

Chapter 2: Vulnerabilities to Exploitation and Discrimination

2.1. Overview

This chapter details the official refugee journey through the six identified stages: (1) registration for legal status, welfare, and benefits; (2) healthcare; (3) housing; (4) education; (5) employment; and (6) community, social, and political life. It then delves into the practical challenges, varied experiences, discrimination, and difficulties experienced by specific groups of refugees. It identifies some intersectional characteristics that can make people particularly vulnerable to exploitation, discrimination, and experiencing challenges in accessing services. These characteristics are summarised in the table below. They were selected as they have impacted refugees' experiences to date and are likely to affect refugees in the future, particularly if programmatic priorities change, financial support decreases, and/or disinformation efforts gain more traction.

TABLE 2. Characteristics that can make refugees vulnerable in the region

Journey stage	Characteristics that can make refugees vulnerable
Legal status, welfare, and benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separated or unaccompanied children • Elderly people, especially those travelling alone • People with disabilities, particularly those with disabilities that limit mobility • People unable to attend in-person registration or cover the related costs • People with low digital literacy • People with incomplete or inaccurate documentation from Ukraine or who were not properly recorded upon entry • People with complex cases for temporary protection, including third-country nationals • People who do not speak the local language • Transgender people • Members of the Roma community • Single-parent families (Moldova)
Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elderly people • People with mental health conditions and/or experiencing trauma or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) • People with disabilities • People with chronic health needs • Women seeking support for sexual or reproductive health • People who do not speak the local language or English • Refugees living in more remote regions • People on lower incomes
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elderly people and people with disabilities or mobility issues • People on lower incomes or in more vulnerable and precarious positions in relation to all types of housing • Members of the Roma community • Women suffering abuse, including domestic abuse • Single parents • Residents of collective shelters • People renting privately without a formal lease
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-school children • Children who do not speak the local language

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children attending Ukrainian schools online • Children experiencing bullying • Youth in their late teens • Children with disabilities or neurodiversities • Roma children
Employment and income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents or guardians, especially of multiple children • People with disabilities • Underemployed refugees • People who were not economically active before arrival in the host country • Refugees reliant on employment agencies • People who do not speak the local language • People based outside of major cities • People near retirement age
Community, social, and political life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People suffering from trauma • People employed in long-hour jobs • People separated from family and/or in the host country alone • Elderly people • Children and young people in their late teens • LGBTQIA+ refugees • People with disabilities and neurodiversities • Roma refugees • People who are politically active in supporting the war effort (Slovakia and Moldova)

2.2. Legal status, welfare, and benefits

In March 2022, the Czech Republic,⁴⁷ Poland,⁴⁸ Romania,⁴⁹ and Slovakia⁵⁰ passed legislation implementing the European Union Temporary Directive (TPD)⁵¹ and clarifying administrative procedures for people fleeing Ukraine to claim TP and access humanitarian assistance. On 1 March 2023, Moldova transposed the TPD into its legislation and formalized the right of refugees to remain in the country until 1 March 2024.⁵² In line with the TPD and the March 2022 national legislation packages, Ukrainian citizens and non-Ukrainian third-country nationals (TCNs) are exempt from the regulations regarding short-stay visas to enter the European Union.⁵³ To extend their stay beyond 90 days, Ukrainian citizens (and their non-Ukrainian spouses) must apply for TP or other government schemes such as work permits or asylum.⁵⁴ TCNs are also eligible to apply for TP if they had permanent residency in Ukraine before the invasion or had refugee status in Ukraine and cannot return to their country or region of origin in safe conditions.⁵⁵ While the application process is similar, TCNs effectively face a double burden of proof in that they must demonstrate sufficient ties to Ukraine and a lack of safety in their country of origin.

⁴⁷ Ministry of Interior (2023). [Dočasná ochrana](#), accessed 23 March 2023.

⁴⁸ European Commission (2022). [Poland: parliament adopts law on assistance to Ukrainian refugees](#)

⁴⁹ Government of Romania (2022). [DECISION no. 367 of March 18, 2022, regarding the establishment of conditions for ensuring temporary protection, as well as for the modification and completion of some normative acts in the field of foreigners](#), accessed 20 March 2023.

⁵⁰ European Commission (2022). [Slovakia adopts package of legislative changes to facilitate integration of those fleeing Ukraine](#)

⁵¹ European Union (2022). [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/382, 4 March 2022](#)

⁵² Prior to this, Moldova offered refugees from Ukraine a form of temporary protection similar to that of TP, but issued through Moldova's National Commission on Exceptional Situations. Since this fell under state of emergency legislation, the entry rights and refugee protection were valid only for a renewable 60-day period of a state of emergency. While the repeated extensions were welcome, this system brought about more uncertainty than TP status.

⁵³ Government of Romania (2022). [Arrival in Romania](#), accessed 20 March 2023; Ministry of Interior (2023). [Dočasná ochrana](#), accessed 23 March 2023; European Commission (2022). [Poland: parliament adopts law on assistance to Ukrainian refugees](#); European Commission (2022). [Poland: parliament adopts law on assistance to Ukrainian refugees](#)

⁵⁴ Government of Romania (2022). [Arrival in Romania](#), accessed 20 March 2023.

⁵⁵ European Union (2022). [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/382, 4 March 2022](#)

Once granted TP, refugees have the right to access healthcare, education, housing, and other services and benefits on par with citizens of the host country. In some cases, there are differences in access or process between Ukrainian citizens and TCNs (such as in Poland, where TCNs from Ukraine must obtain a TP certificate from the Office of Foreigners within 15 days of arrival).⁵⁶ In other cases, there are slight restrictions on the benefits available to refugees compared to citizens (such as in Slovakia, where Ukrainians under TP are not automatically entitled to child, parental, maintenance, funeral, or childbirth allowances).⁵⁷

There are also requirements related to the renewal of TP status. Refugees in the Czech Republic had to re-register online no later than 31 March 2023 and then attend an in-person appointment at the Ministry of Interior;⁵⁸ those in Poland were required to re-register 18 months after 24 February 2022 but no earlier than nine months from the date of their entry into Poland.⁵⁹ In Romania, TP had to be renewed in March 2023 and then every six months.⁶⁰ In Slovakia, TP is currently granted until March 2024.⁶¹

Some focus countries—in particular, the Republic of Moldova and Romania—see themselves also as transit countries, given the number of Ukrainian refugees who travel through them to reach other destinations.⁶² Those countries have established humanitarian mechanisms to support safe onward travel for refugees. For example, in collaboration with multilateral partners, the Government of Romania established ‘green corridors’ to support people travelling to other border crossing points in Europe. As of 13 January 2023, the government had provided no-cost travel through Romania to 687,820 refugees from Ukraine.⁶³

The desk-based research and research workshops identified the groups discussed below as facing particular challenges at this stage of the refugee journey.

Separated or unaccompanied children were identified as particularly vulnerable in all five countries. The invasion of Ukraine resulted in the separation of many families, with minors often left in the care of people other than their immediate relatives. Research from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) shows that, of households surveyed between October 2022 and March 2023, 2 percent had children separated from both parents.⁶⁴ The International Centre for Migration Policy Development reports that many Ukrainian children who entered Poland in the first three months following Russia’s escalation of the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 were accompanied by relatives or caregivers who were not their legal guardians, meaning that their care needed to be formalised in Poland. As a result, 19,200 temporary guardianships were appointed for 23,000 Ukrainian refugee children in Poland by June 2022.⁶⁵ While the figures for unaccompanied children in the region are less clear, media⁶⁶ and government⁶⁷ reports cite cases of children leaving Ukraine and entering neighbouring countries alone. The Czech Government Commissioner for Human Rights and National Coordinator for Adaption

⁵⁶ European Union Agency for Asylum (2022). [Poland](#)

⁵⁷ Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs, and Family (2023). [Useful information for citizens of Ukraine](#), accessed 21 March 2023.

⁵⁸ Government of the Czech Republic (2022). [Informace k prodloužení dočasné ochrany](#), accessed 27 March 2023.

⁵⁹ Government of Republic of Poland (2022). [Amendment to the law on assistance to Ukrainian citizens in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of the country](#)

⁶⁰ European Union Agency for Asylum (2022). [Information on temporary protection in Romania](#)

⁶¹ UNHCR (2022). [Help Slovakia: Temporary Protection](#) accessed 21 March 2023.

⁶² UNHCR (2023). [Operational Data Portal](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

⁶³ Government of Romania (2023). [Romania’s Response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis](#)

⁶⁴ UNHCR (2023). [Protection Risks and Needs of Refugees from Ukraine](#), accessed 13 April 2023.

⁶⁵ The International Centre for Migration Policy Development (2022). [Temporary protection in Poland – what solutions for vulnerable groups?](#)

⁶⁶ Guardian (2022). [Slovak hails boy, aged 11, who travelled 700 miles alone from Ukraine](#)

⁶⁷ SPRAVY (2022). [Unaccompanied children fleeing Ukraine are also housed in Centers for Children and Families](#), accessed 22 March 2023.

and Integration of Refugees, Klára Šimáčková Laurenčíková, told media sources that, as of March 2023, there were approximately 30,000 child refugees in the Czech Republic unaccompanied by legal representatives.⁶⁸ This group is likely to face even greater vulnerabilities, including risks of trafficking, abuse, and violence.⁶⁹ Unaccompanied children may also lack access to proper identification documentation and legal advice⁷⁰ and struggle to access TP without a parent or guardian to confirm their registration.⁷¹

Participants in the research workshops considered unaccompanied children among the most vulnerable groups within the Ukrainian community in Romania, citing examples of severe loneliness and isolation; higher risks of mental health problems, self-harm, and addictive behaviours; and vulnerability to exploitation due to their inability to support themselves financially.⁷²

The elderly, particularly travelling alone: Participants in the research workshop noted that the elderly, particularly if travelling alone and lacking knowledge of the local language, may experience challenges in accessing the necessary information to register for TP and welfare support.⁷³ This risk may be compounded for elderly refugees with poor digital literacy, who find online information more challenging to access and who will rely upon in-person information provided at border crossings and registration centres.⁷⁴ According to REACH's multi-sectoral needs assessment in Poland, elderly people face additional barriers in adapting to the new situation and accessing services.⁷⁵ They may require additional support or alternative non-digital communication channels to ensure they fully understand and access their legal status, rights, and benefits.

People with disabilities, particularly those with disabilities that limit mobility: People with disabilities face challenges in registration and accessing benefits,⁷⁶ particularly since many processes require an in-person application. The Bratislava research workshop participants op commented that regional locations also affect these limitations. People outside of Bratislava reported longer and more difficult journeys to state offices, which are additionally challenging for people with mobility issues.⁷⁷ Deaf Ukrainians in Moldova face challenges, as minimal sign language interpretation is available, and Russian (used in Moldova) and Ukrainian sign languages are unrelated. In Romania, people with disabilities cannot send a family member in their place to register for their temporary protection status, so they are required to travel personally.⁷⁸ In the Czech Republic, the Ministry of the Interior has allowed individuals to send representatives if they cannot attend an in-person appointment to finalise their TP status (based on power of attorney rights and the presentation of a medical report). Still, this bureaucratically complex process requires significant pre-documentation.⁷⁹ This may be challenging for some individuals, particularly those who have a mobility-limiting disability and are travelling alone without a trusted individual to act on their behalf.

⁶⁸ Ceske Noviny (2023). *Commissioner: There are about 30,000 unaccompanied child refugees from Ukraine in the Czech Republic*

⁶⁹ European Commission (2022). *SRSR on Migration and Refugees publishes reports of visit to Czech and Slovak Republic*

⁷⁰ European Union (2021), *Briefing – Vulnerability of unaccompanied or separated child migrants*

⁷¹ Ministry of Interior (2023). *Dočasná ochrana*, accessed 23 March 2023.

⁷² Bucharest focus groups workshop, 15–16 February 2023.

⁷³ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

⁷⁴ IOM (2022). *Assistance to people fleeing the war in Ukraine: IOM Slovakia*

⁷⁵ UNHCR REACH (2022). *Multi-sector needs assessment Poland*

⁷⁶ UNHCR (2022). *Slovakia: protection brief – May-October 2022*; World Health Organization (2023); *Enabling support for Ukrainians with disabilities in the Republic of Moldova*, accessed 23 March 2023.

⁷⁷ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

⁷⁸ Government of Romania (2022). *Apply for temporary protection*, accessed 29 March 2023.

⁷⁹ Ministry of Interior (2023). *Dočasná ochrana*, accessed 23 March 2023.

Other people unable to attend in-person registration or cover the related costs: Due to the requirement for in-person visits to finalise TP registration, people who face barriers to travel can experience delays in securing their legal status and benefits. This might include those residing in remote areas for whom travel distance can be prohibitive and adults who care for young, elderly, or unwell relatives.⁸⁰ According to the UNHCR, Slovakia (30 percent) and Romania (26 percent) have the highest reported number of Ukrainian refugee households with at least one person with specific needs (defined as a disability, serious health conditions, or old age vulnerabilities) in the region neighbouring Ukraine (Belarus, Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia).⁸¹ Costs associated with applying for TP can include transportation to government offices for in-person appointments and computer or internet access for electronic registration or access to legal advice or assistance. People living below the poverty line or on low incomes may not have access to the resources necessary to complete the application process.

People with low digital literacy: Information on legal status, rights, and benefits is primarily available online, and this may be challenging for people who have low digital literacy skills. According to media reports, as of 17 March 2023 in the Czech Republic, only 277,000 of approximately 500,000 refugees had submitted the necessary documentation to renew their TP beyond March 2023, with up to one in 10 Ukrainian refugees experiencing problems with the process and documentation requests.⁸² The Refugee Aid Organisation noted that seniors and unaccompanied minors without a legally recognised guardian to complete their application were particularly vulnerable.⁸³ Those refugees may struggle to navigate the application process or communicate with officials and thus risk losing their TP status.

People with incomplete or inaccurate documentation from Ukraine or those not properly recorded upon entry could experience issues and delays registering for legal status and benefits. Ukrainians from eastern regions were more likely to have fled their homes without documentation as the hostilities escalated.⁸⁴ In addition, some people may have lost documents during multiple displacements. According to the UNHCR, 26 percent of Ukrainian refugees in Romania, for example, were displaced internally in Ukraine at an earlier date.⁸⁵ Participants in the workshop also shared examples of temporary protection cards issued by Romanian officials with handwritten or incorrect information; those cards were invalidated later and required re-registration.⁸⁶

People with complex cases for temporary protection, including TCNs: Some countries, such as the Czech Republic, operate slightly different forms of registration for displaced persons fleeing Ukraine, depending on whether an individual is a Ukrainian citizen (and whether they were resident in the Czech Republic before or after 24 February 2022) or a TCN. While information is available regarding different cases for TP, such as the Ministry of the Interior website, which publishes guidance in Czech, English, and Ukrainian,⁸⁷ the differences in status and registration processes may leave some individuals unclear regarding their legal status and rights. There are additional complexities for Ukrainians who held a valid residence permit in another EU country before February

⁸⁰ Bucharest focus groups workshop, 15–16 February 2023.

⁸¹ UNHCR (2022). [Displacement patterns, protection risks and needs of refugees from Ukraine](#)

⁸² ČT 24 (2023). [Vyplnit potřebné dokumenty nezvládají desetitisíce uprchlíků. Problémy mají senioři, handicapovaní i děti bez doprovodu](#), accessed 23 March 2023.

⁸³ ČT 24 (2023). [Vyplnit potřebné dokumenty nezvládají desetitisíce uprchlíků. Problémy mají senioři, handicapovaní i děti bez doprovodu](#), accessed 23 March 2023.

⁸⁴ HIAS, VOICE (2022). [Ukraine Assessment Report - Waiting for the Sky to Close: The Unprecedented Crisis Facing Women and Girls Fleeing Ukraine](#), accessed 29 March 2023; Chisinau research workshop 1 March 2023.

⁸⁵ UNHCR (2022). [Romania Protection and Profiling Monitoring Factsheet](#)

⁸⁶ Bucharest focus groups workshop, 15–16 February 2023.

⁸⁷ Ministry of Interior (2023), [Dočasná ochrana](#), accessed 23 March 2023.

2022 and those who held a valid residence permit in the Czech Republic but did not extend their stay after 24 February 2022. The Ministry of the Interior states that these groups may not be eligible for TP in the Czech Republic. Instead, they must apply for TP in the state that granted their residence permit or apply for other provisions in the Czech Republic, such as asylum.⁸⁸ A report on the fact-finding mission to the Czech Republic by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Migration and Refugees in May 2022 highlighted the absence of free legal aid and state-funded counselling to support individuals with unusual or exceptional cases, leaving them vulnerable and potentially unable to secure their TP status.⁸⁹ Participants in the research workshop also expressed concerns about the legal aid and judicial review process, particularly restrictions on the right of appeal. In addition, there are reports of discrimination faced by non-Ukrainians fleeing the invasion. In July 2022, the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants commented that there was ‘a double standard approach’ between Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian citizens arriving in Poland, adding that ‘those with specific vulnerabilities, including the ones with irregular migratory status face heightened difficulties in obtaining residence permits and proper shelter’.⁹⁰ Finally, TCNs from Ukraine who do not meet the criteria to apply for TP⁹¹ must apply for asylum or a similar national protection system, which usually provides fewer benefits. For example, Poland grants the right to work only after six months if no decision on the application has been reached.⁹² TCNs who lack documentation are particularly vulnerable, as they may be unable to secure legal status, leaving them at greater risk of exploitation and abuse. While the total number of stateless TCNs arriving in the region is relatively low, cases of TCNs who are struggling were raised in the workshops. One participant shared a story of an Armenian man who arrived from Ukraine without papers and required specialist NGO support to avoid destitution.⁹³

People who do not speak the local language: While all five countries have made significant efforts to provide all necessary documentation in multiple languages, including Ukrainian, refugees can still struggle with some bureaucratic processes and practicalities when they do not speak the local language. This was particularly discussed in Romania workshops, where the local language differs most significantly from Ukrainian compared to the other research countries. Many workshop participants raised the issue of language barriers, noting that before 2022 Romania had only a small bilingual community. Data from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) supports this, reporting that as of August 2022, only 11 percent of Ukrainians in Romania could speak Romanian.⁹⁴

Transgender Ukrainians experience particular difficulties at this stage in the journey since their legal documentation can be incongruous or may not reflect their lived identity or chosen name.⁹⁵ This was noted in the workshops in Romania, for instance.⁹⁶ A hotline was established for LGBTQIA+ people entering Moldova, but there is very little public-facing information about the impact of the refugee crisis on transgender people.⁹⁷ HIAS and VOICE produced a joint report that suggests transgender people perceive a risk of violence at border

⁸⁸ Ministry of Interior (2023). [Dočasná ochrana](#), accessed 23 March 2023.

⁸⁹ Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees (2022). [Report of the fact-finding mission to the Czech Republic by Ms Leyla Kayacik](#) (4–6 May), accessed 7 January 2023.

⁹⁰ United Nations Office at Geneva (2022). [Top rights expert questions double standard Ukraine’s war displaced](#)

⁹¹ Either (1) having been a stateless person recognised as living within Ukraine before 24 February 2022, (2) a refugee or TCN reliant on protection from the Ukrainian government before 24 February 2022, or (3) a family member or relative of a displaced Ukrainian national.

⁹² General Inspectorate for Migration (2023). [Drepturi și obligatii](#), accessed 31 March 2023.

⁹³ Bucharest focus groups workshop, 15–16 February 2023.

⁹⁴ IOM (2022). [Ukraine intervention – 9 month report, 24 February - 24 November 2022](#)

⁹⁵ Lee, J. (2022). [‘Danger everywhere’: War and transphobia create perfect storm for trans Ukrainians](#), accessed 26 March 2023.

⁹⁶ Bucharest focus groups workshop, 15–16 February 2023.

⁹⁷ Stiri, M.D. (2022). [Refugiaților LGBT+ din Ucraina li se va acorda ajutor în Moldova](#), accessed 23 March 2023.

crossings and echoed that outdated documentation may prevent them from crossing international borders.⁹⁸ There are reports of discrimination against transgender refugees on the Ukrainian and Romanian sides of their shared border, for instance. On the Ukrainian side, NGOs reported cases of transgender women being asked to submit to humiliating ‘bio-medical’ checks and of others who have not undergone gender-affirming surgery being immediately conscripted and sent back.⁹⁹

Members of the Roma community are noted as being discriminated against at the borders. Examples have been shared of border guards refusing to stamp passports,¹⁰⁰ leading to problems at reception centres—where there were further reports of discrimination.¹⁰¹ Before the escalation of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, it is estimated that as much as 20 percent of Ukraine’s Roma community was undocumented, which can cause particular problems, as noted above.¹⁰² The lack of targeted resources and support for Roma means that the specific issues those populations face—many of which arise from prejudice or exclusion—are under-addressed. This led to post-arrival challenges in accessing full legal status and entitlements, including housing,¹⁰³ education, and employment.¹⁰⁴ Workshop participants in Moldova reported that Roma people were less likely to have all the information required to obtain official documentation in Ukraine, which may compound challenges in accessing legal status in the country.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, there have been reports that Roma in Moldova are not believed when they say they are fleeing the war or are not given access to the same quality of service as ethnic Ukrainians, although they are fleeing the same hostilities.¹⁰⁶

Single-parent families may face additional challenges in attaining legal status, particularly in Moldova, due to Moldovan laws that require both parents’ consent for decisions affecting a child’s status. Single parents may also face challenges at the border if they have different surnames. According to the IOM, parents travelling alone with a minor child should have been granted power of attorney by the second parent to be eligible for IOM assistance to travel to another country.¹⁰⁷ This reflects Moldova’s national law, which requires two parents to be registered on the birth certificate for a child to receive Moldovan documentation.¹⁰⁸ The absence of partners is compounded by the fact that some parents are unaware of each other’s whereabouts, and the war has made it more challenging for families, partners, and ex-partners with shared custody to remain in contact with each other and their children.

One participant detailed the case of a woman she knew who, before TP’s introduction, could not attain settled status for her child without the co-signature of her ex-husband. The woman was no longer in contact with the man and had no means to contact him

⁹⁸ HIAS, VOICE (2022). [Ukraine Assessment Report - Waiting for the Sky to Close: The Unprecedented Crisis Facing Women and Girls Fleeing Ukraine](#), accessed 29 March 2023.

⁹⁹ HIAS and Voice (2022). [Romania Assessment Report - Waiting for the Sky to Close: The Unprecedented Crisis Facing Women and Girls Fleeing Ukraine](#)

¹⁰⁰ Mirga-Wójtowicz, E., Talewicz, J., and Kolaczek, M., UNHCR (2022). [Human rights, needs and discrimination – the situation of Roma refugees from Ukraine in Poland](#)

¹⁰¹ Amnesty International (2022). [Refugees from Ukraine in Poland](#) and Mirga-Wójtowicz, E. and Fiałkowska, K., Boll Foundation (2022). [Anti-gypsyism in the time of war](#)

¹⁰² Roma Support Group (2022). [March 2022 Newsletter](#), accessed 20 March 2023.

¹⁰³ Mirga-Wójtowicz, E., Talewicz, J., and Kolaczek, M., UNHCR (2022). [Human rights, needs and discrimination – the situation of Roma refugees from Ukraine in Poland](#)

¹⁰⁴ Roma Association in Poland (2022). [The situation of the people of Roma origin](#)

¹⁰⁵ Chisinau Research Workshops 1 and 2 March 2023.

¹⁰⁶ Roma Support Group (2022). [March 2022 Newsletter](#), accessed 20 March 2023.

¹⁰⁷ DOPOMOGA.GOV.MD (2023). [IOM – International Organization for Migration](#), accessed 22 March 2023.

¹⁰⁸ DOPOMOGA.GOV.MD (2023). [IOM – International Organization for Migration](#), accessed 22 March 2023.

since the full-scale invasion. Therefore, she could not register her child for settled status in Moldova.¹⁰⁹

2.3. Healthcare

Refugees from Ukraine who have been granted TP have the right to access healthcare in their country of residence. As there are differences in the national health systems of each focus country, there are different means of accessing healthcare.

In Poland, Ukrainian citizens under TP are entitled to access publicly funded healthcare on the same terms as Polish citizens.¹¹⁰ TCNs who fled Ukraine are also entitled to healthcare in Poland, but it is provided through a different system and via designated medical facilities that have signed an agreement with the Head of the Office for Foreigners.¹¹¹ In Romania, refugees under TP are entitled to free national healthcare services, including primary healthcare, emergency medical assistance, and treatment for acute or chronic diseases. Services not typically free for Romanians, such as dental care, are also not free to Ukrainians.¹¹² For refugees who have not yet applied for or received TP status, border crossing documents can be used as evidence of the right to access national health services.¹¹³

In the Czech Republic, Ukrainian refugees under TP are automatically registered in the Czech health system, and the government covers health insurance payments during the first 150 days of their residency in the country.¹¹⁴ After 150 days, refugees must organise their own payments for health insurance¹¹⁵ through employer contributions, independent payments, or state support via the Labor Office of the Czech Republic.¹¹⁶ Without insurance, Ukrainian refugees can also apply for the Extraordinary Immediate Assistance scheme as a one-off, means-tested emergency allowance when there is a serious risk of injury.¹¹⁷ In Slovakia, emergency care is provided free of charge, but other forms of healthcare require insurance coverage.¹¹⁸ All citizens and residents, including refugees, must have health insurance, paid either through employers or directly by the individual.¹¹⁹ However, since January 2023, the Government of the Slovak Republic has ensured that refugees under 18 who are not covered by public health insurance still have access to the full range of healthcare support available under the scheme.¹²⁰

¹⁰⁹ Chisinau research workshop 1 March 2023.

¹¹⁰ This includes access to general and emergency healthcare, prescriptions, infectious disease prevention measures, COVID-19 vaccinations for adults, and standard preventative vaccinations for children.

¹¹¹ National Health Fund Poland (2022). [Assistance for Ukrainian citizens guaranteed in a special act. What do healthcare providers need to know?](#) accessed 15 March 2023.

¹¹² Dadnam, D., Lomasney, E., Gartshore, L., and McKernon, S., British Dental Journal (2021). [Romanian dilemmas](#)

¹¹³ European Commission (2022). [Romania: New order facilitates access to healthcare for people arriving from Ukraine](#)

¹¹⁴ Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (2023). [Pomoc pro občany Ukrajiny a jejich zaměstnavatele](#), accessed 12 February 2023.

¹¹⁵ Ministry of Health (2022). [Ministerstvo zdravotnictví odstartovalo očkovací kampaň pro Ukrajince](#), accessed 15 February 2023.

¹¹⁶ Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (2023). [Pomoc pro občany Ukrajiny a jejich zaměstnavatele](#), accessed 12 February 2023.

¹¹⁷ Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees (SRSG) (2022). [Report of the fact-finding mission to the Czech Republic by Ms Leyla Kavacik](#) (4–6 May), accessed 7 January 2023.

¹¹⁸ IOM UN Migration (2023). [Information and assistance in connection with the war in Ukraine](#), accessed 23 March 2023.

¹¹⁹ OECD (2017). [State of Health in the EU – Slovak Republic – country health profile 2017](#)

¹²⁰ Ministry of Health (2023). [Determination of the scope of healthcare needed](#)

Since 1 March 2023, Moldova's TP status has provided the basis of access to healthcare in the country for Ukrainian refugees; displaced people with TP status can access basic healthcare without additional registration.¹²¹ A number of private healthcare providers have waived costs for Ukrainian residents in Moldova.¹²²

In addition, specific challenges and barriers to access remain. The groups discussed below were identified through the desk-based research and the research workshops as facing particular challenges at this stage of the refugee journey.

Elderly people: Ukrainian refugees aged 60 and over report the highest need for healthcare. For example, 46 percent of refugees surveyed in Poland over 60, and 45 percent in Romania, reported a healthcare need within the previous 30 days.¹²³ In Romania, Ukrainian refugees aged 60 and over also reported the lowest access to healthcare (by age) amongst those who needed it, with only 61 percent of respondents saying that they were able to access the medical care they needed compared to 70 percent of adults under age 60 and 93 percent of children.¹²⁴ In Poland, access to healthcare is limited by factors such as elderly refugees travelling alone, residing in a collective shelter, and not having Polish language skills.¹²⁵ In addition, a higher number of elderly people in Poland have reported mobility issues, further increasing the risk of failing to access healthcare.¹²⁶ Participants in the Prague research workshops added that elderly refugees can be under extreme stress, as they must navigate new systems in a new culture and language and may feel that they are a burden to their already struggling adult caregivers.¹²⁷

People with mental health conditions and/or experiencing trauma or PTSD: The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that one in five people fleeing war will have a mental health condition within 10 years, with one in 10 developing a severe condition like PTSD or psychosis.¹²⁸ Evidence from protection monitoring also suggests that new arrivals—having been exposed to conflict in Ukraine for a longer time—are likely to have more compounded and complex mental health conditions that require specialised medical support.¹²⁹ Participants in the research workshops discussed barriers to accessing mental health support, including pre-existing limitations in provision, long waiting times, high costs, and feelings of shame or guilt in seeking mental health support.¹³⁰ Approximately 13 percent of Ukrainian refugees surveyed in Poland in November 2022 reported being internally displaced before coming to Poland,¹³¹ and evidence from other conflicts indicates that those who have experienced multiple displacements are likely to have experienced more trauma. Mental health problems were reported in 14 percent of Ukrainian refugees surveyed by UNHCR in Poland, with those aged 60 or over the most affected.¹³² In September 2022, one survey found that approximately 75,000 adult Ukrainian refugees in the Czech Republic need professional mental healthcare, but only around 5,000 (3 percent) have received it.¹³³ A

¹²¹ Treatment for Ukraine (2023). [General Information and legal support within Moldova](#), accessed 22 March 2023.

¹²² United for Ukraine (2023). [Healthcare: Moldova](#), accessed 22 March 2023.

¹²³ UNHCR REACH (2022). [Multi-sector needs assessment Poland](#); UNHCR REACH (2022). [Multi-sector needs assessment Romania December 2022](#)

¹²⁴ UNHCR REACH (2022). [Multi-sector needs assessment Romania December 2022](#)

¹²⁵ UNHCR REACH (2022). [Multi-sector needs assessment Poland](#)

¹²⁶ UNHCR REACH (2022). [Multi-sector needs assessment Poland](#)

¹²⁷ Prague research workshop 1–2 February 2023.

¹²⁸ ReliefWeb (2022). [WHO promotes action on urgent mental health needs of Ukrainian refugees](#)

¹²⁹ UNHCR (2023). [Regional Refugee Response Plan January – December 2023](#)

¹³⁰ Prague research workshops 1–2 February 2023; Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023.

¹³¹ UNHCR (2022). [Refugees from Ukraine in Poland Regional Profiling Update November 2022](#)

¹³² UNHCR REACH (2022). [Poland: multi-sector needs assessment 2022 refugees from Ukraine](#)

¹³³ PAQ Research (2022). [Hlas Ukrajinců: Duševní zdraví uprchlíků](#), accessed 20 November 2022.

UNHCR area-based assessment in Slovakia that looked at the four main cities found that 54 percent of refugees surveyed were unaware of mental health and psychological support services available nearby.¹³⁴

People with disabilities: The UNHCR reports that persons with disabilities typically constitute at least 15 percent of any displaced population and face a range of vulnerabilities, including inadequate access to basic services and information.¹³⁵ Disability certificates issued in Ukraine are not always automatically recognised, for example, in Poland and the Czech Republic. Ukrainian refugees are eligible to apply for the Polish disability certificate, yet the process can be slow and is exacerbated by the requirement to produce medical documents in Polish confirming the state of health or disability.¹³⁶ In the Czech Republic,¹³⁷ people who do not have documents confirming their disability may not be entitled to the same social benefits and financial allowance as Czech citizens with a disability. Delays in securing the certificate can make people with disabilities more vulnerable. For example, in Poland, disabled persons residing in collective centres are exempt from the amendment that requires a financial contribution for accommodation costs; however, proof of disability is required to secure this exemption.¹³⁸ Many specialist institutes and NGOs with particular healthcare offerings in Moldova have established outreach services for Ukrainians. Still, workshop participants raised that refugees with disabilities continued to experience challenges accessing information. More widely, families of children with disabilities have been noted to have considerable needs that are not met due to cost, lack of a disability certificate, transportation challenges, and lack of services for adolescents.¹³⁹

People with chronic health needs: Participants in the research workshops reported that challenges around waiting times and the ability to secure general practitioner referrals to specialist services were experienced by both refugees and the host community.¹⁴⁰ Additional barriers for refugees, including high service costs, missing or foreign healthcare records, and language differences, are reported to delay or prevent people with chronic health conditions from accessing essential healthcare assistance or medicines.¹⁴¹ Participants in the Bucharest workshop shared stories of individuals with chronic health conditions whose medical records were in Ukrainian and who faced additional delays in securing needed medical support.¹⁴² A study by the Help to Help Ukraine association reported that many patients were asked to translate their medical records or re-submit to a full medical evaluation in Romania, a costly and time-consuming process risky for people with urgent treatment needs.¹⁴³ In the Czech Republic, 9 percent of refugees surveyed reported that they had a chronically ill child who was unable to receive appropriate treatment.¹⁴⁴

Women seeking sexual or reproductive health support: The UNHCR has highlighted reports of gender-based violence, including sexual violence toward women and girls in Ukraine, and urged host countries to strengthen their response services and specialised care such as emergency contraception, HIV prophylaxis, and abortion.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁴ UNHCR REACH (2023). [Slovakia: area based assessment \(Bratislava, Kosice, Nitra and Zilina\) - February 2023](#)

¹³⁵ UNHCR (2022). [Ensuring the protection of persons with disabilities fleeing from Ukraine](#)

¹³⁶ The Commissioner for Human Rights Poland (2022). [Problems of refugees from Ukraine with obtaining disability certificates](#); Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023.

¹³⁷ Zakony Pro Lidi (2022). [Act No. 108/2006 Coll., Social Services Act](#), accessed 27 March 2023.

¹³⁸ The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration (2023). [Amendment to the Act on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine signed by the President, 25 January 2023](#)

¹³⁹ World Health Organisation (2022). [Health of refugees from Ukraine in Poland 2022: survey findings](#)

¹⁴⁰ Warsaw workshop 9 February 2023.

¹⁴¹ UNHCR REACH (2022). [Multi-sector needs assessment Poland](#)

¹⁴² Bucharest focus groups workshop 15–16 February 2023.

¹⁴³ Help to Help Ukraine (2023). [Access to healthcare for Ukrainian refugees in Romania](#)

¹⁴⁴ PAQ Research, [Hlas Ukrajinčů: Zdraví a služby](#), accessed 26 November 2022.

¹⁴⁵ UNHCR (2022). [Regional Ukraine Refugee Response: Gender-Based Violence Sub-Working Group](#)

Poland is one of only two states within the EU where performing or aiding abortion is criminalised (except in two exceptional circumstances).¹⁴⁶ Even in those circumstances, however, abortions are rarely performed legally. Participants in the research workshops added that this could be shocking to women arriving from Ukraine, where abortion is more accessible as a healthcare right; this leaves women who have experienced sexual violence at risk.¹⁴⁷ Moreover, in Poland, prescriptions are required for emergency contraception, adding another barrier. In Romania, according to a cross-NGO Gender Analysis Brief completed in May 2022, while abortion before 14 weeks is legal, doctors may often refuse to carry out an abortion or refer patients to private practices with higher fees, leaving female Ukrainian victims of sexual violence extremely vulnerable.¹⁴⁸

People who do not speak the local language or English: Language barriers were mentioned in research workshops in Romania, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland as complicating refugees' access to information on healthcare services and adding further burdening overstretched healthcare staff who must communicate via an interpreter or in a language they are not (very) familiar with. This was particularly discussed in Romania, where Ukrainian-Romanian interpreters are lacking, and the healthcare system is complex.¹⁴⁹ In Slovakia, 30 percent of refugees surveyed reported language as a main barrier to accessing care.¹⁵⁰

Refugees living in more remote regions: Residence in more remote and poorer regions with existing service provision gaps can compound the vulnerabilities experienced by refugees. In Romania, the IOM found significant differences in Ukrainian refugees' ability to access hospitals and general healthcare depending on their region of residence.¹⁵¹ For example, 82 percent of Ukrainian refugees in Bucharest reported that they had 'easy' access to a local hospital compared to just 36 percent of Ukrainian refugees in Constanta. Similarly, while 76 percent of Ukrainian refugees in Bucharest reported that they had 'easy' access to a local health clinic, only 44 percent of Ukrainian refugees in Galati said the same. Participants in the research workshops shared examples of Ukrainian refugees residing in rural areas in poorer regions of Slovakia who could not access information about local healthcare provision and cases of refugees who could not access general practitioner assistance and even ambulance services.¹⁵²

People on lower incomes can find accessing some types of healthcare challenging. In Romania, people on low incomes are less able to afford medical treatment that is not publicly funded or not readily available (such as dental care).¹⁵³ Those on low incomes living in more remote areas might struggle to afford travel to healthcare providers. In countries where health insurance is required for broader care after a certain period, such as Slovakia, unemployed people might struggle to arrange the necessary support.

2.4. Housing

Refugees' accommodation includes collective sites, hosted and rented private accommodation, and social/public housing. All five focus countries offer a form of emergency shared accommodation via collective sites or refugee

¹⁴⁶ Centre for Reproductive Rights (2020). [European abortion laws, a comparative overview](#)

¹⁴⁷ Warsaw workshop 9 February 2023.

¹⁴⁸ CARE/SERA | The Federation of NGOs for Child Protection | The Federation of Social Services | Plan International (2022). [Rapid Gender Analysis Brief Ukrainian Refugees in Romania](#)

¹⁴⁹ World Health Organisation (2023). [Understanding the obstacles faced by Ukrainian refugees in Romania](#)

¹⁵⁰ UNHCR. [Protection Risks and Needs of Refugees from Ukraine](#), accessed 13 April 2023.

¹⁵¹ International Organisation for Migration (2022). [Ukraine response – Romania evolution of needs report](#)

¹⁵² Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

¹⁵³ UNHCR (2022). [Protection Profiling Romania – September 2022](#)

accommodation centres (RACs).¹⁵⁴ These sites are generally intended to provide only short-term accommodation, but some refugees have lived in RACs longer. For example, in Moldova, 90 percent of residents in RACs in December 2022 had been there for more than two months.¹⁵⁵ Some governments have introduced payment charges for refugees staying in collective accommodation for extended periods. For example, in the Czech Republic, refugees in collective accommodation for longer than 150 days must agree on payment terms with the provider or find alternative accommodation;¹⁵⁶ in Poland, as of 1 March 2023, refugees who stay in collective centres for more than 120 days must contribute 50 percent of their costs (not more than PLN 40—approximately \$9 USD or £7 GBP), and those who stay for more than 180 days must contribute 75 percent of their costs (not more than PLN 40—approximately \$14 USD or £11 GBP).¹⁵⁷

Hosted private accommodation has been prevalent, particularly in countries close to Ukraine that have welcomed significant numbers of refugees. In August 2022, the UNHCR reported that across Belarus, Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia (collectively recording 1,747,096 Ukrainian displaced persons in the country at that time), 36 percent of Ukrainian refugees were staying with private hosts, making this the most common form of immediate accommodation at that time.¹⁵⁸ Government subsidies have supported host-matched accommodation in the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia.¹⁵⁹ For example, the Government of Romania introduced the 50/20 programme¹⁶⁰ under which individuals who host a Ukrainian refugee receive 50 RON (approximately \$11 USD and £9 GBP) for accommodation and 20 RON (approximately \$4.50 USD and £3.50 GBP) per day for food for each refugee hosted. In Slovakia, the government provides allowances to citizens who host Ukrainian refugees or offer accommodation free of charge.¹⁶¹ These were increased by 25 percent in September 2022 to a maximum of 710 EUR to 1,790 EUR per month for properties with one to four rooms.¹⁶² Moldova has had no state-sponsored system to assign Ukrainians to live in privately hosted accommodation, which has been arranged through informal networks.

Under TP status, Ukrainian refugees are entitled to access the private rental market. According to UNHCR data, as of January 2023, up to 44 percent of Ukrainian refugees living in Poland were in private rental accommodation.¹⁶³ In the Czech Republic, as of January 2023, approximately 75 percent of Ukrainian refugees were recorded as living in private housing.¹⁶⁴ There is also limited provision of social housing in some focus countries (such as the Czech Republic) and efforts to increase capacity (such as in Romania).¹⁶⁵

Finding sustainable longer-term accommodation remains an issue in all five focus countries,¹⁶⁶ with contextually specific challenges in each. For example, in Poland, the rapid arrival of refugees occurred in the context of

¹⁵⁴ OECD (2022). [Housing support for Ukrainian refugees in receiving countries](#)

¹⁵⁵ UNHCR (2023). [Moldova Refugee Accommodation Centre \(RAC\) Weekly Needs Monitoring; Update as of 27.12.2022 \[EN/RO\]](#), accessed 27 March 2023.

¹⁵⁶ See [Act No. 65/2022 Coll., Act on Certain Measures in Connection with the Armed Conflict on the Territory of Ukraine Caused by the Invasion of the Russian Federation Troops](#) for more details; also, Česká justice (2022). [Vnitro chce prodloužit dočasnou ochranu Ukrajinců, změkčí se podmínky pro lékaře](#), 2 November 2022, accessed 12 January 2023; and OECD (2022). [Rights and Support for Ukrainian Refugees in Receiving Countries](#), accessed 12 January 2023.

¹⁵⁷ The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration (2023). [Amendment to the Act on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine signed by the President, 25 January 2023](#)

¹⁵⁸ UNHCR (2022). [Operational Data Portal](#), accessed 23 September 2023.

¹⁵⁹ OECD (2022). [Housing support for Ukrainian refugees in receiving countries](#)

¹⁶⁰ *Dopomoha / Help for Ukrainians in Romania* (2022). [The 50/20 programme](#)

¹⁶¹ Ukraine Slovakia (2022). [Accommodation](#), accessed 23 March 2023.

¹⁶² European Commission (2022). [Slovakia: accommodation allowance for refugees from Ukraine to increase](#)

¹⁶³ UNHCR (2023). [Regional Refugee Response Plan January – December 2023](#)

¹⁶⁴ UNHCR (2023). [Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan \(January-December 2023\)](#)

¹⁶⁵ Government of Romania (2023). [Romania's Response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis](#)

¹⁶⁶ UNHCR (2023). [Regional Refugee Response Plan January – December 2023](#)

significant housing challenges, including high demand, insufficient supply, and rising rental and mortgage costs;¹⁶⁷ there are reports of Ukrainians—particularly those on lower or single incomes—in precarious housing situations and contractual agreements.¹⁶⁸ In the Czech Republic, the UNHCR reported that social housing capacity outside Prague remains limited, and refugees outside the capital may require additional support (such as cash grants) to access sustainable private rental or social housing.¹⁶⁹ The groups discussed below were identified by the desk-based research and the research workshops as facing particular challenges at this stage of the refugee journey.

Elderly people and people with a disability or mobility issue: Elderly refugees are already more likely to face access barriers due to language barriers, no employment or low-income levels, and difficulties adapting to a new situation. Elderly people with disabilities or mobility issues face additional challenges in accessing appropriate housing, including adapted housing and affordable housing outside of collective sites. In Moldova, the WHO highlights that the UNHCR-led disability taskforce has supported people with disabilities to find temporary accommodation. However, a lack of suitable facilities and assistive equipment, along with lengthy bureaucratic processes, have made it challenging to transition from temporary accommodation to private or independent living for refugees with disabilities.¹⁷⁰ As of December 2022, 42 percent of RAC residents in Moldova were people living with disabilities and 9 percent had serious medical conditions, suggesting that these groups use RACs more widely than private housing.¹⁷¹ This may be in part because 17 percent of RACs in Moldova were adapted from specialist facilities to cater for people with mental health issues or disabilities, making them some of the most adequate long-term housing options to date.¹⁷²

People on lower incomes are in more vulnerable and precarious positions in relation to all types of housing: People on lower incomes will struggle to leave collective accommodation for private rented housing due to cost. This brings additional challenges around access to employment, education, and social assistance. In the Czech Republic, for instance, all these require an official residence address.¹⁷³ Furthermore, the lower an individual's or household's income, the greater the percentage spent on rent, which in an inflationary market leaves people with low incomes even more vulnerable to sudden price rises. This also makes them vulnerable to exploitative landlords; one participant in the research workshop cited an example of a tenant being extorted by their landlord.¹⁷⁴ People on low incomes living in unsafe or abusive situations in hosted accommodation might not be able to secure alternative housing. Participants in the Prague research workshop also noted that refugees who cannot secure independent accommodation, and in cases where local housing capacity and crisis shelters are exhausted, must move to a new location or town. This can lead to additional feelings of displacement and/or challenges accessing services and maintaining or gaining employment.¹⁷⁵ In Romania, where accommodation provision for refugees continues to be subsidised, an upcoming review of the programme might create uncertainty and risks of entering poorer quality housing or returning to collective centres.¹⁷⁶

¹⁶⁷ Telewizja Polska (2019), [Poland lacks over 2 million flats: report](#)

¹⁶⁸ Warsaw workshop 9 February 2023.

¹⁶⁹ UNHCR (2023). [Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan \(January-December 2023\)](#)

¹⁷⁰ World Health Organization (2023) [Enabling support for Ukrainians with disabilities in the Republic of Moldova](#), accessed 23 March 2023.

¹⁷¹ UNHCR (2023). [Moldova Refugee Accommodation Centre \(RAC\) Weekly Needs Monitoring; Update as of 27.12.2022 \[EN/RO\]](#), accessed 27 March 2023.

¹⁷² UNHCR (2023). [Moldova Refugee Accommodation Centre \(RAC\) Weekly Needs Monitoring; Update as of 27.12.2022 \[EN/RO\]](#), accessed 27 March 2023.

¹⁷³ UNHCR (2023). [Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan \(January-December 2023\)](#)

¹⁷⁴ Prague research workshop 1–2 February 2023.

¹⁷⁵ Prague research workshop 1–2 February 2023.

¹⁷⁶ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

Roma: There have been reports of Ukrainian Roma refugees facing discrimination and prejudice when accessing core services, particularly housing. The UNHCR found that, in Poland, in the initial months after the invasion of Ukraine, proportionally fewer Roma refugees were offered hosted accommodation than non-Roma refugees.¹⁷⁷ As a result, Ukrainian Roma refugees remain disproportionately represented in collective sites and less likely to access other forms of accommodation. At the same time, there are reports of anti-Roma discrimination in collective sites, including hostile behaviour from non-Roma staff and racist verbal attacks.¹⁷⁸ Media coverage by CNN found that Ukrainian Roma refugees in Romania faced issues including accusations of not being Ukrainian, segregation into lower-quality accommodation, and being given misleading information about their rights.¹⁷⁹ Moldova's Ombudsman's report of April 2022 cites cases of administrators of RACs refusing to accept Roma refugees, multiple cases of police warning local accommodation centres not to accept Roma refugees, and a heating system being intentionally disconnected at an accommodation centre during below-freezing weather. The report concludes that discrimination has impacted decision-making about the provision of housing to Roma and that 'intentionally or not, the accommodation of ethnic groups in some temporary centres was nevertheless affected by existing (predominantly negative) social stereotypes about them.'¹⁸⁰ The European Roma support group reported that the few RACs where all Roma were housed in Moldova lacked food, medicine, and warm clothing, and were often overcrowded.¹⁸¹

Women suffering abuse, including domestic abuse: If women have few accommodation options, they may be forced to stay in places where they do not feel safe.¹⁸² Research from VOICE reports that poor accommodation in Slovakia affects exposure to gender-based violence and other risks to women,¹⁸³ supporting findings from the UNHCR multi-sectoral needs assessment that cited the impressions of women and girls who live in collective centres about lack of safety and security.¹⁸⁴ Workshop participants in Slovakia highlighted that low-income households living in poor quality smaller rented housing were likely to experience challenges in both reporting abuse and in finding suitable and safe alternative housing.¹⁸⁵ In Romania, in the context of significant landlord power and limited tenants' redress mechanisms, participants in the research workshop noted that single women are particularly vulnerable to both high housing costs and potential exploitation by landlords.¹⁸⁶ The limited visibility of refugees living in private accommodation raises the risk that harms, including gender-based violence, exploitation, inadequate living conditions, and arbitrary eviction go undetected. A UNHCR rapid survey found that over half of all respondents did not know where to report cases of violence or abuse related to the 50/20 housing programme in Romania, demonstrating an important information gap for refugees.¹⁸⁷

¹⁷⁷ Mirga-Wójtowicz, E., Talewicz, J., and Kolaczek, M., UNHCR (2022). [Human rights, needs and discrimination – the situation of Roma refugees from Ukraine in Poland](#)

¹⁷⁸ Mirga-Wójtowicz, E., Talewicz, J., and Kolaczek, M., UNHCR (2022). [Human rights, needs and discrimination – the situation of Roma refugees from Ukraine in Poland](#)

¹⁷⁹ Kottosova, I., CNN (2022). [‘You are not a refugee.’ Roma refugees fleeing war in Ukraine say they are suffering discrimination and prejudice](#)

¹⁸⁰ Avocatul Poporului, Ombudsman. (2022). [Report No. 1 on the monitoring the observance of the rights of foreigners from Ukraine in the context of the state of emergency for the period from February 25 to April 30, 2022](#). Unofficial translation from Centrul de Drept al Avocatilor, accessed 28 March 2023.

¹⁸¹ Roma Support Group (2022). [March 2022 Newsletter](#), accessed 20 March 2023.

¹⁸² VOICE and HAIS (2022). [Slovakia Assessment Report - Waiting for the Sky to Close: The Unprecedented Crisis Facing Women and Girls Fleeing Ukraine](#)

¹⁸³ VOICE and HAIS (2022). [Slovakia Assessment Report - Waiting for the Sky to Close: The Unprecedented Crisis Facing Women and Girls Fleeing Ukraine](#)

¹⁸⁴ UNHCR REACH (2022). [Slovakia multi-sectoral needs assessment 2022](#)

¹⁸⁵ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

¹⁸⁶ Bucharest focus groups workshop, 15–16 February 2023.

¹⁸⁷ UNHCR (2022). [Rapid survey of the 50-20 programme – UNHCR Romania thematic report](#)

Workshop participants in Romania noted that refugees might be reluctant to come forward to raise specific issues with authorities due to uncertainty about legal and procedural matters relating to these topics and fears that they will not be believed (especially if they raise a complaint against a Romanian citizen who is likely to be both more familiar with the processes and procedures in the country and able to better express themselves in Romanian to refute any claims).¹⁸⁸

Single parents: Single parents (disproportionately women) face a number of barriers to accessing housing. First, widespread family separation and a lack of social networks in the host country makes childcare a challenge,¹⁸⁹ limiting single mothers' ability to find employment and thus afford private rental accommodation. Even where single mothers can work, single-salary households face financial challenges in securing private rental accommodation, particularly in the larger, more expensive cities. Second, even when mothers with children can afford private rental accommodation, there can be discrimination or prejudice against renting to single earners with children.¹⁹⁰ This means that mothers with children can find it hard to secure a private rental agreement (or may be asked to provide additional guarantees with public notary assistance). Third, as a result of these barriers, Ukrainian families are often forced to rent accommodation that is smaller or of a lower quality than is needed.

Residents in collective shelters: Evidence indicates that residents in collective shelters are among the more vulnerable groups, reporting lower incomes and savings,¹⁹¹ increased financial pressure,¹⁹² and higher rates of health conditions than Ukrainians in private or hosted accommodation.¹⁹³ They are also more likely to experience multiple displacements, increasing the risk of mental health issues. Within collective centres, specific groups may be particularly vulnerable, including women (at risk of sexual exploitation), Roma and LGBTQIA+ individuals (facing discrimination and prejudice in shared sites), and the elderly, as well as solo refugees (experiencing greater isolation and barriers to accessing services). After a certain period, Poland and the Czech Republic require residents to co-fund stays in collective accommodation, with exceptions in Poland for certain vulnerable groups. This means that those who do not fall within those groups might find themselves in even more vulnerable situations.¹⁹⁴ Standards of collective centres also vary. The Refugee International team has noted that some centres have relatively high-quality facilities and services, including physical and mental healthcare, language classes, and facilities for mothers and children.¹⁹⁵ Other centres have lower standards (including poor preparation for winter weather), are less sustainable (due to funding or dependence on volunteers), and may face closure as they are returned to their original use (such as schools). Therefore, residents of collective sites are often in a precarious position in terms of longer-term sustainability and the appropriateness of accommodation. Furthermore, collective centres might not be suitable for people with special needs. For example, a UNHCR REACH multi-sectoral needs assessment in Slovakia found that only 34 percent of collective accommodation sites were accessible to people with disabilities.¹⁹⁶ Participants in the Bratislava research workshop also

¹⁸⁸ Bucharest focus groups workshop, 15–16 February 2023.

¹⁸⁹ UNHCR (2022). [Displacement patterns, protection risks and needs of refugees from Ukraine – regional protection analysis 1](#). For example, according to the Protection Profiling in Poland, since the invasion of February 2022, the majority of respondents (80 percent) have been separated from their immediate family members. UNHCR (2022). [Refugees from Ukraine in Poland Regional Profiling Update October 2022](#)

¹⁹⁰ Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023; Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023; Chisinau research workshop 1 March 2023.

¹⁹¹ IOM (2022). [Ukraine Response 2022 - Poland: Needs Assessment Analysis Dashboard 17 June-26 September](#)

¹⁹² Norwegian Refugee Council (2023). [One year on: seven out of ten refugees from Ukraine risk falling into poverty in neighbouring countries](#)

¹⁹³ UNHCR REACH (2022). [Multi-sector needs assessment shelter Poland](#)

¹⁹⁴ Relief Web (2023). [Poland: Amendments to Ukrainian refugee hosting laws showcase the need for continued humanitarian support](#)

¹⁹⁵ Panayotatos, D., and Cone, D. (2022). [Preparing for the unpredictable: ensuring the protection and inclusion of refugees from Ukraine in Romania and Moldova](#)

¹⁹⁶ UNHCR REACH (2022). [Slovakia multi-sectoral needs assessment 2022](#)

commented on the strict rules attached to certain forms of collective temporary accommodation,¹⁹⁷ noting that, while rules are in place to protect some vulnerable groups, they may inadvertently impact other groups. For example, one participant commented on the link between trauma and alcohol and drug use and expressed concern that people suffering from addiction could easily fall afoul of social behaviour rules in the centres and face eviction and homelessness.¹⁹⁸

People renting privately without a formal contract: Workshop participants highlighted that people without formal rental contracts are among the most vulnerable refugees.¹⁹⁹ Participants in the Moldova workshop indicated that many landlords were unwilling to pay the 12 percent²⁰⁰ withholding tax applied to rent and preferred to make informal arrangements.²⁰¹ This was echoed by a participant in Bratislava who shared examples of landlords using ‘unofficial’ contracts as a way to avoid tax payments, which can be appealing to refugees because of the flexibility but leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and without access to proper tenants’ rights.²⁰² People without legal rental agreements are also vulnerable to eviction and sudden homelessness. In addition, refugees without a rental contract may face issues when renewing their TP status without this proof of residency.²⁰³ Workshop participants also discussed landlords’ common perception of Ukrainians as short-term, unreliable tenants and reluctance to sign formal contracts with them for less than a one-year period. The law in Moldova also allows landlords to change the rent on private property in case of changes in price, without regulation, so renters across the board face a potentially precarious situation.²⁰⁴

2.5. Education

According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), up to 2 million children have been displaced from Ukraine since February 2022.²⁰⁵ Under TP, school-age Ukrainian children have the right to access education. However, levels of enrolment in primary and secondary schools across the five focus countries are varied—and generally relatively low—as many Ukrainian children continue to receive online education. For example, fewer than 1,000 Ukrainian children were registered as fully enrolled in Romanian schools as of January 2023.²⁰⁶

In the Czech Republic, enrolment in pre-primary, primary, and secondary grades (up to the age of 15) is mandatory for all children, including refugees. For the 2022–23 school year, UNICEF reported that 50,285 Ukrainian children had been accepted into Czech kindergartens, primary schools, and secondary schools (it was estimated that, at the end of 2022, 70 percent of kindergarten-aged refugee children attended kindergartens, 90 percent of primary school-aged children attended primary schools, and less than half of adolescents attended secondary schools).²⁰⁷ In Poland, Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia, all school-age children must be enrolled in education; for Ukrainian refugee children, this can include enrolment in an online Ukrainian school. Many Ukrainians in these countries report choosing to continue with online schooling provided by Ukrainian authorities for reasons including language barriers, uncertainty over length of stay in the host country, bureaucratic

¹⁹⁷ City of Bratislava (2023). [City Hostels](#), accessed 24 March 2023.

¹⁹⁸ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

¹⁹⁹ Chisinau research workshop 1 March 2023.

²⁰⁰ PWC (2023). [Worldwide Tax Summaries: Moldova](#), accessed 31 March 2023.

²⁰¹ Chisinau research workshops 1 March 2023.

²⁰² Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

²⁰³ IOM (2023). [Migration Information Centre](#), accessed 13 April 2023.

²⁰⁴ Global Property Guide (2019) [Income tax in Moldova](#), accessed 30 March 2023.

²⁰⁵ European Commission (2022). [Refugee flows from Ukraine](#)

²⁰⁶ Government of Romania (2023). [Romania: Report on the national response to those displaced from Ukraine](#), accessed 30 March 2023.

²⁰⁷ PAQ Research (2023). [Hlas Ukrajinců: Vzdělávání](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

difficulties, costs, space restrictions in schools,²⁰⁸ concerns that school certifications may not be recognised in Ukraine in future, and a general preference for schooling in Ukrainian.²⁰⁹

Governments and NGOs across the five focus countries have developed extracurricular educational support and provision, both attached and unattached to schools. For example, in Romania public schools and local authorities deliver after-school Romanian language programmes.²¹⁰ Poland's Ministry of Education has prepared guidance for teachers and educators on supporting Ukrainian refugees, including training in multi-cultural and intercultural education and teaching Polish as a foreign language, and recommended school-led initiatives such as Polish language classes and the hiring of Ukrainian-speaking teaching assistants.²¹¹ In Slovakia, the UNHCR has noted a number of informal learning opportunities are available for Ukrainian students and encouraged further expansion of these activities.²¹² The groups below were identified by the desk-based research and the research workshops as facing particular challenges at this stage of the refugee journey.

Pre-school children: Evidence from UNICEF's work on early childhood development indicates that access to quality care and education programmes helps to provide children with emotional, social, cognitive, and language foundations that are linked to positive education and wellbeing outcomes throughout childhood.²¹³ Before the arrival of refugees from Ukraine, kindergartens, especially in large cities, experienced serious pressure on places; this has become more severe since February 2022.²¹⁴ In the Czech Republic, it is estimated that 15 to 20 percent of preschool children may be excluded from education precisely because of the insufficient capacity of schools and kindergartens.²¹⁵ Furthermore, Ukrainians arriving with few or no social-communal networks struggle to access both informal and formal childcare. Limited access to preschool care and educational programmes outside the home adds to the vulnerability of younger preschool children displaced from Ukraine. In the Czech Republic, an alternative and temporary solution was the opening of adaptation groups and centres (which in practical terms means separate classes for Ukrainians). While some argue these may make children feel segregated and excluded,²¹⁶ those who have attended such adaptation groups more often moved on to formal education (85 percent).²¹⁷

Children who do not speak the local language: Language barriers were mentioned as a significant barrier to education in all workshops, particularly Romania, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. According to a PAQ survey, in the Czech Republic fewer than one-quarter of children under the age of three (22 percent) can communicate

²⁰⁸ For example, it is estimated that 3 percent to 5 percent of primary school pupils and roughly 10 percent of teenagers may be excluded from education because of the insufficient capacity of Czech schools. PAQ Research (2023). [Hlas Ukrajinců: Vzdělávání](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

²⁰⁹ UNHCR (2023). [Moldova 2022: Participatory Assessment](#), accessed 23 March 2023; UNHCR REACH (2022). [Slovakia multi sectoral needs assessment October 2022](#); UNHCR (2023). [Slovakia: regional refugee response plan 2023](#); UNHCR REACH (2023). [Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment Poland](#), accessed 24 March 2023; Kafembe, I., UNICEF (2022). [Using innovation in Romania to get Ukrainian children learning again](#); UNHCR, [Protection Risks and Needs of Refugees from Ukraine](#), accessed 13 April 2023; REACH UNHCR (2022). [Multi-Sector Needs Assessment: Key Findings](#), accessed 30 March 2023.

²¹⁰ Bucharest research workshop 15–16 February 2023.

²¹¹ Public Information Bulletin of the Commissioner for Human Rights, (2022). [Problems of education of children and youth from Ukraine - recommendations of the Ombudsman. The answer of MEiN](#)

²¹² UNHCR (2023). [Slovakia: regional refugee response plan 2023](#)

²¹³ UNICEF (2021). [The formative years: UNICEF's work on measuring ECD](#)

²¹⁴ Public Information Bulletin of the Commissioner for Human Rights (2022). [Problems of education of children and youth from Ukraine - recommendations of the Ombudsman. The answer of MEiN](#); Gromada, A., and Richardson, D., UNICEF (2021). [Where do rich countries stand on childcare?](#); PAQ Research (2023). [Hlas Ukrajinců: Vzdělávání](#), accessed 28 March 2023; United Nations Development Fund (2020). [INEQUALITIES IN URBAN AND RURAL MOLDOVA: Beyond incomes and averages, looking into the future of inequalities](#), page 45, accessed 31 March 2023.

²¹⁵ PAQ Research (2023). [Hlas Ukrajinců: Vzdělávání](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

²¹⁶ Deník, N. (2022). [Krizové řešení: Skupiny místo školy. Ukrajinským dětem ale hrozí segregace, varují experti](#), accessed 16 December 2022.

²¹⁷ PAQ Research (2023). [Hlas Ukrajinců: Vzdělávání](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

in common situations, and almost half of children (45 percent) know few or no Czech words.²¹⁸ This also applies to those children who have been in the Czech Republic for more than half a year.²¹⁹ A survey of refugees in Slovakia reported that, for those who had not completed education, not speaking the language was one of the most commonly reported reasons for not attending school (at 12 percent of respondents).²²⁰ Language support was also lacking in some schools; none of the nine schools that The Centre for Educational Analysis visited in Bratislava had the necessary tools to support children from Ukraine to overcome the language barrier.²²¹ Furthermore, a study by Comenius Institute reported that 85 percent of teachers surveyed said that language barriers were the biggest challenge in educating and integrating Ukrainian refugees, with 67 percent requesting additional language support in education and 58 percent asking for support to adapt curriculum content for non-Slovak children.²²² Save the Children reported that nearly three-quarters of Ukrainian children had little or no knowledge of Romanian and were unable to continue their education in the Romanian education system due to language barriers²²³ or struggled to join at the correct educational grade.

One participant in the workshop said that Ukrainian parents were concerned about their children falling behind educationally and that this was a key reason for preferring to continue with online Ukrainian schooling.²²⁴

In addition, Ukrainian children may face psychological problems such as anxiety, trauma, and fear following displacement and experiences of war that, when combined with language barriers, can make integration into a new school system particularly challenging.

Children attending online Ukrainian school: Those attending online-only schools have fewer opportunities for integration, language learning, and building social bonds. Workshop participants raised concerns about isolation, stigma, and demotivation among children, particularly the longer they attend online-only schools.²²⁵ In addition, it is difficult to monitor how many children not enrolled in local schools are in fact attending online Ukrainian schools, with the UNHCR estimating that up to 16 percent of Ukrainian children in Poland may not be attending school at all.²²⁶ Young people not attending either in-person or online school are especially vulnerable to exploitation, risky behaviours (such as criminality), and/or negative mental health outcomes.²²⁷

Children experiencing bullying: Workshop participants in Slovakia and Moldova commented that peers from pro-Russian parts of society might bully Ukrainians at school and online, with specific examples shared of some wearing pro-Russian tee-shirts to taunt Ukrainian children.²²⁸ Participants highlighted the mental toll on children when peers accuse them of lying about what happened in Ukraine in order to get support and hearing 'Why don't you go home? There's no bombing there anymore'.²²⁹ Among secondary school children in Slovakia, 28.3 percent reported being bullied multiple times per month, with the figure increasing for those from lower socio-economic

²¹⁸ PAQ Research (2023). [Hlas Ukrajinců: Vzdělávání](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

²¹⁹ PAQ Research (2023). [Hlas Ukrajinců: Vzdělávání](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

²²⁰ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023). [Fleeing Ukraine: Displaced People's Experiences in The EU](#), accessed 5 April 2023.

²²¹ Centre for Educational Analysis (2023). Inclusion of male and female pupils from Ukraine in education. Qualitative survey of nine Bratislava schools, accessed 4 April 2023.

²²² European Commission (2022). [Slovakia: challenges in the education of refugee children from Ukraine](#), accessed 26 March 2023.

²²³ Save the Children Romania (2022). [Save the Children Romania education survey](#)

²²⁴ Bucharest research workshop 15–16 February 2023.

²²⁵ Bucharest research workshop 15–16 February 2023.

²²⁶ UNHCR, REACH (2023). [Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment Poland](#), accessed 24 March 2023.

²²⁷ Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023.

²²⁸ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

²²⁹ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

backgrounds.²³⁰ This feeds into a culture where, as workshop participants explained, Slovak children are not told off for bullying and the behaviour is considered ‘kids being kids’.²³¹ Moreover, without knowledge of the local language, Ukrainian children cannot effectively advocate for themselves.²³² Bullying is also known to have a negative impact on reading performance and wellbeing, risking increased education gaps for Ukrainian refugees.²³³

Youth in their late teens: Students close to or at the point of finishing high school can fall between the Ukrainian and host country education systems. To complete the Ukrainian high school diploma, students need to sit in-person exams in Ukraine, which is in many cases impossible. Older teenagers are more likely to study online,²³⁴ as entrance exams for high schools, for example in the Czech Republic, can be extremely challenging for Ukrainian children who come from a different educational background and do not speak Czech. Older teenagers are also at greater risk of dropping out of full-time education and report higher incidences of mental health issues.²³⁵ One participant in the workshops shared examples of young people approaching the age of 18 expressing guilt and anxiety over whether they should return to Ukraine to fight, adding to the risk of dropping out of school and discontinuing employment or education.²³⁶

Children with disabilities or neurodiversities: Workshop participants, particularly in Slovakia, highlighted that Ukrainian children with neurodiversities such as dyslexia or autism struggle to get the extra support they need at home and in schools.²³⁷ Participants stated that even being admitted to a school was a challenge.²³⁸ This is partly due to a shortage of support for children with special needs, with only 12.1 percent of children under age seven in Slovakia having access to early childhood services.²³⁹

Roma children: Roma children might be particularly vulnerable due to: (1) generally lower educational levels in some cases; (2) limited Ukrainian language skills; and (3) discrimination. Before the escalation of the war, the Roma community in Ukraine had higher rates of illiteracy and school dropouts than the wider community, and it was estimated that almost half of Roma had not completed secondary education.²⁴⁰ This has made it more challenging for Roma communities to integrate into host schooling systems. In the Czech Republic, non-participation of Roma children in education is higher than Ukrainian refugee averages, particularly in preschool²⁴¹ and primary education,²⁴² where surveys estimate up to 90 percent and 78 percent non-attendance rates, respectively. Furthermore, a PAQ Research study found that only 25 percent of Ukrainian Roma respondents attended online Ukrainian schools.²⁴³ There is some evidence to suggest that Roma refugees are also less likely to attend education initiatives provided by the government, such as adaptation groups.²⁴⁴ These factors increase the challenges of adapting to life in the Czech Republic. Furthermore, estimates suggest as many as 34 percent

²³⁰ European Commission (2021), *Education and Training Monitor 2021*, Slovakia, accessed 12 April 2023.

²³¹ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

²³² Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

²³³ European Commission (2021), *Education and Training Monitor 2021*, Slovakia, accessed 12 April 2023.

²³⁴ See, for example, UNHCR REACH (2022). *Slovakia multi sectoral needs assessment October 2022*, accessed 13 April 2023.

²³⁵ Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023.

²³⁶ Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023.

²³⁷ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

²³⁸ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

²³⁹ European Commission (2021). *Education and Training Monitor 2021*, Slovakia, accessed 12 April 2023.

²³⁹ IOM UN Migration (2023). *How to get a job in Slovakia*, accessed 23 March 2023.

²⁴⁰ Roma Support Group (2022). *March 2022 Newsletter*, accessed 20 March 2023.

²⁴¹ PAQ Research (2022). *Hlas Ukrajinců: Šetření o romských ukrajinských uprchlících*, accessed 15 December 2022.

²⁴² PAQ Research (2022). *Hlas Ukrajinců: Šetření o romských ukrajinských uprchlících*, accessed 15 December 2022.

²⁴³ PAQ Research (2022). *Hlas Ukrajinců: Šetření o romských ukrajinských uprchlících*, accessed 15 December 2022.

²⁴⁴ PAQ Research (2022). *Hlas Ukrajinců: Šetření o romských ukrajinských uprchlících*, accessed 15 December 2022.

of the Roma community do not speak Ukrainian.²⁴⁵ Some Roma children, particularly those from Western and Southern Ukraine, are more likely to speak Romani at home than Ukrainian.²⁴⁶ While there are government initiatives to support Ukrainian refugees, efforts are largely focused on supporting children who speak Ukrainian (e.g., through translation of school resources, use of interpreters and dictionaries in exams, etc.), and there is little or no provision for students who do not speak Ukrainian well.

2.6. Employment and income

Under the rights of TP,²⁴⁷ Ukrainian refugees are entitled to access the host country labour market on par with citizens. Governments in the five focus countries have supported access to employment in different ways, including by establishing online job portals for Ukrainians—for example in Poland,²⁴⁸ Moldova,²⁴⁹ Romania,²⁵⁰ and Slovakia.²⁵¹ The Romanian National Agency for Employment also provides free advisory services and training opportunities for Ukrainian refugees.²⁵² Additional advice is provided by multilaterals such as IOM, which has a website dedicated to Ukrainians seeking employment in Slovakia that contains information on rights and entitlements.²⁵³ According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the pace of taking up employment has been higher among Ukrainian refugees than other refugee groups in Europe,²⁵⁴ estimating, for example, that at the start of 2023 between 25 percent and 40 percent of Ukrainian refugees in Poland were in employment.²⁵⁵ However, there are significant variations between countries. Finding work is still reported to be one of the primary difficulties for refugees in many countries,²⁵⁶ with 25 percent of individuals in Slovakia reporting in a recent survey that their main reason for unemployment is the lack of opportunities.²⁵⁷ According to IOM research in August and September 2022, in the Czech Republic, financial support (86 percent), language courses (60 percent), and job search support (60 percent) were refugees' three greatest needs with regard to work.²⁵⁸ The same survey conducted between October and November revealed changes mainly in regard to the financial support (mentioned by 64 percent),²⁵⁹ with language courses (48 percent), and employment support (58 percent) remaining among the frequently mentioned needs.²⁶⁰

The groups discussed below were identified by the desk-based research and the research workshops as facing particular challenges at this stage of the refugee journey.

Parents or guardians, especially of multiple children: Responsibilities associated with being a single parent can be challenging for separated families, with the burden falling disproportionately on women. The UNHCR estimates that 78 percent of refugees from Ukraine experienced separation during their refugee journeys.²⁶¹ This

²⁴⁵ Roma Support Group (2022). [March 2022 Newsletter](#), accessed 20 March 2023.

²⁴⁶ United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (2010). [Written comments of the European Roma Rights Centre and the International Charitable Organisation Roma Women Fund "Chiricli"](#)

²⁴⁷ European Union (2022). [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/382, 4 March 2022](#)

²⁴⁸ [Central Database of Job Offers](#), accessed 15 March 2023.

²⁴⁹ Government of Moldova (2023). [Pa6oma](#), accessed 6 April 2023.

²⁵⁰ Dopomoha (2022). [Dopomoha \(Help\)](#), accessed 20 March 2023.

²⁵¹ IOM UN Migration (2023). [How to get a job in Slovakia](#), accessed 5 April 2023.

²⁵² Dopomoha (2022). [Dopomoha \(Help\)](#), accessed 20 March 2023.

²⁵³ IOM UN Migration (2023). [How to get a job in Slovakia](#), accessed 23 March 2023.

²⁵⁴ OECD (2023). [What we know about the skills and early labour market outcomes of refugees from Ukraine](#)

²⁵⁵ OECD (2023). [What we know about the skills and early labour market outcomes of refugees from Ukraine](#)

²⁵⁶ UNHCR REACH (2023). [Area-Based Assessment, Slovakia](#), accessed 6 April 2023.

²⁵⁷ UNHCR. [Protection Risks and Needs of Refugees from Ukraine](#), accessed 13 April 2023.

²⁵⁸ IOM (2022). [DTM Report](#), accessed 20 November 2022.

²⁵⁹ IOM (2023). [DTM Report](#), accessed 5 February 2023.

²⁶⁰ IOM (2023). [DTM Report](#), accessed 5 February 2023.

²⁶¹ UNHCR (2022). [Displacement patterns, protection risks and needs of refugees from Ukraine – regional protection analysis 1](#)

means that familial, social, and communal networks are severely disrupted, and traditional support networks are not in place. A 2021 UNICEF study found that more than 50 percent of parents in Romania relied on informal care provided by family, friends, and neighbours.²⁶² When refugees arrive with few or no existing social-communal networks, they face challenges in accessing informal childcare.²⁶³ Without access to childcare and therefore employment, parents or guardians are more vulnerable to poverty.

The limited supply of nursery and kindergarten places in all research countries is felt by Ukrainian refugees.²⁶⁴ Lack of adequate childcare is among the key barriers to single parents entering the labour market in all five countries.²⁶⁵ Also, many refugee women are not entitled to maternity or parental benefits, which take into account whether the applicant has paid social and health insurance.²⁶⁶

People with disabilities: The UNHCR highlights how refugees with disabilities across the world experience obstacles to employment and, without work, lose out on self-reliance, a critical factor in their resettlement.²⁶⁷ This is the case in the current Slovak labour market, for instance, with refugees with disabilities struggling to access work and the assistance mechanisms that can enable it.²⁶⁸ Workshop participants highlighted that refugees with disabilities find securing employment challenging due to discrimination by employers and barriers to access, and that many face exploitation at work, including not being paid for hours worked.²⁶⁹ Some support does exist, however. Slovak citizens who are unable to work due to health issues can apply for an invalidity pension,²⁷⁰ and on 2 December 2022, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Family began the provision of a 'severe disability allowance' to provide subsidies to support refugees with severe disabilities, either in or out work.²⁷¹

Underemployed refugees: Research workshop participants in all countries raised concerns that highly qualified Ukrainians were not able to find work in their preferred fields in the host countries. Particularly in Moldova, this was linked to the perception that Ukrainians are not regarded as a sustainable workforce since most intend to return to Ukraine, and some might choose to leave the country with little notice.²⁷² Studies and workshop participants in all countries noted language skills as a barrier to higher-paying jobs,²⁷³ including in Moldova, where proficiency in both Russian and Romanian is required for some higher-skilled roles.²⁷⁴ During the research workshops in Poland, participants commented that Ukrainian refugees feel that working in jobs that they perceive as below their skill level and professional background creates additional anxiety and mental strain.²⁷⁵ Participants also shared examples of professionals struggling to have their qualifications recognised in Poland and the Czech

²⁶² Gromada, A., and Richardson, D., UNICEF (2021). [Where do rich countries stand on childcare?](#); UNHCR REACH (2022). [Slovakia multi-sectoral needs assessment 2022](#)

²⁶³ Deloitte (2022). [Refugees from Ukraine in Poland: challenges and potential for integration](#)

²⁶⁴ Public Information Bulletin of the Commissioner for Human Rights (2022). [Problems of education of children and youth from Ukraine - recommendations of the Ombudsman. The answer of MEIN](#); Gromada, A., and Richardson, D., UNICEF (2021). [Where do rich countries stand on childcare?](#); PAQ Research (2023). [Hlas Ukrajinců: Vzdělávání](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

²⁶⁵ Deník Referendum (2022). [Český sociální systém nezohledňuje, že z Ukrajiny prchají především ženy s dětmi](#), accessed 22 December 2022; UNHCR (2022). [Multi-Sector Needs Assessment Romania - Key preliminary findings, November 2022](#); UNHCR, REACH (2023). [Poland: Multi-sectoral Needs Assessment 2022](#), accessed 24 March 2023.

²⁶⁶ Czech Social Security Administration/CSSA (2023). [O jaké nemocenské pojištění se zajímáte?](#), accessed 20 February 2023.

²⁶⁷ UNHCR (2021). [Integration Handbook](#), accessed 12 April 2023.

²⁶⁸ UNHCR (2023). [Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan - Slovakia Chapter \(January-December 2023\)](#), accessed 5 April 2023.

²⁶⁹ Košice research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

²⁷⁰ European Commission (2023). [Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion](#), accessed 12 April 2023.

²⁷¹ Mareena & Human Rights League, [State contribution: Financial support for migrants and refugees in Slovakia](#), accessed 11 April 2023.

²⁷² Chisinau research workshop 1 March 2023.

²⁷³ OECD (2023). [What we know about the skills and early labour market outcomes of refugees from Ukraine](#)

²⁷⁴ Chisinau research workshop 1 March 2023.

²⁷⁵ Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023.

Republic.²⁷⁶ In addition, time and cost barriers to having Ukrainian qualifications recognised in host countries can prevent more Ukrainian refugees from finding employment in their chosen or skilled professions.

People who were not economically active prior to arrival in the host country: According to a survey by the Multiculturalism and Migration Observatory, approximately 68 percent of adult refugees in Poland were economically active before departure from Ukraine.²⁷⁷ For those who were not active in the formal labour market in Ukraine (such as carers), seeking employment in a new country can be particularly daunting despite sometimes finding themselves the sole or primary income earner due to family separation during displacement.

Refugees who rely on employment agencies: Low incomes can limit access to opportunities such as education, job training, and networking, making improvement of an individual's social-economic situation more difficult and increasing risks of exploitation. Across the EU, the UNHCR has reported on the likelihood of the exploitation of Ukrainian refugees in employment and other spaces.²⁷⁸ One form of employment of foreigners in some countries, such as the Czech Republic, is through employment agencies, which can provide accommodation and thus represents a simpler way to obtain both employment and accommodation.²⁷⁹ However, agency employment, especially if linked to accommodation, can come with potential exploitation issues (e.g., informal work, which can come without guaranteed breaks, with irregular payment, non-compliance with labour regulations, and no contract), as many people do not report abuse, fearing reprisal.²⁸⁰ Some Czech NGOs that provide legal and social counselling have reported that problems of agency exploitation have worsened with the number of refugees.²⁸¹ In Slovakia, there have been stories of temporary staffing agencies sending Ukrainian workers to jobs and accommodation that do not comply with regulations.²⁸² Workshop participants in Bratislava also highlighted that employment agencies have been reported to take financial cuts and exploit refugee workers, for example by paying them less than the minimum wage.²⁸³

People who do not speak the local language: A survey across EU countries accepting refugees found that 52 percent of women and 45 percent of men reported not being employed due to their language skills, and 48 percent of respondents said that their current job was below their education level.²⁸⁴ Language skills were raised as an issue in all countries, impacting refugees' ability to find employment opportunities, take part in interviews, and obtain employment. For example, a PAQ survey in the Czech Republic found that one of the main reasons for unemployment was insufficient knowledge of the Czech language.²⁸⁵ In Romania, 41 percent of respondents to the UNHCR multi-sectoral needs assessment reported that language barriers were a challenge in obtaining enough income to meet their household needs.²⁸⁶ Participants in the Bucharest research workshops noted that refugees who speak English may have better access to employment opportunities, but refugees with neither

²⁷⁶ Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023, Prague research workshop 1–2 February 2023.

²⁷⁷ Pędziwiatr, K., Brzozowski, J., and Nahorniuk, O., (2022). [Multiculturalism and Migration Observatory, Refugees from Ukraine in Kraków](#)

²⁷⁸ UNHCR (2022). [Statement on risks of trafficking and exploitation facing refugees from Ukraine attributed to UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for Protection](#), accessed 11 April 2023.

²⁷⁹ Seznam Zprávy (2022). [Ukrajinci ve spárech otrockých agentur: v Česku dřou zdarma, bez pauz i smluv](#), accessed 15 December 2022.

²⁸⁰ Seznam Zprávy (2022). [Ukrajinci ve spárech otrockých agentur: v Česku dřou zdarma, bez pauz i smluv](#), accessed 15 December 2022.

²⁸¹ Seznam Zprávy (2022). [Ukrajinci ve spárech otrockých agentur: v Česku dřou zdarma, bez pauz i smluv](#), accessed 15 December 2022.

²⁸² Spiegel International (2022). [Ukrainian Refugees Report Cases of Exploitation in Europe](#), accessed 5 April 2023.

²⁸³ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

²⁸⁴ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023). [Fleeing Ukraine: Displaced People's Experiences in The EU](#), accessed 5 April 2023.

²⁸⁵ PAQ Research (2022), [Hlas Ukrajinců: Chudoba](#), accessed 25 November 2022.

²⁸⁶ UNHCR (2022). [Multi-Sector Needs Assessment Romania - Key preliminary findings, November 2022](#)

Romanian nor English language proficiency were unlikely to secure employment.²⁸⁷ In Slovakia, multiple studies report that language barriers are the primary reason that refugees struggle to find employment.²⁸⁸

People based outside of major cities: There is a disparity in unemployment rates and types of work between larger cities, particularly in Romania, Slovakia, and Moldova. Unemployment rates also differ significantly. For example, in 2021, the Romanian National Institute of Statistics estimated that the lowest rates of registered unemployment were in Bucharest (0.8 percent) and the highest were in the southwest (4.3 percent).²⁸⁹ After Bucharest, the city of Constanta hosts the second highest number of refugees from Ukraine residing in Romania.²⁹⁰ Participants in the research workshop discussed the seasonal nature of employment in Constanta, with more work available in the summer season. This makes it challenging for Ukrainian refugees living there to secure stable, reliable work at other times of year.²⁹¹ A UNHCR area-based assessment of Constanta from August 2022 found that 92 percent of refugees surveyed were reliant on savings to meet household income needs, and that livelihoods could become a priority need for Ukrainian refugees in the city as the conflict protracts.²⁹² In Moldova, agricultural work is disproportionately undeclared compared to other industries,²⁹³ and a lack of decent infrastructure such as roads and electricity impacts on the ability of rural regions to develop economically.²⁹⁴ There is also a significant brain drain from rural regions to the capital and to other countries, resulting in a lack of economic growth and opportunities in Moldova's rural regions.²⁹⁵ These factors make finding quality employment more challenging for Ukrainians living in rural settlements or outside of the larger cities.

People near retirement age: Participants in the Romania research workshop noted that refugees who are close to retirement age face additional challenges.²⁹⁶ Those who want to find employment in Romania have fewer routes into the labour market, particularly if they are unable to speak Romanian, and others who were able to work in Ukraine might be compelled to keep working (and, potentially, travelling) due to uncertainty about accessing their pensions.²⁹⁷ Digital literacy may also limit older people's access to information on employment opportunities. People aged 60 and above were the group most likely to prefer receiving information in person or from their friends and family.²⁹⁸

2.7. Community, social, and political life

Since February 2022, the initial focus in all five countries has been on humanitarian response and immediate needs. However, as the situation protracts, governments are increasingly looking at integration and community cohesion, with different approaches shaped by historic trends of immigration and asylum, the existence of

²⁸⁷ Bucharest research workshop 15–16 February 2023.

²⁸⁸ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023). [Fleeing Ukraine: Displaced People's Experiences in The EU](#), accessed 5 April 2023.

²⁸⁹ UNHCR REACH (2023). [Area-Based Assessment, Slovakia](#), accessed 6 April 2023; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023). [Fleeing Ukraine: Displaced People's Experiences in The EU](#), accessed 5 April 2023; and UNHCR. [Protection Risks and Needs of Refugees from Ukraine](#), accessed 13 April 2023.

²⁸⁹ European Commission (2021). [Labour market information: Romania](#)

²⁹⁰ UNHCR REACH (2022). [UNHCR Romania: Situation Overview in Constanta, Area-Based Assessment \(As of July-August 2022\)](#)

²⁹¹ Bucharest research workshop 15–16 February 2023.

²⁹² UNHCR REACH (2022). [UNHCR Romania: Situation Overview in Constanta, Area-Based Assessment \(As of July-August 2022\)](#)

²⁹³ International Labour Organisation (2022). [Turning Moldova "white" – The Moldovan government takes bold steps to encourage the formalization of employment](#), accessed 25 March 2023.

²⁹⁴ World Bank (2020) [Local roads bring greater connectivity and support to rural communities in Moldova](#), accessed 25 March 2023.

²⁹⁵ Chemonics International (2023) [Turning Moldova's Brain Drain into Brain Gain](#), accessed 25 March 2023.

²⁹⁶ Bucharest research workshop 15–16 February 2023.

²⁹⁷ Bucharest research workshop 15–16 February 2023.

²⁹⁸ UNHCR (2022). [Displacement patterns, protection risks and needs of refugees from Ukraine – regional protection analysis](#)

Ukrainian communities before February 2022, and the political climate.²⁹⁹ Engagement on integration issues focused on social and community issues by governments and multilateral organisations has been noted in all five countries, and activities are conducted at the national and local government levels and by active civil society and NGO networks. The groups discussed below were identified by the desk-based research and the research workshops as facing particular challenges at this stage of the refugee journeys.

People suffering from trauma: Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of adult refugees in a survey reported experiencing trauma since the war started, and 62 percent reported impacts on their wellbeing such as panic attacks and a loss of self-confidence.³⁰⁰ A workshop participant shared, ‘everyone coming from Ukraine these days is traumatised.’³⁰¹ The impact of trauma means that many Ukrainian refugees may struggle to participate in social and community life, and this was mentioned as a significant characteristic that can impact Ukrainian refugees in all five research countries. One participant in the Bucharest research workshop added that living with family members who are suffering from trauma also created barriers to integration, sharing examples of young people struggling to support parents who exhibited signs of apathy, depression, and anxiety.³⁰² A participant in the Poland workshop described struggles in the initial months in Poland, commenting:

‘It was difficult for me to understand how people can smile on the streets and look happy when such atrocities were happening in Ukraine, how they could continue with their lives as if nothing was happening. I went to therapy and after six months I started seeing the good things in life again, enjoying the theatre, discovering new places’.³⁰³

The potential impacts of trauma can become especially acute for people who do not receive adequate mental health support or counselling. This might be due to high demand of such services. For example, 14 percent of refugees seeking medical or psychological support in Slovakia reportedly have not received it.³⁰⁴ On the other hand, stigma around mental health in both host communities and Ukraine can mean that refugees might not seek help when needed.³⁰⁵ Slovakia’s League for Mental Health also argues that many refugees who hope to return to Ukraine imminently struggle to integrate as their disbelief in their ‘new reality’ means that they invest less in their current situation.³⁰⁶

People employed in long-hour jobs: Ukrainian refugees in employment are likely to be working in ‘low-skilled’ sectors, often working irregular or long hours, which makes integration into community life challenging. This challenge can be exacerbated by other barriers such as lack of language skills or childcare, or other caring responsibilities. Participants in the Poland workshops added that the loss of previous peer groups, combined with

²⁹⁹ UNHCR (2023). [Ukraine situational regional response plan January-December 2023 Romania chapter](#)

³⁰⁰ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023). [Fleeing Ukraine: Displaced People’s Experiences in The EU](#), accessed 11 April 2023; for other surveys, see PAQ Research (2022). [Hlas Ukrajinců: Duševní zdraví uprchlíků](#), accessed 20 November 2022.

³⁰¹ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

³⁰² Bucharest research workshop 15–16 February 2023.

³⁰³ Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023.

³⁰⁴ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023). [Fleeing Ukraine: Displaced People’s Experiences in The EU](#), accessed 11 April 2023.

³⁰⁵ de Vetten-Mc Mahon, M., Shields-Zeeman, L.S., Petrea, I., et al. (2019). [Assessing the need for a mental health services reform in Moldova: a situation analysis](#). *Int J Ment Health Syst* 13, 45; Romaniuk, P., Semigina, T. Ukrainian health care system and its chances for successful transition from Soviet legacies. *Global Health*. 2018 Nov 23;14(1):116. Doi: 10.1186/s12992-018-0439-5. PMID: 30470237; PMCID: PMC6260664.

³⁰⁶ Relief Web (2022). [Supporting Mental Health as Ukrainian Refugees Navigate Life in Slovakia](#), accessed 12 April 2023.

few opportunities to meet new people while working long hours and trying to secure meaningful accommodation, education, and employment opportunities made it difficult for Ukrainian adults to integrate into Polish community life and to attend regular Polish language courses.³⁰⁷

People separated from family and/or in the host country alone: The UNHCR estimates that 78 percent of refugees from Ukraine experienced separation during their refugee journeys,³⁰⁸ meaning that familial, social, and communal networks are severely disrupted, and traditional support networks are not in place. Separated family members face multiple challenges including difficulty accessing support and resources, negative impacts on mental health, and greater risk of exploitation or harm. Participants in the Romania research workshop noted that elderly people who were separated from family and in Romania alone faced greater risks of social isolation and higher barriers to integration.³⁰⁹

Elderly people: Older refugees are particularly at risk of social isolation, having lost their social networks and lacking easy ways to form new relationships through children or education.³¹⁰ Workshop participants in Slovakia also raised that refugees in this age group are the most vulnerable to social isolation due to lack of targeted activities for seniors.³¹¹

Children and young people in their late teens: Children and adolescents, particularly if they do not speak the local language or are enrolled in online Ukrainian school, can experience social isolation.³¹²

LGBTQIA+ refugees can experience challenges in a range of countries. Discrimination has tangible impacts on how people integrate into society, with just 25 percent of LGBTQIA+ refugees living in the EU reporting that they feel part of their communities, as compared to 34 percent of their non-LGBTQIA+ counterparts.³¹³ LGBTQIA+ rights have become an increasingly politicised issue in recent years, with anti-LGBTQIA+ rhetoric used for political purposes.³¹⁴ Since January 2020, more than 100 Polish municipalities have declared themselves ‘free from LGBT ideology’.³¹⁵ This can create an unwelcoming environment for LGBTQIA+ refugees, particularly outside of major cities. Some activists are working to provide resources such as safe housing and financial aid for medications for LGBTQIA+ refugees, but they face a lack of assistance from the government and rely on grants from international organisations.³¹⁶ In Slovakia, numerous cases of online harassment of the LGBTQIA community, hate speech, and violence have been recorded.³¹⁷ LGBTQIA+ persons from Ukraine report having experienced discrimination, physical violence, and, in some cases, detention by Slovak authorities.³¹⁸ In addition, LGBTQIA+ refugees may have specific needs and sensitivities that are more difficult to meet when they are displaced. For example, 47 percent of Ukrainian LGBTQIA+ respondents in the EU considered lack of privacy in their housing to be a

³⁰⁷ Warsaw research workshop 9 February 2023.

³⁰⁸ UNHCR (2022). [Displacement patterns, protection risks and needs of refugees from Ukraine – regional protection analysis](#)

³⁰⁹ Bucharest research workshop 15–16 February 2023.

³¹⁰ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

³¹¹ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

³¹² The Slovak Spectator (2023). [The silent toll of the war in Ukraine is on minds](#), accessed 4 April 2023; UNHCR REACH (2023). [Area-Based Assessment, Slovakia](#), accessed 6 April 2023.

³¹³ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023). [Fleeing Ukraine: Displaced People’s Experiences in The EU](#), accessed 12 April 2023.

³¹⁴ Reid, G. (2021). [Poland breaches EU obligations over LGBT and women’s rights](#), Human Rights Watch 2021.

³¹⁵ Ash, L. (2020). [Inside Poland’s LGBT-free zones](#), BBC News 2020.

³¹⁶ Su, Y., Valiquette, T., Greatrick, A., Robinson, C., The New Humanitarian (2022). [How LGBTQI+ to LGBTQI+ support is helping Ukrainian refugees find safety in the EU](#)

³¹⁷ Reuters (2022). [‘Radicalised teenager’ killed two outside Slovakia gay bar](#), accessed 12 April 2023.

³¹⁸ VOICE and HAIS (2022). [Slovakia Assessment Report – Waiting for the Sky to Close: The Unprecedented Crisis Facing Women and Girls Fleeing Ukraine](#), accessed 12 April 2023.

problem—figures higher than non-LGBTQIA+ refugees surveyed.³¹⁹ Furthermore, in the EU, LGBTQIA+ refugees struggle to know where to access services and information to support their specific needs more than non-LGBTQIA refugees (45 percent versus 30 percent in one survey).³²⁰

People with disabilities and neurodiversities: People with disabilities can be excluded from community life in several ways, depending on the disability and the social and cultural context in which they live. Many public spaces, such as buildings, sidewalks, and transportation systems, are not designed to be accessible to people with physical disabilities, making it difficult for them to navigate and join community activities. People with disabilities may face social isolation due to stigma, discrimination, or lack of social support. Economic exclusion due to discrimination in employment or lack of access to education or training opportunities can limit the ability to participate and contribute to society. Workshop participants also noted that the lack of accessible state schools or support for children with disabilities may lead to social isolation.³²¹ People with some disabilities or neurodiversities may also face communication barriers that make it difficult for them to participate in social interactions, access information, or communicate their needs and preferences. Refugees with disabilities may be overlooked, as they may have limited access to information and may be separated from their support networks, leaving them unable to respond to the situation and navigate through the new environment.³²²

Roma refugees: The Roma community faces deeper issues than other refugee groups regarding discrimination and lack of access to services. In monitoring the treatment of Ukrainian Roma refugees in Poland, Amnesty International reported examples of discrimination and prejudice and expressed concern about the impact of xenophobic stereotypes.³²³ The UNHCR reported that discrimination faced by Roma meant that Ukrainian Roma refugees faced problems with service access and support that non-Roma refugees were less likely to encounter.³²⁴ In one survey in the Czech Republic, 30 percent of Roma refugees said they encountered intolerance from the general population, including 14 percent by Czech authorities and institutions and 9 percent by other Ukrainian refugees.³²⁵

People who are politically active in supporting the war effort (Slovakia and Moldova): With a section of society reporting pro-Russian sentiments,³²⁶ Ukrainian refugees who overtly support Ukraine in the war, particularly in Slovakia and Moldova, risk attracting attention from pro-Russian groups that are actively hostile to their presence and support to the war. Participants in the workshops highlighted cases of Ukrainians in Moldova who faced anti-Ukrainian rhetoric in their hosts' homes due to the influence of Russian media sources or historic sympathy for Russia.³²⁷ Indeed, much of the Russian-language media in Moldova has in the past often come from Russia itself,³²⁸ and some Russian-speaking communities have more sympathetic views of Russia in the context of the invasion—for example, a recent poll in Gagauzia found that support for the pro-Western

³¹⁹ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023). [Fleeing Ukraine: Displaced People's Experiences in The EU](#), accessed 12 April 2023.

³²⁰ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2023). [Fleeing Ukraine: Displaced People's Experiences in The EU](#), accessed 12 April 2023.

³²¹ Bratislava research workshop 7–8 March 2023.

³²² OHCHR (2022). [Ukraine: 2.7 million people with disabilities at risk, UN committee warns](#), accessed 26 March 2023.

³²³ Amnesty International (2022). [Poland: "We came here, they wouldn't let us in." Roma from Ukraine treated as unwanted refugees](#)

³²⁴ Mirga-Wójtowicz, E., Talewicz, J., and Kolaczek, M., UNHCR (2022). [Human rights, needs and discrimination – the situation of Roma refugees from Ukraine in Poland](#)

³²⁵ PAQ Research (2022). [Hlas Ukrajinčů: Šetření o romských ukrajinských uprchlících](#), accessed 15 December 2022.

³²⁶ GLOBSEC (2023). [Ukrainian refugees in Visegrad countries: Societal Attitudes and Challenges of Accommodating People Fleeing the War](#), accessed 11 April 2023; GLOBSEC (2022). [New report shows that the V4 population supports Ukrainian refugees with some reservations](#), accessed 22 March 2023; [Slovak Academy of Science](#), GLOBSEC (2022). [New poll: Slovaks want Ukraine to win the war, Not Russia](#), accessed 22 March 2023.

³²⁷ Chisinau research workshop 2 March 2023.

³²⁸ Broadcasting Board of Governors (2016). [Role of Russian Media in the Baltics and Moldova](#), accessed 28 March 2023.

Moldovan government was as low as 2 percent, with 85 percent to 90 percent of respondents reporting having trust in the Russian Federation.³²⁹

³²⁹ Gagauzyeri.com (2023). [Підробно об итогах соцопроса в Гагаузіи](#), accessed 28 March 2023.