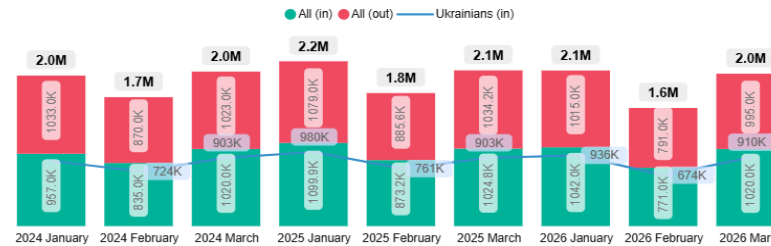


Since mid-March 2022, UNHCR and its local NGO partners Right to Protection (R2P), NEEKA, and The Tenth of April (TTA), have conducted [border monitoring at 30 crossing points](#) between Ukraine and Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Moldova.

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. As of 2025, a revised monitoring tool was deployed.

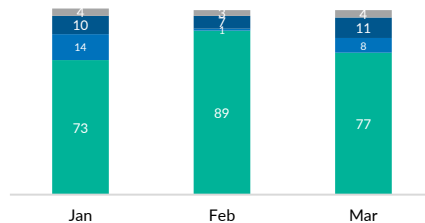
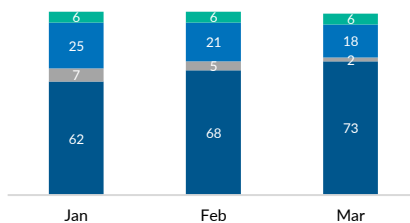
**Ukraine western border movement (in and out)**

**Key cross-border mobility trends**

- In the first quarter of 2026, the overall levels of cross-border mobility decreased by over 1 million border crossings from Q4/2025. While in Q4/2025 6.7 million crossings were recorded, they dropped to 5.6 million crossings in Q1 of 2026.
- Q1/2026 border crossing trends mirror those observed in Q1 of 2025 and 2024, with a steady decrease in border crossings observed in February.
- Inbound movements dominated in Q1 with 32K more people arriving than departing.

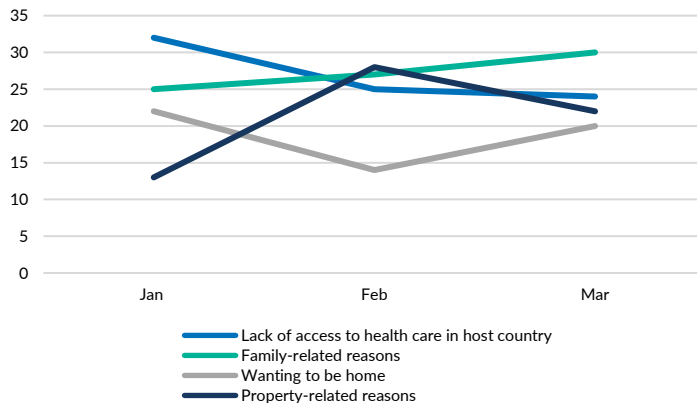
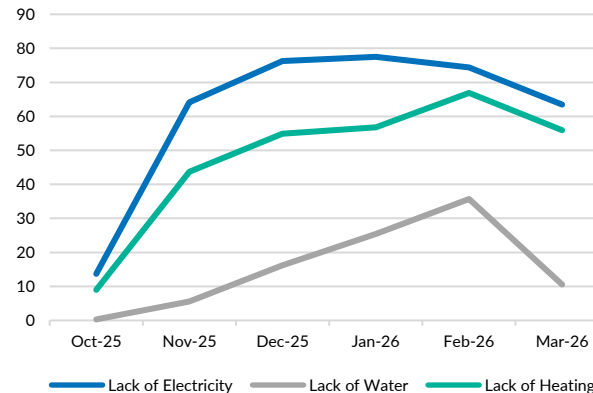
In Q1 of 2026, monitors conducted [5,134 individual interviews](#) at the borders. Of those 77% were departing, and 23% were entering Ukraine.

**Entering Ukraine:** 1,181 interviews were conducted with people entering Ukraine in the Q1. Of those, 79% were female and 21% were male respondents. 25% were above the age of 60 years.

**Departing Ukraine:** 3,953 interviews were conducted with people departing Ukraine in Q1. 66% of respondents were female and 34% male. 12% of respondents were above 60 years.

**Duration of stay in Ukraine Q1 2026**

**Duration of stay abroad Q1 2026**

**Border monitoring trends: Returns to Ukraine – Q1 2026**

- In Q1/2026, returns to Ukraine due to [struggles to access health care in host countries and family-related reasons](#) (27%) remained the main reasons for returning, followed by the need to check on property left behind (21%) and homesickness (19%). 1% indicated that they are coming to Ukraine to access Government assistance and services.
- In terms of intended duration of stay in Ukraine, short-term stays remained most prevalent in Q1/2026 with [80% saying they intend to stay in Ukraine for less than one month](#), an increase in quarterly percentage by 5% from Q4/2025. 9% were uncertain about their duration of stay, 8% planned to stay in Ukraine for over 1 month, while 4% planned to return permanently.

**Main reasons for returning Q1 2026**

**Energy-related reasons for departure Q4/2025 & Q1/2026**

**Border monitoring trends: Departures from Ukraine – Q1 2026**

- 18% of respondents said they were [departing Ukraine for the first time](#) since 24 February 2022, a decrease by 10% from Q4/2025. 16% reportedly departed to seek safety abroad, a decrease by 4% from Q4/2025.
- 6% of respondents said they were [internally displaced prior to departing Ukraine](#). For 13% of them, this contributed to their decision to leave Ukraine.
- As throughout 2025, in Q1/2026 nearly all respondents noted safety and security concerns as a main [reason for their departure](#) at 95%. As in Q4/2025, energy-related reasons – lack of electricity, heating and water – remained the second most important group of factors for people to depart Ukraine. 5% reportedly departed for mobilization-related fears, while 4% left due the occupation of their homes.
- 68% of respondents were unsure about the [period of their stay abroad](#). 5% of respondents intended to stay abroad permanently. Unlike for those who return to Ukraine, short-term stays abroad are less popular reported at 6%.
- 63% indicate that they [intend to return to Ukraine should the situation stabilize](#), an increase by 8% from Q4/2025. Almost one third of respondents, 32%, was unsure and 6% indicated that they would not return, even should the situation stabilize, aligning with the 5% of those who reportedly departed Ukraine permanently.
- [Improvements in the security situation remains the dominant factor influencing return decisions](#) for 44% of respondents, followed by a stabilization of the energy situation back home (32%) and access to job opportunities (22%). The cut or closure of assistance programmes in host countries was a factor for returns for 2% of respondents.

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. In Q1/2026, some [2,150 people received support at the borders](#).