reveals four different engagement patterns among Ukrainians: (1) some Ukrainian children attend Russian or Ukrainian schools in Georgia; (2) certain children attend Georgian schools; (3) a number of children attend both Georgian and Ukrainian online schools; and (4) some attend online schools in Ukraine, as they either do not know Georgian or as Russian and Ukrainian schooling is unavailable in their location. The accessibility of education services was also measured by the quantitative survey and in the desk study. According to the desk and qualitative study, as of December 2022, 6,400 Ukrainian children remain in Georgia (from an original 28,908 entrants), and 64% of whom are school-aged (4,169 out of 6,400), while 2,231 are preschool-aged (from 0 to 5).<sup>10</sup> The KIs believe that 50% of Ukrainian school-aged children are enrolled in local schools, while the others continue an online education provided by the Ukrainian government.

Within the survey conducted, 75 of the 100 respondents state that at least one HH member is presently studying within the educational system. The statistics suggest that 130 people are engaged in educational processes from 75 families; of which 25 children go to kindergarten, 96 children to school, 8 adults are in

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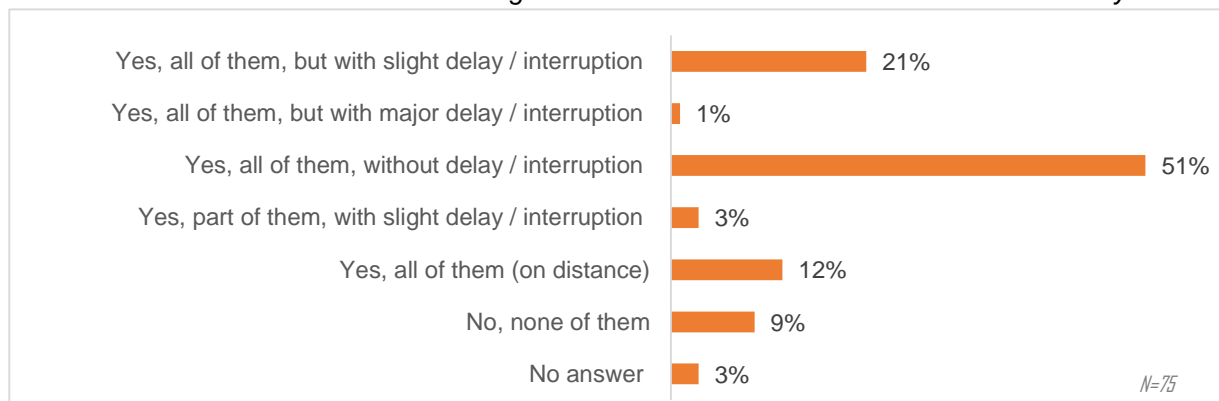
<sup>9</sup> UNHCR. (2022). *Ukrainian Refugees in Georgia*.

<sup>10</sup> UNHCR. (2023). *Ukraine Situation in Georgia: Update No27*.



university, and 1 adult is a post-graduate. **Approximately half of the respondents state that those in the education system have continued receiving instruction without interruption and delay (51%),** while 21% state that they have continued, although with slight interruption or delay (see Chart 7). Only seven respondents state that their HH members have not maintained their education in Georgia due to the language barrier, the position of teachers, or the distances between schools and homes.

*Chart 7. Continuance of education in Georgia for those who were in the Ukrainian education system*



Based on the overall findings, **preschool and school education are both available to Ukrainians, although they are not always accessible, largely due to the language barrier, the absence of a nearby Russian or Ukrainian sector, the lack of information, or because of an intention not to continue education in Georgia.** Notably, some families have relocated from larger cities to smaller urban or rural settlements due to high rent prices, however this reduced their access to education services. Specific barriers are also experienced in those female-headed households with many children – **mothers with multiple children, who lack childcare support, find it difficult to take children of different ages to Georgian educational facilities and to handle the situation alone.** The condition of mothers ultimately impacts a child’s access to schooling in Georgia. In addition, as noted in the chapters above, adolescent employment, which is incompatible with the best interest of a child, and extreme economic hardships in certain households also affect children’s access to education.

Alongside the needs of these children, the KIs indicate that **teachers working in the Ukrainian sector have particular needs and require support; they are also often traumatized, underqualified, and do not know how to respond to particular cases in their schools.** The respondents recalled a particular case in which pupils had a severe reaction to a ringing school bell – they covered their ears, bent over, and laid on the floor. In such circumstances, teachers do not know how to react, and they themselves can also become a traumatic trigger for such behavior. Due to these factors, some KIs think that greater focus should be placed on empowering teachers.

### **GBV services**

The study additionally analyzes access to GBV services for Ukrainian survivors of violence. The main findings of the qualitative survey indicate that the **state has an obligation to respond to GBV cases, irrespective of legal statuses, and to offer the applicable services to victims. If a person is granted survivor status, they are automatically engaged in the public referral system and gain access to all the available services and programs.** Nevertheless, despite its availability, there are factors that limit access to GBV programs and services for the Ukrainians community – particularly for women. Significantly, the UNHCR carried out a comprehensive analysis to assess the accessibility of GBV services for female refugees and the prominent barriers that they experience in Georgia. This study suggests that **many women feel that processes like domestic violence reporting, asylum applications, and court proceedings are not tailored towards their unique needs as refugees.** These processes can be confusing, insufficient, and sometimes even hostile. The agencies involved in providing GBV services have



a tendency to pass responsibility to other organizations, thereby leaving survivors in uncertain situations. **Another obstacle for female refugees in Georgia relates to culture and discrimination.** Both their own cultural attitudes as well as the attitudes of locals can act as a barrier when reporting GBV cases or accessing the necessary resources. Where negative stereotypes and a sense of stigma can often lead to frustration or even unsafe environments. **The third group of obstacles relates to the lack of economic independence for refugees in Georgia.** The desk study suggests that many refugee women struggle to find viable employment, often due to the language barrier, negative social attitudes, and other issues. Therefore, women struggle to become financially independent, which can cause further dependency on their male perpetrators.<sup>11</sup> The RGA findings confirm that GBV cases can be underreported in the Ukrainian community because these women are not economically independent (with no income or affordable housing), thus potentially making them financially reliant on their perpetrators. In actuality, the informants noted that they and many other Ukrainian women had been offered free accommodation in exchange for intimate relationships, and some were forced to take such propositions, which placed them directly in a disadvantaged situation with a high risk of violence and exploitation.

Interestingly, **although the public GBV referral works well and Ukrainians can receive assistance, if they refer cases to the police or other organizations, their extreme vulnerability may cause hesitancy to expose their experiences or to separate from their perpetrators.** While they may initially be provided with shelter, this service is temporary and once it has ended, some women may be forced to return to their partners. The key informants also highlight similar cases, where some recall that community members talked about their GBV experiences, called the police, engaged women in the public referral system, and started receiving services and support – however, these women did not issue restraining orders and later voluntarily returned to the perpetrators. As one respondent evaluates herself, their vulnerability and the need for protection motivates them to make these decisions. It is also worth mentioning that in addition to the underlying psychological and subconscious aspects of seeking protection, such behavior can be motivated by a lack of independence, income, employment, and of long-term housing, alongside a general sense of insecurity or instability in their lives. Consequently, **although these services are available and accessible to Ukrainian GBV survivors, there are still both direct and indirect (psychological and economic) factors that influence engagement in these programs.**

### **Services for children with disabilities**

The system of referral is also used to place CwD and PwDs in the relevant services and programs provided by state care agencies and by municipalities. The evidence shows that **certain Ukrainian children with disabilities could access the relevant rehabilitation services in Georgia, while some found access difficult or impossible because of the absence of refugee status.** Thus, the findings suggest that Ukrainian children with refugee status may have better access to the programs tailored to their needs.

For CwD and PwDs, service provision begins with an assessment to determine an individual's developmental phase and the status of their disability. **Some specialists carefully approach the assessment of Ukrainian children and question which tools the assessment commission should utilize – Georgian or Ukrainian adapted tools,** because such tools derive from a local socio-cultural context. The cultural differences between Georgians and Ukrainians are particularly notable, and the assessment of children with Georgian adapted tools might bring about one set of result regarding developmental phases – whereas Ukrainian tools could illustrate quite another picture. This occurs because some patterns of behavior are acceptable for Ukrainian children at a particular age, which are not considered typical in Georgia and thus assessed differently, considering the local context. This subject is of great important as incorrectly conducted assessments may be applied regarding the status of a disability for those who retain a developmental phase, and the correct status may not applied on time to individuals

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<sup>11</sup> Arghanasvili, A. (2023). *Assessment on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) among UNHCR persons of concern – asylum-seekers, refugees, humanitarian status holders and stateless persons.* UNHCR Georgia.

in great need. This is incompatible with the best interest of disabled children under any circumstance, and this issue needs to be resolved so that every child is correctly assessed and that they receive the necessary services on time. Based on these findings, it is recommended to inform specialists about the Ukrainian assessment tools, the permitted intervention approaches, the cultural context, the accepted norms, and a more holistically approach towards Ukrainian children with some form of delayed development, and thus the assistance required from local service providers.

### **Legal services**

The survey underscores that legal services and assistance from governmental agencies and NGOs is available to Ukrainians. It appears that demand for legal services has decreased over the last six months, whereas requests for other services have risen – namely, referrals for family disputes, difficulties associated with business registry, and accessing healthcare services have recently increased, while those for complications associated with opening bank accounts have significantly reduced (as some commercial banks allow the use of Ukrainian documentation and others have managed to access passports from the Ukrainian embassy).

The problem of business registry was accentuated by adult Ukrainian men. **The absence of a legal address in Georgia, the language barrier, the lack of precise information, administrative barriers, and bureaucracy are all still significant problems hindering business registry for Ukrainians.** As the men participating in the FGDs often do not have a legal address in Georgia, this limits their opportunities to register businesses. They also lack information regarding the type of documentation required, where to register companies, and the process is considered too bureaucratic, all of which is intensified by the language barrier. Often they also do not receive clear guidelines during this process and at have even received incorrect, counterproductive information. In addition, some KIs note that the authorities have made incorrect procedural responses, thus confusing those individuals hoping to create a business, and making it difficult to receive the required services. Based on the overall findings, it is important to raise awareness of how and where Ukrainians can register their businesses in Georgia, what information they require (original/translated/notarized), and what procedures they have to follow.

### **Georgian language courses**

According to the survey, the language barrier is one of the most prominent issues facing Ukrainian community members in Georgia, as it ultimately affects their access to services and the realization of various opportunities. Georgian language courses are not fully available and are only accessible in Tbilisi and Batumi. Moreover, the UNHCR evaluated the language education in Georgia, and defined that these courses offered solid academic programs, but they are not necessarily adjusted to the needs of refugees. According to one respondent: *“the level of education is not necessarily considered. Refugees represent different groups, the dynamics are different... Courses were tailored to the needs of minorities in Georgia, but not refugees as such.”* Nevertheless, it appears that the relevant recommendations have already been issued to the respective language centers, and it is simply a matter of time to discover the results.

The survey highlights that Ukrainians are concentrated in larger cities, but a significant share of the community also live in relatively small rural and urban areas, and that that these numbers are anticipated to increase over time. However, they often cannot access language education from these locations, and at times have to spend money on hiring private tutors. In addition, certain mothers with young children find it difficult to leave their homes because they lack childcare support for when they are absent. Therefore, not only the content but the form of language delivery may need to be adapted to the needs of the Ukrainian community – including those in rural and remote areas, single mothers, mothers with many children, and so on.

## Access to information

The qualitative and quantitative surveys provide insight into the accessibility of information among the Ukrainian population in Georgia. As the statistics reveal, the vast majority of the Ukrainians sampled (94%) have had access to sufficient or somewhat sufficient information since the onset of the war. They typically attempt to use various channels (information sessions, community group facilitators, the reception desk at Larsi border, websites, bilingual or trilingual leaflets, brochures and materials, etc.) for outreach and receiving information about the available assistance programs. Despite these diverse communication tools, **the quantitative and desk study demonstrate that although the level of information has improved within the Ukrainian community, it is not saturated enough for community members to be sufficiently informed about the most relevant issues.** According to a needs **assessment carried out by CARE in March 2022**, the vast majority of Ukrainians (94%) were in an informational gap, and required further information on various subjects, including accommodation and housing in Georgia (74%), schools and kindergartens (71%), and traveling and transportation options (65%).<sup>12</sup> Comparatively, the level of information has since risen, yet a notable proportion of the men and women questioned here are still eager to receive more information about access to medical services, education, accommodation and housing, and transportation options, while a significantly smaller number believe they already have sufficient information on these subjects (see Table 3).

*Table 3. Assessment of information levels regarding the available services*

Service	I would like to receive more information	I am sufficiently informed	Not required / interesting for me/my family
Access to medical services in Georgia	87 (87%)	13 (13%)	-
Access to school / kindergartens	41 (41%)	36 (36%)	23 (23%)
Accommodation / housing in Georgia	72 (72%)	24 (24%)	4 (4%)
Travel / transportation options in Georgia	49 (49%)	48 (48%)	3 (3%)
Vaccination and COVID-19 preventative measures	42 (42%)	32 (32%)	26 (26%)

Interestingly, although Ukrainians are a relatively well-informed refugee community in Georgia, the findings show that **access to information still presents one of the biggest challenges for Ukrainian men and women.** Equally, several Ukrainian NGOs report that 80% of their caseload refers to requesting information about assistance packages that Ukrainians can utilize. Notably, the study also emphasizes the factors influencing information accessibility among the Ukrainian community. Specifically, the existing communication channels are dispersed, and community members are not given critical information on the available services or programs on arrival in Georgia. As a result, they find navigating this difficult – requiring numerous in-person meetings and phone calls with various organizations simply to comprehend what they are qualified for. It worth noting that the Internally Displaced Persons, Ecomigrants and Livelihood Agency has a reception hub at the Larsi border, however their role is not proactive, and they do not inform every Ukrainian crossing the Georgian border about the assistance programs available.

In addition to the factors reported by KIs, a holistic analysis of the situation reveals other factors that significantly influence the levels of information within the Ukrainian community. Namely, Ukrainians are a highly mobile community – some frequently change their location within Georgia or leave and return without advance notice, correspondingly they may frequently change phone number, which makes it difficult for organizations to engage with them or maintain consistent communications. In addition, Ukrainians are heavily concentrated in the larger cities, but a significant share of population live in smaller cities and settlements, the emerging information thus underscores that this community is fairly scattered – thereby outreach, engagement, and offering information on the available assistance programs becomes

<sup>12</sup> CARE Caucasus. (2022). *Rapid Needs Assessment Report*.

problematic. Although outreach is often difficult, it is particularly hard to maintain direct contact with Ukrainian men aged 18-65, as they avoid most forms of contact outside their community, often attempt to be as discrete as possible, or they communicate via Ukrainian women.

The surveys indicate that Ukrainians use various communication tools to receive service-related information. **Online communication channels are heavily favoured and Ukrainians seemingly feel comfortable using them after arrival in Georgia.** The estimates denote that **Telegram (80%) and Facebook (63%) are the most preferred and trusted sources of information on a variety of topics** (see Annex 6, Table 7.3). The KIs underline that such online communication tools are the most effective ways to reach Ukrainians, they do however also contain the risk of spreading potentially counter effective and false information. As Ukrainian men are underrepresented in the survey, it becomes impossible to make gender specific conclusions about their preferred information sources based on the statistical estimates. However, this shortcoming is compensated by the separate FGDs with Ukrainian adult men. This analysis highlights that **Ukrainian men rely on internal networks and volunteer groups in order to receive information about the existing services and programs in Georgia.** As previously noted, **they also avoid direct communication, and external interactions are typically carried out via Ukrainian women.** Consequently, Ukrainian men may at times have limited awareness about the existing assistance programs and coping mechanisms, and they can feel restrained when requesting help. On the whole, the findings identify that

*“Ukrainians mostly communicate with one another, and at some point they find it challenging to know which services they can receive... When we arrive in Georgia, we realize that it is pretty difficult to receive information, particularly, about legal issues that relate to the Embassy. We are not always successful in communicating with the Embassy.”*

*Female, KI*

various communication channels are employed to increase the level of information Ukrainians have about available services, and that the vast majority have had access to information since the onset of the war in Ukraine. The largest share however still does not have sufficient information regarding assistance programs and they remain eager to discover more. This indicates the need for continuous communications with the Ukrainian community, with further notification about the accessible services and programs. It is equally important for any communication strategy to reflect gender and age differences, and to ensure that Ukrainian men and women are equally informed about such assistance.

## Feedback and complaints mechanisms

One significant goal behind the survey was to assess the presence of the feedback and complaints mechanisms among provider organizations and to evaluate their accessibility. Details from the key informant interviews suggest that **some organizations have feedback and complaints mechanisms, although seemingly other do not have a specific mechanism, rather they receive information about community members' satisfaction during face-to-face or remote communications with community members.** Organizations use written and verbal communications, phone calls, surveys, hotlines, reception hours, and complaints boxes to receive feedback and to assess the satisfaction of community members. Certain organizations also have community group facilitators to provide feedback on existing assistance programs. In general, the KIs believe that if people are eager to share feedback with a provider organization, they have both the right and the opportunity to do so.

The KIs state that organizations frequently receive positive feedback from community members. Regarding complaints, the international NGOs queried have not yet received any grievances from Ukrainians, although some administrative bodies have received complaints after community members were refused assistance. The findings reveal that if an applicant meets the eligibility criteria, their grievance is resolved and they engage in a program, but if they are refused on the ground of ineligibility, they are subsequently informed.

Overall, such mechanisms are in place, and Ukrainians employ them for both positive feedback and to file complaints when required. However, the findings imply that **feedback and complaints mechanisms are**

*"To be honest, some issues bother me so much and I do not know to whom to apply... I do not really understand how these organizations distribute cash transfers and what eligibility criteria they have... Who receives assistance? Why do others not deserve it? I registered for many programs, but only CARE Caucasus helped me... Maybe, I do not receive assistance because of my humanitarian status? I do not get it at all."*

*Female, 21 years old, Batumi FGD*

**not always accessible due to the language barrier.** The discourses highlighted that administrative bodies receive complaints and then issue responses in Georgian. Therefore, Ukrainians require various arrangements to file a complaint and to understand the response given by state authorities. Besides the language barrier, Ukrainians may also have internal restraints, alongside the fear of losing their current assistance, thus they may be hesitant to file complaints or ask critical questions of an

organization. While organizations have an open-door policy and are willing to hear critical assessments to improve program designs, some community members avoid sharing negative assessments and feedback about the available programs, nor do they ask many questions in this regard. Ukrainian men, relatively, have less access to feedback and complaints mechanisms in comparison to women, as they have less information and often avoid direct contact outside their community.

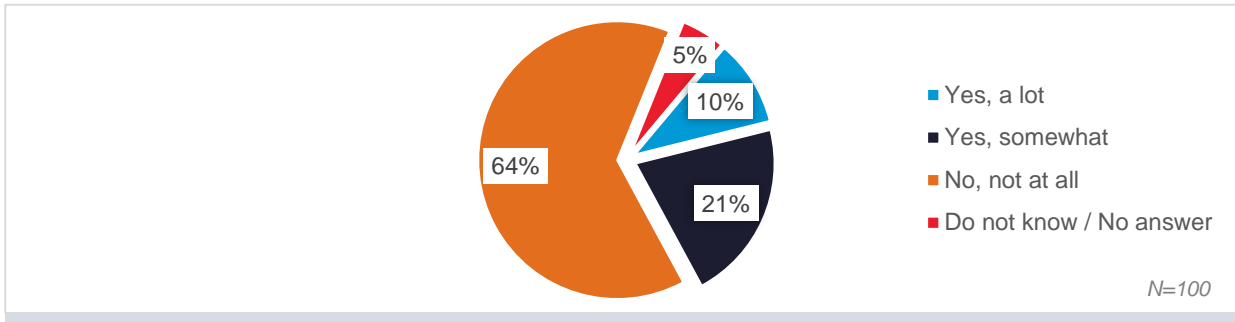
Notably, organizations receive feedback about levels of satisfaction in order to improve their project designs. However, **it is also important for Ukrainians to receive feedback from organizations defining reasons for refusal in unsuccessful applications.** This feedback vector needs improvement because some community members do not receive a response from INGOs and thus they do not understand why their applications have been rejected or how humanitarian aid is distributed. It is important for community members not to feel neglected by INGOs, therefore the delivery of appropriate feedback regarding refusals may ultimately increase their satisfaction level and could help mobilization.

## Participation

The qualitative and quantitative surveys assess Ukrainian participation in decision-making and in their community as part of the humanitarian response plan. It is worth mentioning that a significant share of the KIs struggled to assess Ukrainian participation in decision-making, while those who did discuss the subject developed two unique discourses on the matter. The first discourse emphasizes that **Ukrainians, particularly women, are involved in decision-making**, where providers use feedback mechanisms (information sessions, verbal and written communications, surveys, community group facilitators, etc.) to allow for compliance between the assistance and actual needs. The KIs report that some women are particularly active during these meetings and fully communicate their requirements with the provider organizations. Engagement in this type of participatory mechanism is however avoided by Ukrainian men. While under the second discourse, **certain Ukrainians are engaged in decision-making and some volunteer groups have been established, yet they cooperate with individual organizations, while Ukrainian NGOs and volunteer groups are less engaged in decision-making and coordination.** Supporters of this assumption consider these interactions to be confined to consultations, and consequently community members do not have any notable impact in decision-making processes.

There is an interesting contrast between the assessments of INGOs and the Ukrainians themselves. As the quantitative results suggest, the majority of respondents (64%) do not participate at all in community decision-making in Georgia (see Chart 8). Interestingly, Ukrainian women with children report that they are bound to their homes and have limited external activities (employment, civic activism, participation in decision-making, etc.) due to an absence of childcare support.

Chart 8. Participation in community decision-making in Georgia



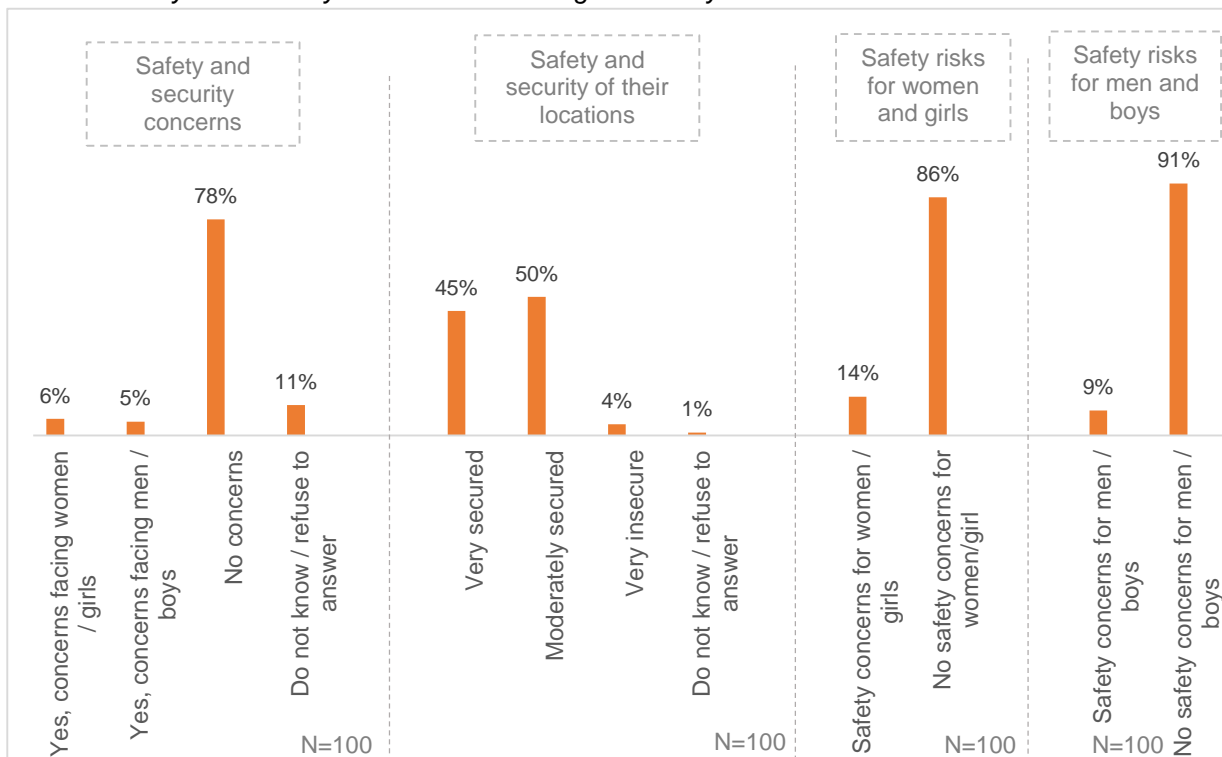
Altogether, the survey indicates that INGOs have mechanisms to ensure Ukrainian participation in decision-making; however, Ukrainian men and women are often not actively engaged for personal and individual reasons, those which differ for each group. Additionally, Ukrainian volunteer groups and CSOs are often the basis for greater participation. Specifically, they maintain outreach with the Ukrainian community, particularly with men, whose consolidation would help broaden the engagement level within the existing participatory mechanisms.

## Protection

The survey also separately assesses protection concerns and risks for Ukrainian women and adolescent girls as well as men and adolescent boys, during which interesting insights were revealed. The qualitative and quantitative results reveal that the majority of the sampled Ukrainians positively assess the environment in Georgia in terms of safety and security. **A notable majority (78%) believe there are no safety or security concerns facing Ukrainian adults or adolescents in their community in Georgia. Moreover, most individuals (63%) think that other families living in their area have no safety issues, and the vast majority (95%) positively assess safety and feel secure in their own location** (see Chart 9). By gender, a total of four respondents suggest that they feel particularly insecure in their current location, of which three are women. Although the Ukrainians participating in the FGDs explain that they feel safe and are not afraid to go outside, because they typically meet positive attitudes towards people from Ukraine rather than anything negative or discriminatory.

Besides the overall assessment, it is notable that the respondents separately evaluated the protection concerns of Ukrainian men or boys and women and adolescent girls. The qualitative and quantitative survey results show that **the majority find no specific safety or security concerns affecting Ukrainian women or adolescent girls (86%) or adolescent boys and men (91%)** (see Chart 9). The analysis illustrates that protection risks are not significant, but they are higher relatively for women and girls (14%) than men and adolescent boys (9%). In addition, Ukrainian women and adolescent girls may be exposed to protection risks outside their community, while men may be subject to such risks from within their community.

Chart 9. Safety and security assessments among the surveyed Ukrainians



Nonetheless, while the overall environment is positively assessed in terms of protection, there have been cases in which Ukrainians of all ages experienced violence or ill treatment, which again raises protection concerns. These issues can be divided into three distinct categories: general protection concerns affecting all community members (i.e., women and men, adolescent girls and boys, children); the GBV concerns of female Ukrainians; and protection concerns impacting children.

### General protection concerns

The qualitative study identifies that there are general protection concerns within the Ukrainian community. These concerns to an extent affect all community members, although some impact men more than the other diversities. Such protection concerns refer to a change in societal attitudes towards Ukrainians, the geographic proximity to Russia, and conflicting relationships between different nationalities.

### GBV concerns

The qualitative and quantitative surveys comprehensively analyzed GBV-related awareness, the interrelated experiences and concerns, and consequently discerned insights into certain issues. The results show that knowledge of GBV is significant in the Ukrainian community, where the **majority state that they are aware of GBV against women**. The survey statistics demonstrate that the respondents are informed of the various forms of GBV, and awareness is particularly high for domestic (71%), psychological (71%), and physical (60%) forms of violence (see Annex 6, Tables 9.1 & 9.2).

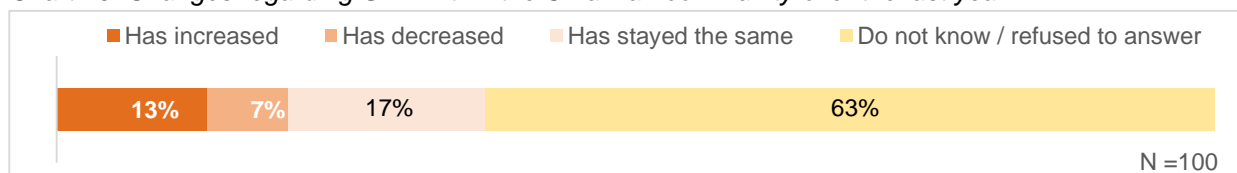
Regarding instances and experiences of GBV, the findings reveal that the overall environment is positively assessed in terms of protection and safety, however certain concerns do still exist for Ukrainian women both inside and outside their community.

The results of the desk study discerned that, as of 2019, roughly three out of four Ukrainians had experienced some form of violence since the age of 15, and in one third of cases they had experienced physical or sexual abuse. Furthermore, human trafficking has been a particular concern for Ukrainian



women and girls since the 1990s. According to the report, most trafficked women and girls are subject to sexual and labor exploitation. The desk study identifies that the war in Ukraine has increased the risk of GBV, particularly conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), and it is likely that certain Ukrainian women in Georgia have experienced CRSV and still require rehabilitation services.<sup>13</sup> The research also points out that **violence may be considered a pre-existing and prevalent problem within the Ukrainian community, and this could have intensified as a result of the war and interrelated experiences.** From the RGA statistics, **14% state that they are aware of GBV cases affecting Ukrainian women in Georgia and 13% consider the war to have amplified GBV cases against these women** (see Chart 10 & Annex 6, Table 9.3).

Chart 10. Changes regarding GBV within the Ukrainian community over the last year



The qualitative study moreover gathered more contextual information regarding GBV against Ukrainian women and adolescent girls. Namely, domestic violence, sexual harassment and abuse, and economic violence (with the risk of prostitution) are the most common forms of GBV affecting Ukrainian women and adolescent girls. The findings also indicate that GBV concerns are particularly high for Ukrainian women and adolescent girls who arrive alone in Georgia (without their partners, spouses, or other family members).

Regarding domestic violence, it appears the war has changed the relationship between men and women in Ukrainian families, which has led to difficulties, higher divorce rates, and further cases of domestic violence. Certain INGOs report that community members have begun speaking out about their experiences of GBV (domestic violence) and are employing the public referral system.

*“Do you know how many cases I had when I was searching for apartments, and I used to receive messages offering a stay in exchange for intimate connections?... I was told how cool it would be, and how lucky I would be to live and have an intimate connection for free. He was lucky that I was not close to him at that time... I am searching for apartments for people who fled from bombs, and then I receive such nasty messages... It is not surprising for women who do not have a family, do not have anywhere to go – and when someone offers such a provision, she is forced to live with him. How many women are engaged in prostitution? Many of them... They were not doing it previously.”*

*Female, KI*

In terms of sexual harassment and abuse, Ukrainian women in the FGDs report excessive and unwanted attention from taxi drivers and strangers on public transportation. In some cases, these women do report harassment to taxi companies, and those particular drivers no longer appear at their locations. In addition to women, Ukrainian adolescent girls have also reported cases of harassment from strange men outside their schools, but compared to adults many do not know how to handle these situations.

GBV cases against Ukrainian women by their landlords have additionally been cited, and some of these concerns are alarming. As the KIs report, some landlords have defrauded, harassed, and even evicted women (often with young children) from their apartments in the middle of the night, after paying rent. Furthermore, the study reveals that certain individuals take advantage of the vulnerability of Ukrainian women and offer accommodation in exchange for intimacy. The qualitative survey demonstrates that some Ukrainian women might have engaged in prostitution to meet their own or their HH needs. These women are in a completely different environment and culture, they do not know the local language, and have

<sup>13</sup> Regional Gender Task Force. (2022). *Making the Invisible Visible: An Evidence-Based Analysis of Gender in the Regional Response to the War in Ukraine*. Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation.

nowhere to go, which makes them extremely vulnerable to the risks of sexual and psycho-emotional abuse, economic violence, and prostitution.

In light of these protection concerns, it is also important to understand the extent Ukrainians are aware about the existing GBV response mechanisms. The survey indicates that **awareness on GBV response mechanisms is not high within the community**; where 56% of the respondents with protection concerns believe that there are no help or support services in the area they live, and 24% could not answer the question (see Annex 6, Table 8.7). The FGDs indicate that **Ukrainian women are more aware of how to cope in cases of GBV compared to men**. The findings show that women tend to call 112, refer to NGOs, or contact to service providers to avoid repeated harassment; while Ukrainian men often believe that wives should address their husbands for assistance. Ultimately, it is important to raise the level of awareness and information on GBV and its response mechanisms in order to reduce violence against Ukrainian women and to boost the referral rate of the relevant services and programs. It might thus prove effective to use online and face-to-face information dissemination to increase outreach to Ukrainian men and women, alongside the use of Ukrainian volunteers and community members to help engage men during face-to-face information sessions and meetings. Due to the seriousness of GBV, a further study or thorough mapping of the community-based protection structures available for Ukrainian refugees in Georgia appears pertinent.

### **Child protection concerns**

Child protection concerns in schools, families, and other areas were also highlighted within the study. **Adolescent girls and boys participating in the Batumi FGD report that they have difficulties interacting with their peers and are often offended at school, which makes them uncomfortable and separated**. Ukrainian adolescent boys in Batumi state that they frequently have conflicts with their Georgian peers, and the study captured various cases of bullying, positive and negative discrimination, extortion from other children, taking items without permission, etc. Adolescent Ukrainian girls also noted certain relationship problems – not with their schoolmates, rather with *“other Georgian peers arriving at their school to offend and distract the Ukrainians studying there.”* **Adolescent girls and boys equally note that they experience different treatment from school staff, which causes feelings of alienation**. Namely, resource officers are believed to have greater loyalty towards Georgian children, while they approach Ukrainians sternly, for instance blaming them for potential damage. Furthermore, adolescent girls highlight that they begin during the second period at school, and when they arrive the rooms have often not been cleaned and they are then blamed for putting rubbish under the desks. These details signify that discriminatory attitudes, harassment, and the treatment of Ukrainian children may perhaps be a serious problem in Batumi schools.

Besides schooling, a number of the KIs mention that Ukrainian mothers complain about aggression from Russian children in playgrounds: *“Mothers write in the chats that Russian children in playgrounds declare how annoying Ukrainians are or that there are Ukrainians all over the place.”* In addition, certain KIs believe that the war has changed the gender roles, responsibilities, and the economic state in Ukrainian families, which in turn dramatically affects the psycho-social state of both parents and children. Under the strain of economic problems, some parents find it difficult to cope with their emotions and psychological stress, therefore at times they are aggressive towards their children.

On the whole, the FGDs indicate that some resource officers treat Ukrainian children differently compared to Georgians, which can be psychologically damaging, and affect their psycho-emotional state, school performance and their social lives. Therefore, the overall positive assessment should not be taken as clear indication that there are no protection concerns for Ukrainian children in Georgia and that a careful approach is required to minimize these risks. It is thus important to communicate with schools and to broaden the capacity of school staff, particularly resource officers, so that they better regulate relations between children and professionally handle conflict situations. In addition, it is crucial to provide psycho-

social support services to single Ukrainian parents so that they are able to better control their emotions and stressful relations, and thus improve relationships with their children.

## Needs and aspirations

The qualitative and quantitative surveys also discovered and explored the needs and aspirations of the people from Ukraine. The ongoing war has affected Ukrainian families differently, and the findings explicate the areas of life that have been most impacted for the sampled Ukrainians. Under the statistical estimates, **income and livelihood (57%) is the most impacted area of life for Ukrainian families in Georgia, and a pronounced majority (85%) name it among the areas notably affected since the onset of war.** The statistics equally find that safety (25%) alongside mental health and wellbeing (22%) are considered the second most affected areas of life, while separation from family members (25%) is identified as the third most impacted area (see Table 4).

Table 4. The most impacted areas of life since the war in Ukraine

Areas of life	The most affected	The 2nd most affected	The 3rd most affected	TOTAL
Income and livelihood	57%	18%	13%	85%
Safety	12%	25%	11%	46%
Physical health and wellbeing	3%	11%	8%	21%
Mental health and wellbeing	18%	22%	15%	52%
Education	1%	7%	9%	16%
Food / nutrition	1%	4%	13%	16%
Separation from family members	7%	8%	25%	37%
Other	1%	4%	6%	11%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100</b>

According to the qualitative, quantitative, and desk research, **due to extreme economic vulnerability, money (for various purposes), food, and livelihood are the most prominent needs for Ukrainians.** This is reflected within the statistics, where the greatest share of Ukrainians define food (23%) and cash (23%) as their most prominent needs (see Table 5). The qualitative study shows that Ukrainian families have different levels of access to food, money, and livelihoods. There are both families with access to all their requirements and those lacking sufficient food and income, who therefore seek humanitarian assistance for food and primary items to satisfy their basic needs. **Access to healthcare is equally regarded as one of the most prominent needs, which closely connects to other needs for Ukrainian families.** The overall analysis of the quantitative and desk study underscores that **Ukrainians have not experienced a change in their priority needs within the last six months and that the most prominent needs remain the same** (see Table 5 below).

Table 5. The top three priorities for the sampled Ukrainians and their families

Priority needs	1st priority	2nd priority	3rd priority	TOTAL
Food	23%	8%	30%	36%
Medicines	10%	17%	26%	33%
Baby items	6%	1%	7%	8%
Cash for various purposes	23%	23%	44%	62%
Clothes	1%	6%	7%	10%
Healthcare	11%	22%	31%	45%
Registration / legal assistance	4%	4%	8%	10%
Childcare / education	3%	3%	6%	11%
Accommodation / housing	12%	10%	21%	33%
Other response	6%	6%	12%	26%
<b>TOTAL (N)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Accommodation and safe housing still represent a major need for Ukrainians.** However, accommodation is not as prominent a problem as in the past, and the FGDs and KIs note that there no Ukrainian families remain without shelter. Nevertheless, **the majority of the respondents (66%) live in rented accommodation**, and many adult Ukrainians find it difficult to afford housing. Although certain humanitarian actors offer accommodation services, they are not always accessible; there is limited capacity as they are costly, and as such focus on the most vulnerable people. Within the sample, a total of 21% receive assistance on accommodation from the state, private companies, or INGOs, which remains relatively low. The survey moreover reveals that **73 of the 100 respondents pay from 175 to 2,107 GEL per month for their accommodation, and the statistical mean for monthly accommodation equates to 879 GEL.** Although recently rent prices have reduced to an extent, Ukrainians still find it difficult to afford and their income is predominantly spent on rent and utility bills. Notably, some Ukrainians arrived in Georgia with savings, which helped them significantly when covering their expenses and bills. Yet as the war continues and their savings are gradually exhausted, they may struggle to afford accommodation, and some families may also face the future risk of eviction. The survey results highlight that 17 of 100 individuals (17%) have faced the risk of eviction thus far. Further details highlight that such risks emerge when landlords raise the rent, plan to sell an apartment, demand an eviction (to rent for a higher price), or if tenants are unable to continue paying their rent. Interestingly, the majority of those facing eviction have plans to address this problem (searching for a smaller or cheaper apartment, borrowing money from relatives or friends, asking for help, etc.). However, a minor share (2 out of 17) believe that they would be left on the streets with nowhere to go and no chance of borrowing or earning money. It is also worth mentioning that accommodation problems particularly impact female-headed households with many children, and the majority of respondents at risk of eviction are women (13 out of 17).

The subject of the economic vulnerability of Ukrainian households was widely discussed during the KIs and FGDs. Alongside humanitarian assistance, **economic integration and employment assistance should be future aspects of engagement to the reduce financial vulnerabilities and increase self-reliance within the Ukrainian community.** The assumptions of KIs and the FGD discussants (Ukrainian adult men and women) correlate, where many Ukrainians aspire to gain employment or to be self-employed in Georgia. Regarding employment, the quantitative survey shows that 33% (33 out of 100) of the sample are employed in Georgia, and 67% (67 out of 100) do not work in Georgia either because they never searched for vacancies, did not require a job, or they searched but failed to find employment. Remarkably, 6 out of those 67 respondents state that they do not work in Georgia because they have a remote job in another country (see Annex 6, Table 1.25 & 1.29). While interest in employment is relatively high and some Ukrainians have managed to gain employed in Georgia, the findings underscore that, like other recognized refugees, **Ukrainians find it difficult to obtain a decent job with proper remuneration** – 45% of employed Ukrainians state that it was difficult or very difficult to gain employment in Georgia (see Annex 6, Table 1.27). The combination of the qualitative and quantitative results demonstrate that **the language barrier, low salaries, a lack of qualifications or competences, the absence of identification (passports), the disconnect between job vacancies and their professions, and shortages in the labor market are all factors impacting Ukrainian employment in Georgia.**

Remarkably, the focus groups confirm that an individual's specialization significantly affects their employment opportunities – there are fields and professions in which Ukrainians are particularly valued and often receive job offers from Georgian companies. The qualitative and quantitative reviews emphasize that Ukrainian women with multiple children, single parents, and women-headed or separated households find employment difficult due to the absence of HH support. According to the survey, **8 out of 60 unemployed women refer to the lack of childcare support as a reason for their unemployment in Georgia.** Mothers find have difficulty accepting full-time positions, but they are still open to part-time or remote job opportunities adapted to their needs. Similarly, Ukrainian men also find employment in Georgia problematic due to the aforementioned barriers, however they are able to attain a reasonably decent salary with physical labor; those which may not require much communication with the local population. This problem therefore

does not have the same impact on men. The FGDs with Ukrainian women show that they are very interested in employment, and consequently aspire to take courses, raise their qualifications, and increase their employment opportunities. As the analysis and results show, it is important to boost employment opportunities for Ukrainian men and to improve their skills so that they find it easier to access work in the Georgian labor market. Moreover, as the problem of employment particularly affects women with multiple children, it becomes critical that employment support programs consider their time, needs, and availability to offer opportunities that are tailored to their circumstances.

Besides employment, the survey highlights that Ukrainians are also interested in creating businesses in Georgia. A third of respondents (32 out of 100) report that they will definitely or likely start a business locally; self-employed they would be able to earn more and have convenient working hours. A subsequent fourth of the sample (23%) have no clear opinion about starting a business because they are uncertain, did not expect the war to last so long, or find it challenging to determine their plans in other countries (see Annex 6, Table 1.31). The survey also explored the barriers in starting a business in Georgia, and **the majority of respondents with the desire to create a business consider the lack of funding and capital to be the greatest challenge in running a business (17 of 32), and almost all of these respondents are women (16 of 17)**. Considering further obstacles, **Ukrainians also identify the high level of competition between companies; the language barrier; the lack of information; deficient understanding of the local legislation and taxation system; doing business in Georgia; the absence of a legal address; and having the correct documentation for business registration, among other issues** (see Annex 6, Table 1.33). To improve self-employment opportunities, it is crucial to raise awareness of how to start businesses among community members. It is also essential that Ukrainians have more information about the administrative and bureaucratic procedures, and it would be helpful to broaden their access to finances through small-grant programs oriented towards this target group.

The findings further indicate that **legal stay and documentation are a prominent need for Ukrainians in Georgia**. Some stakeholders and volunteers report seeing a rise in caseloads related to legal assistance, counselling, and documentation, with many Ukrainians querying these issues. In addition, a UNHCR analysis on Ukrainian requirements reveals that, as of October 2022, 12% of Ukrainians requested information related to documentation and border crossings, while 11% sought details on asylum procedures.<sup>14</sup> As the RGA determines, the vast majority of Ukrainians do not have refugee or humanitarian status, rather they are considered to be visitors. They have the legal right to stay in Georgia without a visa for one year, and this visa-free period is currently expiring for those who entered in the Spring of 2022. Notably, qualitative survey suggest that the individuals who have reached the end of their visa-free period have three possible options: (1) to obtain a residence permit; (2) to cross any Georgian borders and re-enter; or (3) to apply to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) migration department for international protection. **For a residence permit**, FGD participants and KIs report that Ukrainians are qualified for a permit if they have direct Georgian relatives or if they possess property worth more than 100,000 GEL in Georgia. As the majority live in rented properties, they cannot meet the eligibility criteria for residency. In terms of **crossing a border and re-entering**, the KIs and FGD respondents note that some Ukrainians do not have a passport or sufficient documentation to re-enter the country; as neighboring countries (for example Turkey) have changed their policies and no longer accept anyone without a passport. As for documentation, Ukrainians often report difficulty communicating with their Embassy in Georgia, and they cannot submit a passport request due to the long wait times. Some informants also emphasize that passport preparation can be costly, particularly for families with many members, and that they may not be able to afford the amount in light of their economic difficulties. The KIs suggest that the Ukrainian Embassy in Georgia needs to improve its service delivery to satisfy the growing demand on passports and documentation. The KIs did report that the Embassy created an online registration form, which is assessed

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<sup>14</sup> UNHCR. (2022). *Ukrainian Refugees in Georgia*.

positively, for passports and documentation, however places were limited and people were unable to register until April 2023.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, Ukrainians who entered Georgia in February or early March 2022, and whose legal stay is complete, are unable to cross the border and have to apply for international protection in order to avoid fines from the respective authorities.

As the qualitative results highlight, there are not many Ukrainians with humanitarian status, yet this number is growing due to the aforementioned problem. As of 16 December 2022, 509 Ukrainians have applied to the MIA migration department for international protection, and 354 have already received humanitarian status (105 of whom are minors). As the FGDs with women indicate, some Ukrainians are not eager to apply for international protection – some think it may reduce their access to humanitarian assistance, and others are unaware of the benefits or the negative consequences of taking humanitarian status and which options might be best. The FGD participants report that it would be better if they had more information about the benefits of international protection, about the consequences of not crossing a border or applying for international protection on time, about the fines they may receive, and the time they would have for payment.

According to the qualitative survey, **some people from Ukraine have difficulty accessing the available services and programs**. As the previous chapters demonstrate, these problems are observed particularly when accessing cash transfers from the Internally Displaced Persons, Ecomigrants and Livelihood Agency, the SCA or municipal services for CwD, healthcare services, education services, or Georgian language education. A detailed analysis of the obstacles found in these various service provisions is provided within the Access chapter.

Certain qualitative survey participants generally believe that Ukrainian adults can be integrated through language education and economic integration. Ukrainians should therefore be helped to integrate into the labor market, however the KIs note that many Georgians also require employment and support, consequently any such steps should be cautious in order to avoid a public backlash. In terms of youth integration, **socialization activities are not available for Ukrainian children, those which could help them change their daily routines and integrate into Georgian society**. The FGD findings further point out that some women and girls cannot access extracurricular activities from their locations, due to economic difficulties or language barriers. It is important to improve access to extracurricular activities for Ukrainian children, particularly those engaged in Ukrainian online education, in order to improve their psycho-emotional state, to change their daily routines, and to assist greater integration into Georgian society.

According to the key informant assessment, it is vital not to (re)-traumatize Ukrainians when delivering various types of assistance. Every implemented project is oriented towards assistance, however this makes Ukrainians, especially children, subject to different treatment and sometimes this turns into positive discrimination, which can affect their consciousness, remind them of stressful experiences, or impede integration. Consequently, **the informants at times consider Ukrainians susceptible to cases of positive discrimination within school environments, and this needs addressing in the future**.

The qualitative findings suggest that **several volunteer organizations were created following the war in Ukraine, which have since turned into NGOs and that have managed to raise their funding**. Certain KIs think that the organizations which transformed into NGOs require comprehensive capacity building and training in order to raise their awareness about the basic principles of protection. As the survey shows, the UNHCR has already engaged with these groups and organized several events to build capacity on basic humanitarian principles.

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<sup>15</sup> The qualitative information was gathered between January and February 2023.

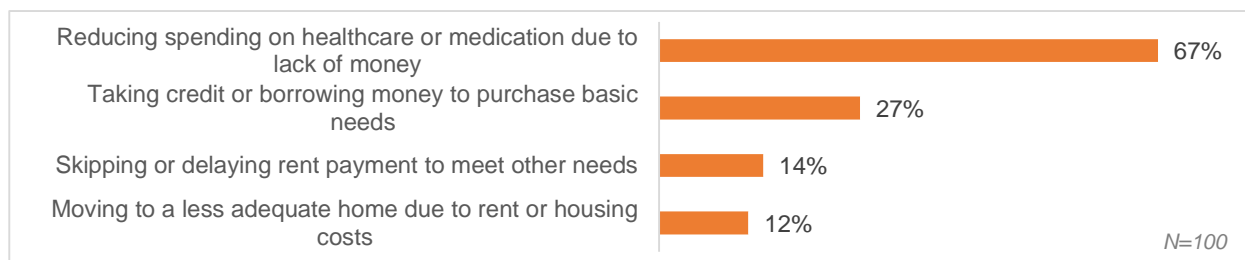
The results suggest that the explored needs – economic hardship, accommodation, employment, etc. – affect the whole Ukrainian community, while individually they also each have particular needs. However, there are groups within the Ukrainian community that are the most affected, including **female-headed households; children; women with minors; women and families with many children; families with members with chronic or serious diseases; the elderly; persons with disabilities; and families with members or children with disabilities**. Therefore, these key groups should specifically be targeted when delivering the various forms of assistance to the Ukrainian community.

## Coping mechanisms

The qualitative and quantitative surveys explore the main needs, concerns, and priorities of Ukrainians in Georgia, they moreover define the main coping strategies that Ukrainians employ to resolve their daily problems. Notably, these coping mechanisms directly respond and align with the prominent needs described in the previous chapter. The study revealed that money, food, and livelihood are the foremost requirements for Ukrainians in Georgia. While the majority of families attempt to spend money in such a way as to make savings for various other purposes. The core findings suggest that some Ukrainians even avoid healthcare services and prioritize at home treatments if they have a mild illnesses – **the majority of the Ukrainians sampled (67%) reduced spending on healthcare and medication to save for other purposes** (see Chart 11).

Besides reduced spending on healthcare, 27% of respondents report that they have taken credit or borrowed money to cover their basic needs. Interestingly, the quantitative survey complements the FGD and KI findings, in which **some Ukrainians attempt to increase their revenue and capacity, and thus manage their material and financial necessities via employment and self-employment**. The study ascertained that various Ukrainians have managed to find work in Georgia. For example, many Ukrainian women are employed in Kutaisi textile factories, some qualified doctors found jobs within hospitals, others have started work in the services sector (in laundries, cafes, restaurants, etc.). Younger people have also managed to maintain or find remote work, and thereby survive. A number of the key informants believe that **Ukrainian families register for as many assistance programs as possible, and that the help provided supports their basic material needs significantly**. Certain KIs also emphasize that private companies have volunteered or offered support to the people from Ukraine; they provide services at a reduced prices or free of charge, which is another advantage these families can benefit from. This service helps families reduce their spending and use the money saved on other significant purposes.

*Chart 11. Strategies applied by Ukrainians to meet their HH needs over the last three months*



The study reveals that accommodation and housing is a prominent need for Ukrainians in Georgia, and that fluctuations on rent and private property prices can make them feel insecure about the future. As such, Ukrainians attempt to reduce their spendings on housing and accommodation in various ways (renting houses together, and moving to smaller settlements, the suburbs, apartments with inadequate living conditions, etc.). In addition, **some Ukrainian families also negotiate prices by signing agreements with their landlords, and this includes a record for contract termination, advance notice that reduces**



**eviction risks, and provisions that rent will not rise until the end of a contract.** Yet the statistics indicate that from the 73 Ukrainians paying for accommodation, the majority have verbal (35 out of 73) not written agreements (24 out of 73) with their landlords (see Annex 6, Table 1.20). The survey suggests that **some agreements do include written records about the terms and conditions for contract termination and advance notice.** From the 59 individuals with verbal and written agreements, **half (29 out of 59) state that they have terms and conditions for these provisions** (see Annex 6, Tables 1.20, 1.21, & 1.22). Significantly, certain Ukrainians feel more secure having a recorded contract, and this can be considered one of the most effective coping mechanisms, however others believe having a particular agreement is irrelevant as some landlords are indifferent and will still act however they wish.

The qualitative and quantitative surveys underscore that food is one of the most demanded items for Ukrainian families, and that many refer to humanitarian organizations for such assistance. The findings suggest that **various respondents receive in-kind assistance (including food, hygiene items, etc.) to provide for their families, while a fifth of the respondents (20%) also state that they have borrowed food to have enough for their households to consume.** These estimates illustrate that access to food and proper nutrition still represents a core need that Ukrainian families find hard to satisfy.

The qualitative survey findings imply that although material needs are prominent, individuals in the Ukrainian community also have psycho-emotional needs. The KIs report that Ukrainians find it problematic being away from their homeland, and they require communication with native speakers who understands their feelings, needs, problems, and their pain. **Some Ukrainian organizations organize events for Ukrainians to maintain close ties with their community and to help them satisfy their psycho-social needs.** Furthermore, it was reported that Ukrainian volunteer groups regularly assist households with children. For instance, they have organized spaces for children to allow parents to complete other activities for a few hours. This initiative has even managed to receive small grants and hire teachers to provide various developmental activities for these children. This latter mechanism is crucial, and it may represent an excellent example of supporting and strengthening Ukrainian female-headed households and women with multiple children in Georgia.

## Coordination

The qualitative survey participants report that several organizations have implemented services and programs oriented at Ukrainians and that this process revealed a need for efficient interagency coordination mechanisms, those which would allow organizations to use their financial and human resources optimally and to cover the needs of Ukrainians maximally.

The UNHCR has already established an interagency coordination group in Georgia, and it unites around 30 international and national organizations. The KIs emphasize that the UNHCR is a key actor in terms of refugee protection in Georgia, and it operates through its partners to ensure that the government has a holistic approach to its refugee response. The UNHCR maintains several roles within refugee protection: (1) it supports the government in providing assistance to refugees and ensures that their services are available; (2) it has a supervisory role – as guardian of the 1951 Refugee Convention it certifies that each country aligns with international obligations under the Convention; and (3) it provides technical support and expertise to the government regarding refugee protection. With respect to the Ukrainian response, the UNHCR leads the interagency coordination group with its partner organizations, thereby aiming to improve the overall response. These organizations thus elaborate complementary programs and divide their fields of activity so that all needs are covered and the maximal number of community members are reached within the programs. Crucially, the KIs report that the UNHCR is a significant part of coordination and that it represents a kind of mediator between organizations and decisionmakers.

Because organizations have finite resources and some of the NGOs engaged do not have sufficient financial or human capacity to cover Ukrainian needs, the establishment of an interagency coordination council was critical within the humanitarian response plan. **A significant share of the informants believe that interagency coordination is an effective mechanism, as it has increased the practicality, efficiency, and flexibility of the process.** Certain groups suggest that mapping organizations and the activation of referrals were core factors contributing to such effective coordination. A minor share of these organizations also report that the coordination mechanism has significantly improved over the last six months – everything is better organized, overlaps between organizations no longer occur, and the overall picture has improved. However, some regional organizations state that they would like more information about the available services, programs, and their providers, and they hope to be more engaged in coordination mechanisms to utilize their capacity more efficiently. As the survey indicates, the Ukrainian population is mostly concentrated in large cities, yet certain people are also scattered across the country, and these regional organizations attempt to reach out to them to offer assistance. Raising the level of engagement and information regionally, with the relevant profiles, could therefore help strengthen and assist Ukrainians living in the relatively remote parts of Georgia.

As the findings reveal, **a trilateral coordination format (government/civil society/private sector) has been applied relatively infrequently** under the humanitarian response plan. Notably, the private sector was actively engaged in the response plan, and directly provided assistance to Ukrainians or reached them via volunteers or organizations. However, private sector engagement is not as solid as at the beginning of the crisis, yet some solidarity does remain. The qualitative survey participants consider the inclusion of the private sector within the coordination mechanism to be instrumental for the economic integration of the Ukrainian community. Therefore, introducing trilateral coordination mechanisms, and more active cooperation with private companies, could assist Ukrainian integration in Georgia.

The respondents suggest that it is always better to have more greater coordination and there can always be desire for it. The findings identify that, with the engagement of donors, weekly meetings are organized under the interagency coordination group; which additionally has eight thematic sub-groups that meet once or twice a month based on necessity. The qualitative survey participants think that the frequency of meetings is enough to exchange information and to plan subsequent activities. Moreover, the actors engaged are aware of each other, have good networks, and if required can organize flexible meetings and discuss coordination details.

## Conclusions and recommendations

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This study gathered diverse information regarding the foremost needs, priorities, and concerns of Ukrainian women, men, and adolescent boys and girls in Georgia. The findings revealed that their core needs have not notably changed over the course of the last month, those which still concentrate on material and financial necessities; access to the available services (particularly healthcare); income and additional funding for adults; and greater access to extracurricular activities for adolescents. Significantly, the analysis underscores that new priorities and concerns have emerged within Ukrainian communities – namely, legal visa extensions and concerns related to protection and SGBV, as serious GBV and protection risks against Ukrainian women have been revealed and must be addressed by various actors.

Based on the key findings, it is highly recommended that the following aspects be considered when evaluating, redesigning, or adjusting planned interventions for the needs of the target population. In order to fill in the revealed gaps and to make the assistance more effective, it is recommended that:

### ***Non-governmental organizations:***

- Plan activities for the **prevention and response to GBV** and sexual harassment against Ukrainian women and adolescent girls.
- **Raise awareness** about GBV and sexual harassment, as well as the available response mechanisms, among both Ukrainian men and women. Use information tailored to the needs of adolescent girls and boys and use face-to-face approaches for greater effectiveness.
- **Ensure the inclusion of both genders in access to information, awareness raising campaigns**, and other areas, while also considering the specificities both women and men have when accessing information.
- **Increase awareness about the available services and programs among stakeholders working with Ukrainians.** Ensure that awareness raising activities also include NGOs working in the regions. The engagement of regional CSOs is anticipated to improve both outreach and the level of information on the available programs.
- Create **employment or self-employment opportunities for Ukrainian women and men** by increasing their employment skills, offering or financing professional courses, and launching small-grant programs for businesses in Georgia.
- **Reduce adolescent employment** by strengthening families and parents via their employment or self-employment.
- In future employment programs, **consider and address women's increased care burdens**, and address their needs, time, and availability in planned programs.
- **Raise awareness on business registry procedures among the Ukrainian community** by delivering information about the place of registry, required documentation (original/translated/notarized), procedures, dates. etc.
- **Provide support to Ukrainian children** by increasing their access to the extracurricular activities that can change their daily routines, assist with stress relief, and encourage integration into local communities. Additionally, when planning interventions for children and the youth, consider the safety and security of adolescent girls and their specific needs.

- **Provide legal consultations to Ukrainians regarding how to continue staying legally in Georgia**, inform them about the benefits and disadvantages of each available option, and offer face-to-face and online consultations to increase service outreach.
- **Communicate the needs of the community to the Ukrainian embassy in Georgia** in order to satisfy the growing demand for passports and documentation, and thereby support Ukrainians in continuing their legal stay in Georgia without interruption.
- **Ensure direct outreach to Ukrainian men, detect their ongoing needs and concerns**, while also planning targeted interventions and (re)designing assistance programs and services. Use a combination of face-to-face and online communication, and engage with volunteer groups and Ukrainian CSOs to increase outreach and to contact Ukrainian men directly.

#### *Donors:*

- **Continue supporting humanitarian actors** working with Ukrainian community members in order to reduce the severity of their issues and problems.

#### *The Government of Georgia:*

- **Increase access to healthcare services**, including reproductive health, by expanding the list of free services, including primary healthcare services, and applications for the international protection of Ukrainians.
- Increase the geographic coverage of centers providing **language education to Ukrainians**. Crucially, this education should also be tailored towards the needs of refugees. Moreover, potentially consider **offering online language classes** to accommodate the needs of women with children.
- **Develop consistent communications in schools** with Ukrainian children (with directors, teachers, staff, resource officers, etc.) to avoid repeated cases of bullying. And increase the capacity of resource officers working in schools with Ukrainian pupils, especially in Batumi.
- **Provide support to secondary school teachers and school personnel** (in schools with Ukrainian pupils) by increasing their capacity and knowledge towards managing panic attacks and PTSD.
- **Improve the visibility of the reception center at the Larsi border** so that Ukrainians arriving in Georgia have greater chances to receive information on the available assistance programs.
- **Review the eligibility criteria of state programs that prevent Ukrainians from crossing the Georgian border**. The findings suggest that Ukrainians with cars are required to cross the border every three months, which make them ineligible for key services and programs.
- **Increase access to the services and programs for CwD and PwD provided by the central government (SCA) and municipalities**. Ensure that the assessment of children's developmental phases reflects the cultural characteristics, behavioral patterns, and approaches that are socially acceptable in Ukraine.
- **Make feedback, complaints, and other mechanisms accessible to Ukrainians** to increase their engagement in programs, to help discern any procedural shortcomings, and to reflect on the established implementation within various programs.

## Annexes

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Annex 1: FGD Guide for Adolescents

Annex 2: FGD Guide for Adults

Annex 3: KII Guide

Annex 4: Individual Story Tool

Annex 5: Quantitative Survey Instrument

Annex 6: Quantitative Survey Tables

## References page

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CARE Caucasus Supporting Ukrainian Refugees  
in Georgia

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CARE works with poor communities in developing countries to end extreme poverty and injustice.

Our long-term aid programs provide food, clean water, basic healthcare and education, and create opportunities for people to build a better future for themselves.

We also deliver emergency aid to survivors of natural disasters and conflict, and help people rebuild their lives.

We have 70 years' experience in successfully fighting poverty, and last year we helped change the lives of 65 million people around the world.



