

Experiences, Needs and Aspirations of Children, Adolescents and Caregivers Displaced from Ukraine

Presentation of key findings and take-aways

Report launch, September 2023

Agenda

1.Introduction

2.Objectives and methodology

3.Key findings

4.Key take-aways

5.Questions and answers, concluding remarks

Research objectives and methodology

Research Objective and Questions

Research Objective

To analyze the **vulnerabilities, risk and protective factors**, and **protection needs** of Ukrainian refugee children, adolescents and their caregivers, in order to **improve evidence-based interventions related to child protection and monetary transfers**.

Questions related to:

1. Demographic profile
2. Main risk and protective factors
3. Child protection needs and the extent to which they are met
4. Facilitators and barriers of access to services
5. Financial situation
6. Intentions to stay/return

Methodology

- Regional, longitudinal phone survey in 24 countries (5 rounds):
 - Child Protection survey with child caregivers (4,489 interviews) – November-December 2022, March-April 2023
 - Cash survey (10,740 interviews) – December 2022-March 2023
- Qualitative data collection in Poland and Romania – December 2022-February 2023:
 - 46 consultations with 307 refugee children
 - 18 FGDs with 115 refugee child caregivers
 - 6 FGDs with 33 host-community members
 - 34 KIIs with service providers (child protection, healthcare and education sectors)

Key findings

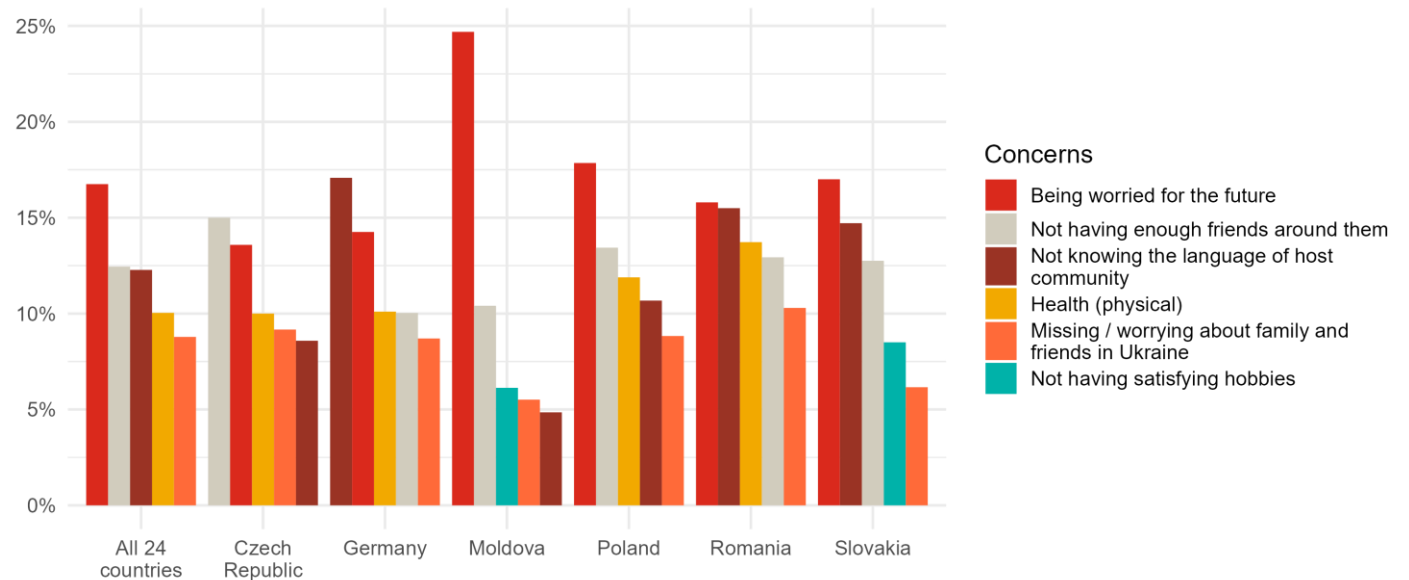
1
**Family and friends as
key concerns and
sources of support**



Separation and loneliness

- Missing and being worried about their family, friends or pets left behind in Ukraine
- Behavioral changes in children, linked to separation
- Lack of friends
- Difficult relationship with parents

% respondents by main safety and wellbeing concerns for refugee children and adolescents from Ukraine in host country (top 5), by country and type of concern - average between survey rounds 1 and 2



Support from family and friends

- Children see family and friends as the people they can rely on most
- Families' varying importance across countries and age groups
- Enjoyment of joint family activities
- Adolescents' autonomy and involvement in family decision making

"If I have a problem, I talk to my mom or to my best friends. I talk to my dog too!"

–

Secondary school girl from Poland

2
**Feeling welcomed by
host community –
but also facing
discrimination**



Feeling welcomed by host community

- Children felt safe in parks, schools, malls or social hubs ran by NGOs; or everywhere
- Caregivers see police (31%) and state social services (25%), as most trusted protection actors
- Community organizations were also trusted (24%), especially in Moldova (40%) and Romania (32%)
- Hosts, neighbors, friends or volunteer organizations helped them feel welcome and provided support



Verbal and physical harassment

- 94% of caregivers did not feel discriminated against (consistent across countries and time)
- Children shared experiences of xenophobic or upsetting remarks from host community (especially in Poland, in school and public transport, by adults and children)
- In Romania, physical bullying reported mainly by young boys, mainly on playgrounds

"In the tram, a boy spoke Ukrainian, and the Poles pulled him out of the tram, intimidated him, and took his phone."

- Secondary school girl from Poland

3

**Language as key
concern, barrier and
facilitator of
integration**



Foreign language and environment

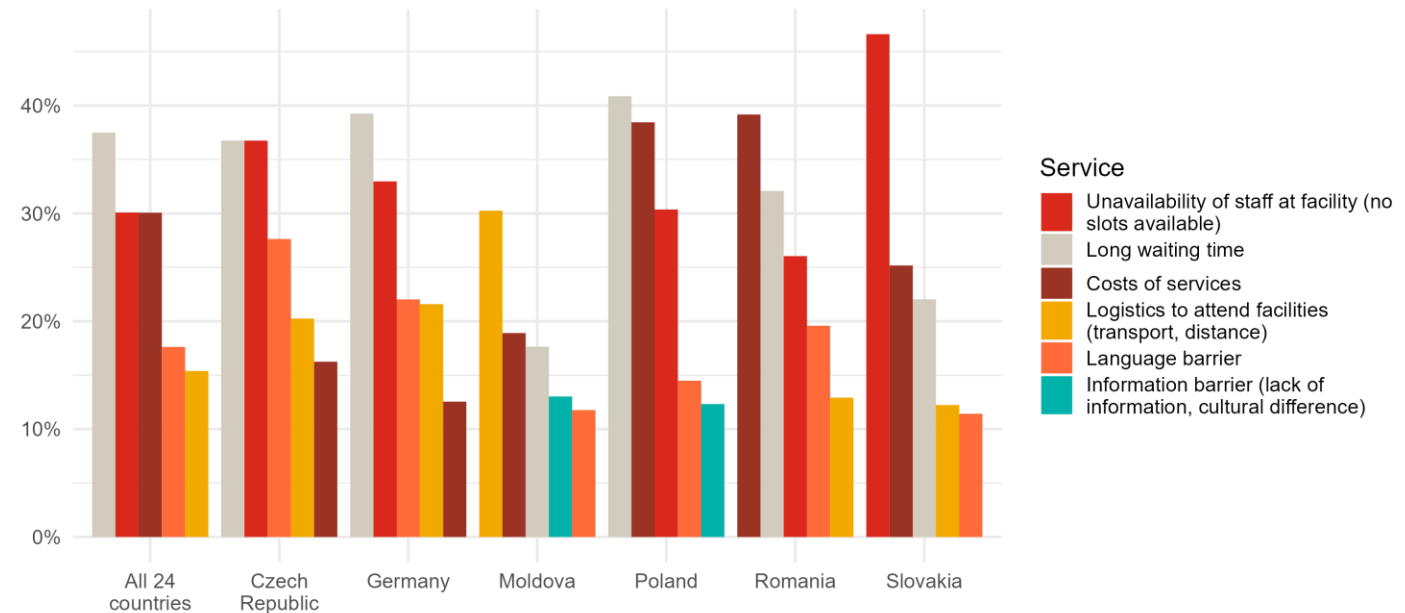
- Most children worried about not knowing the local language and about being in an unfamiliar environment
- Importance for children's autonomy
- 13% of caregivers reported a lack of local language skills as one of the main concerns for refugee children



Language facilitating service access and integration

- Key barrier to accessing services (education, health etc.) – especially in Czech Republic
- 61% of caregivers reported they had poor or very poor skills in the local language
- Language courses widely available, but 68% not following local language classes (exception: Germany)

% respondents by reported barriers to services (top 5), among those who reported barriers, by country and barrier - average between survey rounds 1 and 2



4
**More sustainable
education solutions**



Need for accessing education

- Education among top 3 needs reported by caregivers (9%)
- Both attempted (65%) and successful access (96%) very high for education;
- Problems: (1) Quality of learning online and in UKR hubs, (2) little leisure time, (3) less integration
- Barriers to local schooling: (1) Language, (2) unclear long-term intentions to stay, (3) lack of study recognition by UKR government

*“I like that there is a Ukrainian school. It is boring to be online without friends.” –
Secondary school girl from Romania*

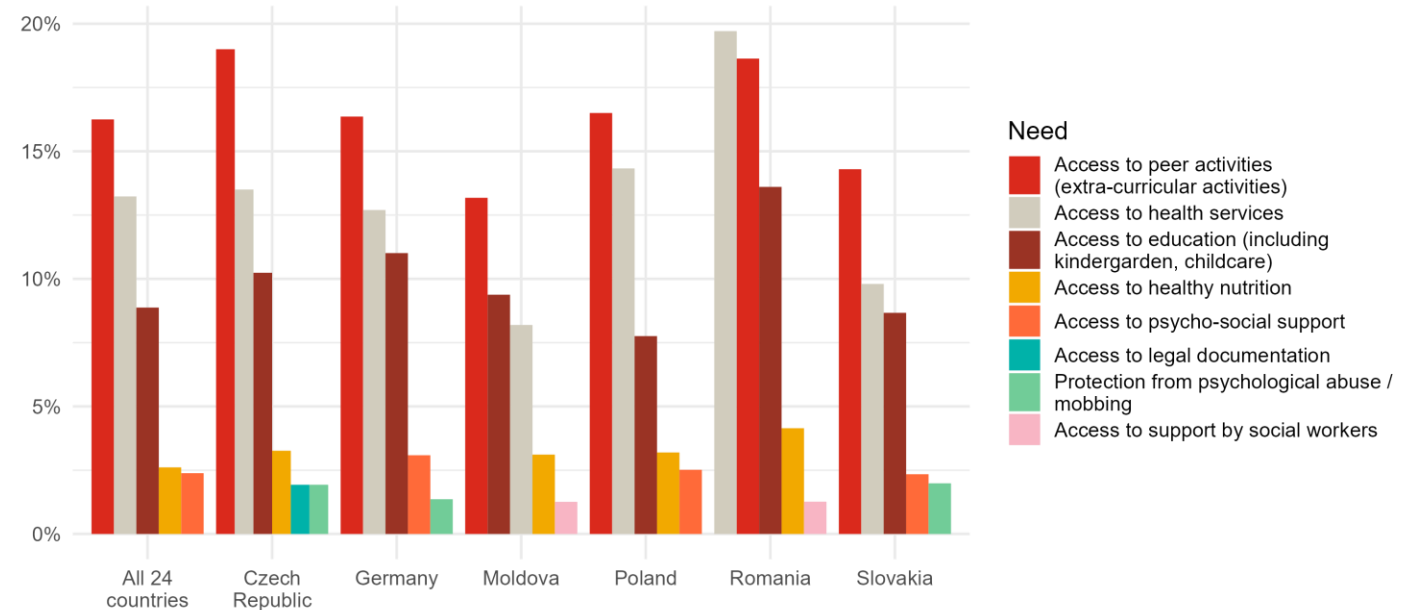
5
**Better access to
extra-curricular
activities**



Need for extra-curricular activities

- Extracurricular activities as children's topmost need
- Desire to do sports and performing arts

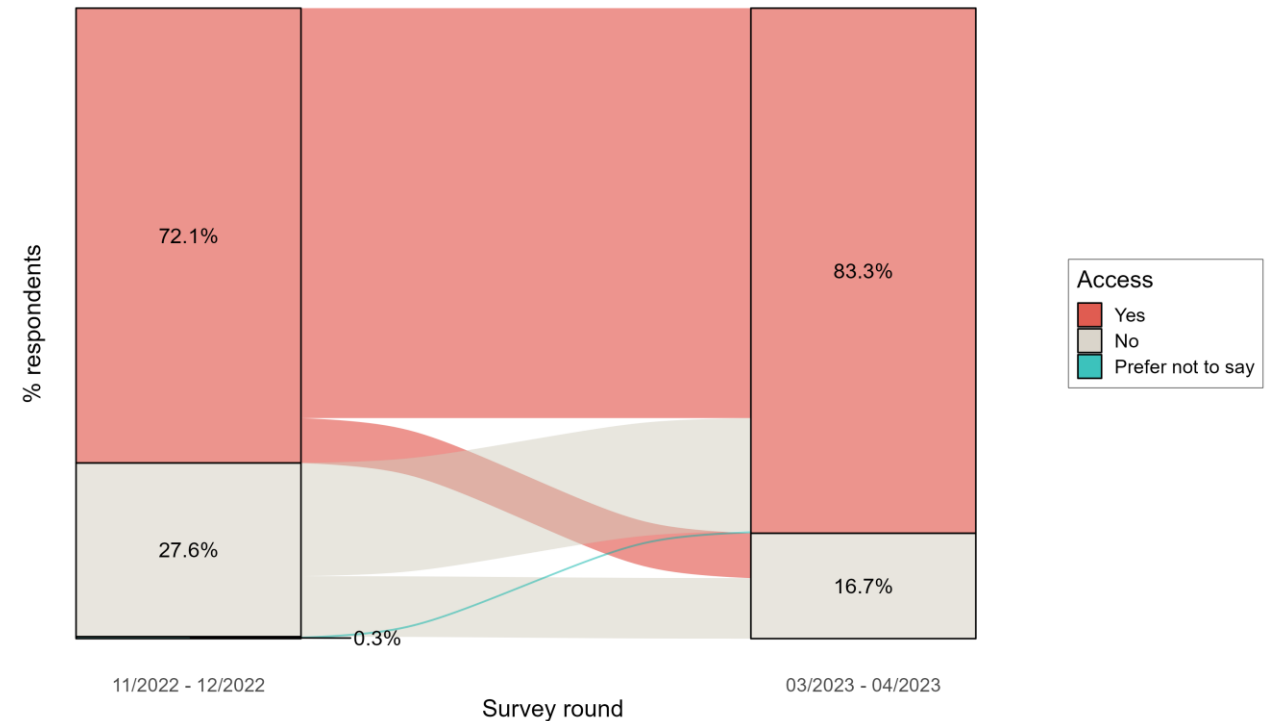
% respondents by main unmet child protection needs in the household in host country (top 5), by country and need - average between survey rounds 1 and 2



Difficulties accessing extra-curriculars

- Both attempted and successful access improved
- EA least accessible service
- Access barriers:
 - Availability
 - Costs
 - Level
 - Scheduling

% caregivers who's children accessed and afforded extra-curricular activities (among those who tried to access this service) in all countries
n = 323



6 Overcoming barriers to physical and mental healthcare



Need for improved healthcare access

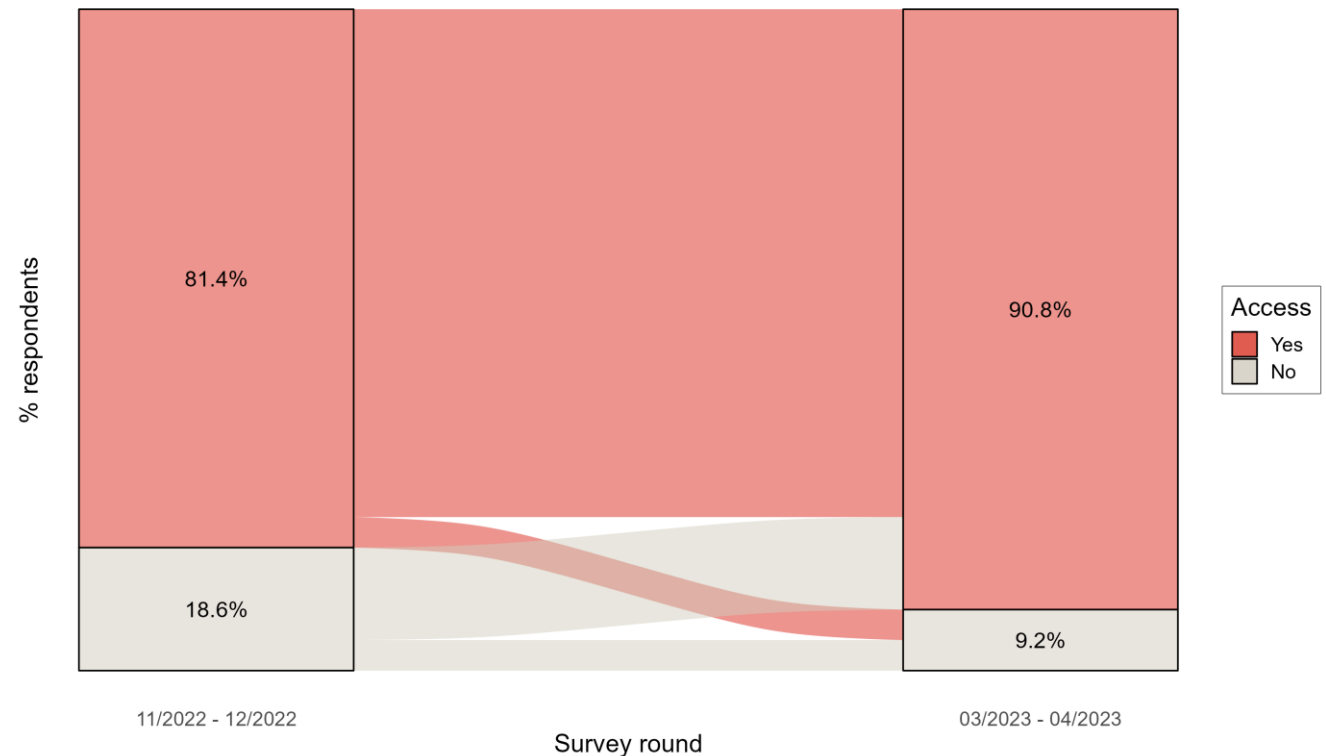
- 13% of caregivers reported better access to physical healthcare as among children's main needs
- Access to MHPSS not often highlighted as priority need (exception: service providers)
- Children more inclined than caregivers to talk about MH issues



Difficulties accessing physical healthcare

- Attempted and successful access rates are high and further increased
- Access barriers:
 - Long waiting time
 - Costs
 - Language
 - Lack of trust in health system
 - Role of GPs as “gatekeepers”
 - Lack of information among doctors
- Problematic coping

% caregivers who accessed and afforded physical health services
(among those caregivers who tried to access this service)
in all countries
n = 672



Difficulties accessing MHPSS

- Few people try accessing MHPSS, but most manage to do so
- Access barriers:
 - Lack of awareness/information in UKR
 - Stigma among caregivers

“My daughter asked my permission to go to a psychologist. She is very precocious, as many children are nowadays. I offered her to talk with me, but she told me that she needed support of a specialist. [...] Initially, it was only her who was going to a psychologist. Then all our family started going.” – Female caregiver, Romania

7 Financial difficulties for people with disabilities



Dependency on assistance

- Only 31% of respondents from households with a person with disability were employed (vs. 46%)
- Lower monthly income: Total p.p.: 235 Euro (vs. 316 Euro)
- Higher expenses on rent for accommodation: 423 Euro (vs. 341 Euro)
- Less savings: 25 Euro per month p.p. (vs. 51 Euro)



Key programmatic and policy take- aways

Ensuring Wellbeing and Safety



Access to MHPSS services

- Strengthen **family and communities' ability to respond** to the mental health and psychosocial needs of children and increase access and availability of focused, non-specialised MHPSS services.
- Ensure the **availability of age and gender** appropriate and **inclusive** recreational activities to support psychosocial wellbeing and community integration of Ukrainian refugees.

Access to MHPSS services

- Increase **awareness about MHPSS services** available, when and how to access them.
- Subsidize and **increase access** to a wider range Mental Health and Psycho-social Support (MHPSS) services
- Continue to allow Ukrainian citizens whose **psychological qualifications** are not recognised to continue to be permitted to provide services

Supporting Integration



Language as means to integration and social cohesion

- Integration and the enjoyment of community activities and **socialization** is hindered by **language barriers** and unfamiliar environment:
 - need to support **integration and social cohesion** with targeted activities that bring together both communities
 - awareness and community mobilization on rights and needs of refugees
 - language support

Addressing Child Protection Needs



Caregivers as a protective factor:

- Children report relying on family and friends as **protective factor**: need to **strengthen support to HHs (focus on single parent)**
 - child care options
 - employment opportunities
 - MHPSS for parents/caregivers
 - parenting courses and activities to strengthen parent/child relationship
 - extracurricular activities in school settings and integration

Access to Child Protection Services

- Increase **funding and tailored design** of inclusive services, social protection systems and employment opportunities to support refugee children and caregivers
- Extend the application of the **Temporary Protection Directive** or provide international protection as appropriate.
- Ensure that the **European Child Guarantee national action plans** include children from Ukraine, specifically in the areas of education, housing, and mental health support

Inherent Value of Children's Consultations



Importance of Child Participation

- Ensure **child participation** in programmes and policy
- Children's urge to express their concerns and **work on solutions together** with peers and adults



QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU!

