



UNHCR UKRAINE BORDER MONITORING AT INTERNATIONAL BORDER CROSSING POINTS
(Borders between Ukraine, the EU and Moldova)

February 2025

Since mid-March 2022, UNHCR and its local NGO partners Right to Protection (R2P), NEEKA, and The Tenth of April (TTA), have conducted border monitoring at 30 border crossing points between Ukraine and Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Moldova. The border monitoring teams provide information, legal assistance, protection counselling and social support to people leaving Ukraine to seek international protection as well as to those returning to Ukraine.

1. Overview: Cross-Border Movements (in and out)

In February 2025, a reduction of cross-border mobility from January was observed, reflecting a trend in previous years when movements slowed in February after a seasonal spike in January. Levels of cross-border mobility for January and February in 2025 also remained in a similar range compared the first two months of the year in 2023 and 2024. In February 2025, there was a greater net outflow, with 12,000 more people departing Ukraine than entering the country.

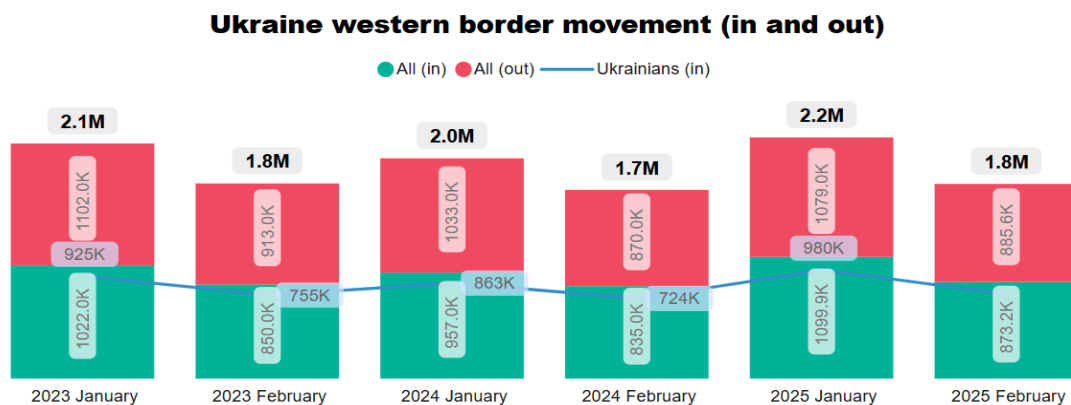


Figure 1: Number of people crossing international borders with Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania. The figure does not include data on border crossings with Moldova. Source: State Border Guard Service (SBGS) of Ukraine.

2. Key monitoring findings

Departing Ukraine

In the reporting period, 1,418 departing people were interviewed: 72% of respondents were female and 9% were older people above the age of 60 years. 3% reported to be living with a disability.

- **First-time departures:** 16% of respondents reported to be leaving Ukraine for the first time - a slight decrease comparing to the previous month (17%).
- **Purpose for departing Ukraine:** The most frequently mentioned purpose for departing was visiting relatives (32%). The second largest share (30%) included those returning to a country of temporary residence including temporary protection (17%) and those seeking safety abroad (13%). Other purposes included business travel (15%) and vacation (14%).
- **Internal displacement as factor for departure:** Of the 10% of respondents (2% less than in January 2025) who said that they were internally displaced before going abroad, 44% noted that their displacement influenced their decision to leave the country.
- **Intended duration of stay abroad:** There is a continuing trend of the vast majority (71%) expressing uncertainty about the duration of their stay abroad (70% in January). 5% planned to stay abroad for less than one month, 18% intended to stay up to one year, and 6% planned a permanent stay abroad.
- **Intention to return should the situation stabilize:** 62% of the interviewed individuals plan to return to Ukraine once the situation stabilizes, marking a significant increase by 17% compared to January 2025. As a result, the share of those uncertain about their return has decreased, now reported at 31% (44% in January). 7% said they did not plan to return, even if the situation stabilized (11% in January). The improvement of the security situation remains the most important factor influencing the decision to return, cited by 53% of respondents. Other key factors include access to livelihoods (20%) and the stabilization of electricity supply (19%). Cut or closure of assistance programmes in host country was noted by 4% as a factor.

Arriving and returning to Ukraine

In the reporting period, 340 people arriving or returning to Ukraine were interviewed. 86% of respondents were female and 13% were older people. 5% reported to be living with a disability.

- **Duration of stay in Ukraine:** Temporary returns continue to dominate, with 67% of respondents planning to stay for less than one month. Meanwhile, 20% expressed uncertainty about the duration of their stay in Ukraine, 11% planned for permanent return, and only 3% intended to stay for up to 12 months.
- **Reasons for arriving/returning to Ukraine:** 68% of those interviewed were returning to Ukraine to visit relatives (43%) and due to homesickness (25%). Other significant reasons for returning include access to medical services (14%) and checking on property (12%).
- **Intended destination oblast:** Kyiv city and Kyivska oblast remain the top final destinations for arrivals, mentioned by 34% of respondents. Other top locations were Kharkivska oblast (20%), and Dnipropetrovska oblast (13%).

3. Public information by the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine on cross-border movements

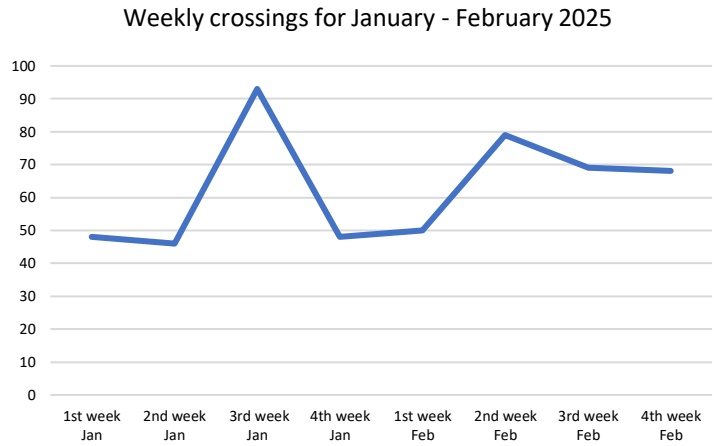
- In February 2025, the State Border Guard Service (SBGS) of Ukraine published several reports on its website, detailing both smuggling-related detentions and arrests as well as intercepted attempts by men of conscription age to cross the border. These intercepted attempts were observed across all oblasts bordering the EU and Moldova, with some cases involving minors and foreigners acting as facilitators for irregular movement. The cost for facilitating such crossings was reported to range from USD 1,000 to USD 15,000 per person.

4. Arrivals from the temporarily occupied territories through BCP Domanove

Since August 2024, the number Ukrainians arriving from the temporarily occupied territories (TOT), Belarus or the Russian Federation through the border crossing point (BCP) “Domanove” between Ukraine and Belarus increased following the closure of the humanitarian corridor in Sumska oblast. UNHCR has systematized its monitoring presence as of January 2025.

In January and February 2025, according to the information of local authorities in Volynska oblast, 501 people, including 66 children, arrived through this BCP. On average, 63 individuals per week arrived during the first two months of 2025. This constitutes a slight decrease compared to the weekly average during the last quarter of 2024 – 102 people.

For people traveling from the TOT, they report that it takes 2 to 3 days to reach this corridor. The border crossing process, including screenings by law enforcement on both sides of the BCP, typically takes 4 to 5 hours



The graph above is based on the information shared by the Social Protection Department in Volynska oblast on a weekly arrivals.

- **Profile of respondents.** In January and February, border monitors surveyed 86 individuals of all the 501 arrivals (over 17% of arrivals). The 66 of surveyed individuals (77%) were female, out of whom 60 were of older age.
- **Areas of departure.** Reportedly, 87% of respondents were travelling from the TOT, nine per cent from Belarus and three per cent from Russian Federation.
- **Reasons for travelling:** Those surveyed noted concerns regarding to their future in the occupied territories (63%), the security situation (57%) and family unity (55%) as three main reasons for reaching Ukraine through this BCP, often after a long and arduous journey. Lack of access to medical services (24%) and pension benefits (21%) in areas of departure were also important factors. Some noted that they need to renew their Ukrainian documents (6%) and 2% arrived due to the risk of imposition of Russian documents.
- **Intentions:** 78% of surveyed individuals said they intend to stay permanently with no intention to go back to the TOT, while 6% were planning to stay less than one month and 8% more than one month. Among the latter two groups, the majority are planning to back to the TOT after visiting relatives or accessing pension allowances. Additionally, four respondents mentioned plans to continue traveling to other countries—two to Poland and two to Germany. The remaining 8% were uncertain.

5. Support provided at the border crossings in February 2025

In February 2025, UNHCR partners, R2P, NEEKA and TTA, conducted **240 monitoring visits to the BCPs** with Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Moldova. During these visits, UNHCR’s partners provided different forms of support to **861 individuals** who crossed the border. This support included a range of services, including counselling of 794 people, the provision of legal assistance to 98 people, while 18 persons received social accompaniment, 13 unaccompanied/separated children were assisted and seven persons were provided with transportation services.

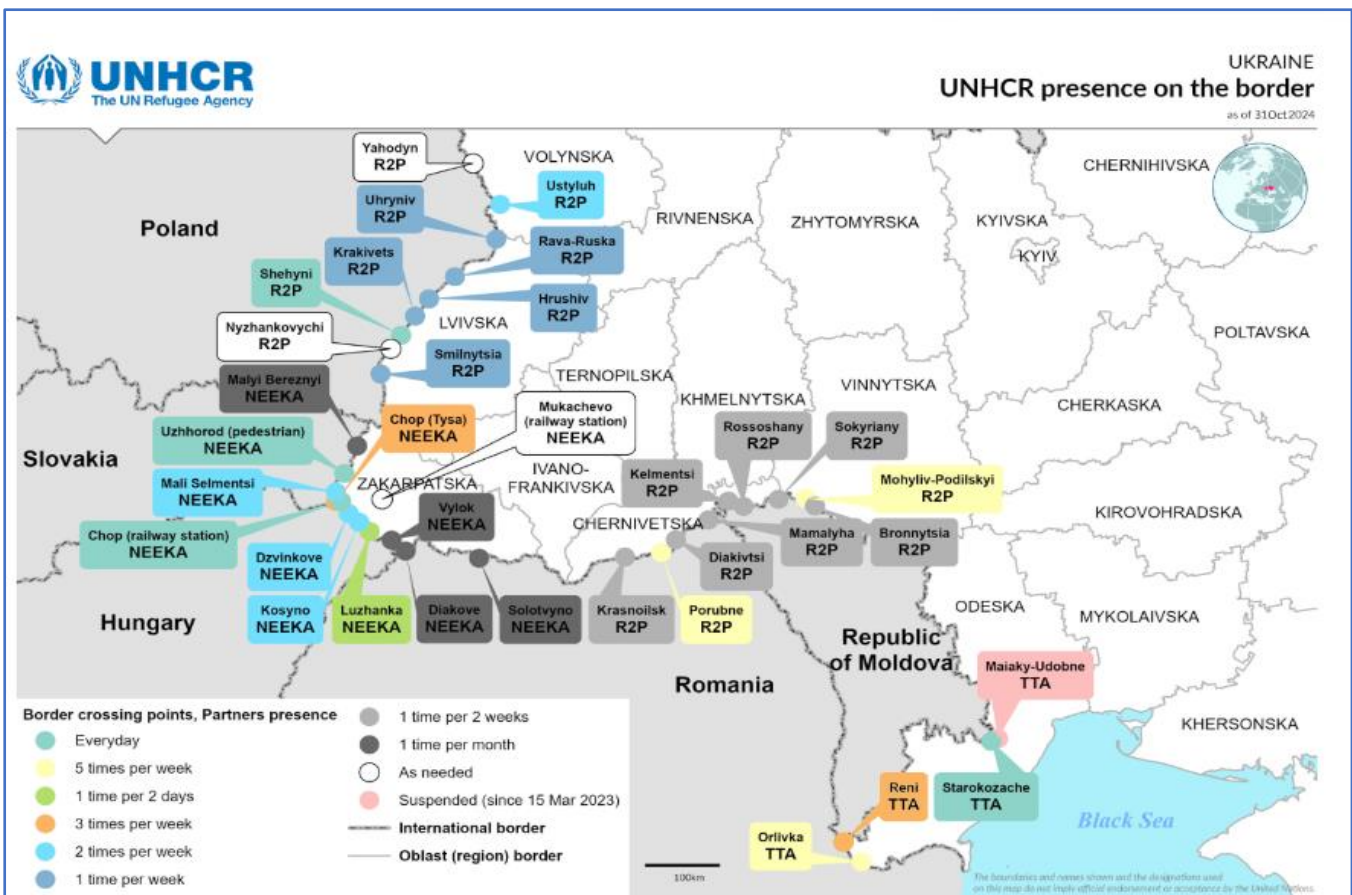
Note on Methodology

In February 2025, UNHCR partners surveyed 1758 people (comprising 71% females 18-59 years of age, 18% males 18-59 years of age, 3% females 60+ years of age, 6% males 60+ years of age and 2% persons with disabilities).

Since mid-March 2022, UNHCR has deployed border monitoring teams through local NGO partners to provide information and assistance to people crossing the border with EU countries (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania) and Moldova. These teams provide information, legal assistance, protection counselling and social support to people leaving Ukraine to seek international protection, as well as to those returning to the country.

Border monitoring teams conduct individual interviews with people who are exiting and entering Ukraine. The purpose of these interviews is to gather information about the individual circumstances, reasons for moving and their protection needs. The border monitoring methodology is focused on assessing and responding to the protection and humanitarian needs of people crossing the border between Ukraine and the EU countries and Moldova. By conducting interviews, gathering data, and providing necessary support, the goal is to enhance protection measures and ensure the well-being of those who are on the move.

The monitoring findings are based on individual interviews conducted with people crossing the border, both those entering and exiting Ukraine and other observations made by the border monitors.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- See Border Snapshot for November 2024 [here](#), December 2024 [here](#), January 2025 [here](#)
- Visit Ukraine's Operational Data Portal for more information products [here](#).
- Visit UNHCR Ukraine's Website [here](#).

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