Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation

MOLDOVA

TEMPORARY PROTECTION: INTENTIONS & EXPERIENCES

Protection Working Group (PWG)

July 2023

In mid-January 2023, the government of the Republic of Moldova approved the granting of Temporary Protection (TP) to displaced Ukrainians and certain third country nationals residing in Moldova, effective 1 March 2023. The approval of TP provided these individuals with a stable legal status in the country, initially for one year, until 1 March 2024, with the possibility of renewal. When TP came into effect, displaced Ukrainians could still reside in the country under the emergency laws. This changed, however, on 15 May 2023, when the right to reside under the emergency laws was withdrawn. As a result, those already in the country had 90 days, until 13 August 2023, to regularize their legal status, be it through TP, asylum, a statelessness application, or residence permit.

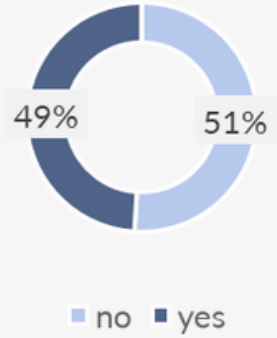
To strengthen and promote an evidence-based response related to the implementation of TP in the Republic of Moldova, PWG partners have been gathering information from Ukrainian refugees about their intentions to apply for TP and, if they have applied for TP, their experiences in doing so. The analysis from this survey, along with an interactive dashboard of the TP survey results allowing for disaggregation based on different criteria, can be found here: TP Dashboard

DEMOGRAPHICS & INTENTIONS

Between 26 April and 10 July 2023, a total of 682 surveys were conducted in 26 raions throughout the Republic of Moldova, including in the Transnistrian Region. Respondents resided in a variety of housing arrangements: 35% in RACs; 26% renting apartments; 19% hosted by family members; and 14% hosted by non-family members. Like the refugee population overall, the majority of adult respondents were female. The overwhelming majority of respondents were Ukrainian nationals (92%), followed by Moldovan nationals with residence permits in Ukraine (5%) and some third-country nationals (2%). Out of the total number of respondents, roughly 41% (283) reported to have some degree of disability (difficulty seeing, remembering, hearing, walking, or communicating), of which 11% reported having a lot of difficulty doing so or who could not do so at all.

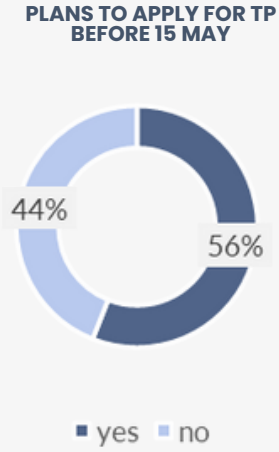
Submission of TP applications was almost evenly split among respondents, with around 49% of respondents having already applied for TP and 51% not having done so. Out of those who had applied, about one-third (34%) had completed the entire process and had received their TP card, while 64% had only completed the online registration and were waiting for an in-person appointment with IGM. Out of the 682 respondents, only 7 (2%) stated that their applications had been rejected. For those over age 50 who had serious disabilities, inability to reach an IGM registration site was the primary barrier for not applying for TP.

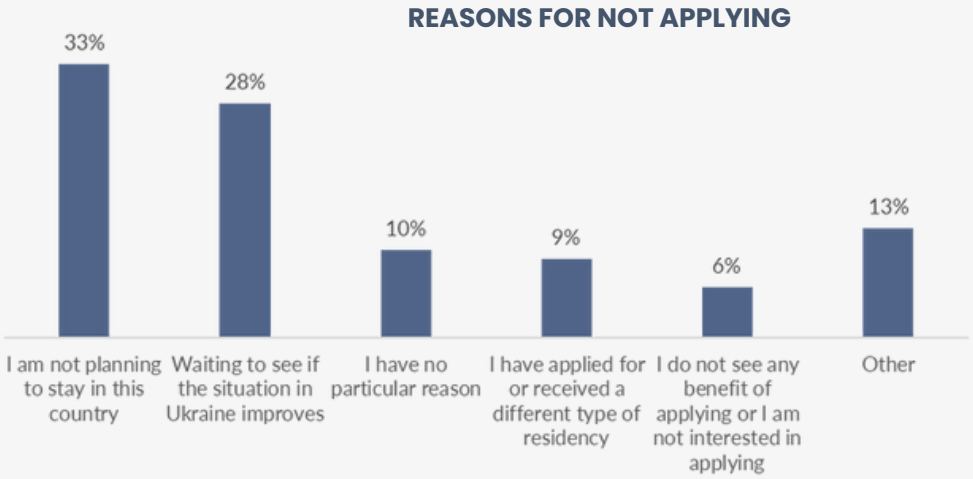
APPLIED FOR TEMPORARY PROTECTION

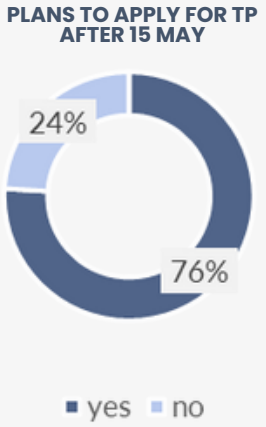


Disaggregated data between those surveyed before and after 15 May, when the 90-day "clock" to regularize status in Moldova began, shows no significant change in the percentages of those who had and had not applied for TP (49% and 51%, respectively). However, the percentage of those planning to apply for TP increased significantly after 15 May, from 56% to 76%, with the overwhelming majority of those surveyed after 15 May either having applied for TP or planning to do so (86%).

Overall, for those who stated that they did not intend to apply for TP, the majority of respondents cited as a reason their plans to leave Moldova (33%) or their hopes to return home when the situation in Ukraine improved (28%). Lack of information about TP, inability to prove residence or relationship status, or lack of documentation were reported as reasons for not applying for TP by a smaller percentage of respondents (13%).



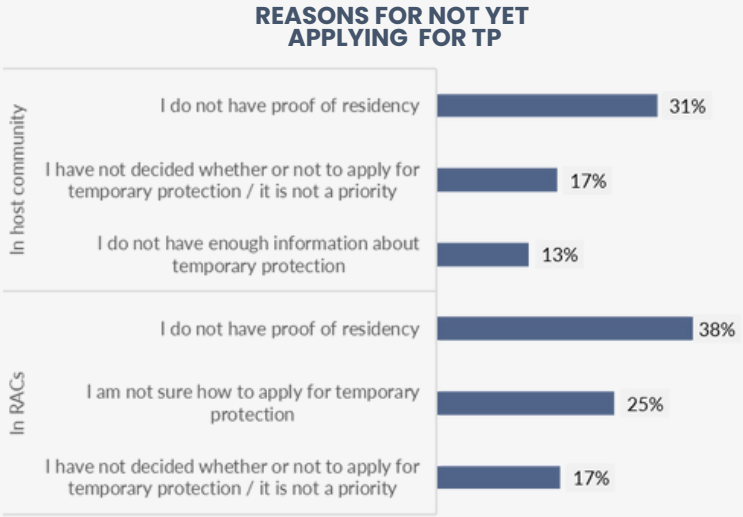




Of note, the percentages of those who cited plans to leave Moldova or hopes for improved conditions in Ukraine as reasons for not applying for TP dropped significantly between those surveyed before 15 May (73%) and those surveyed after 15 May (49%). Of those surveyed before and after 15 May, challenges to TP registration as a reason for not applying for TP correspondingly rose, essentially doubling, between these two survey cohorts (7% versus 16%). Between these two groups, the percentage of respondents who cited that they did not see any benefit in applying for TP or were simply not interested in doing as a reason for not applying for TP also increased from <1% before 15 May to 14% after 15 May.

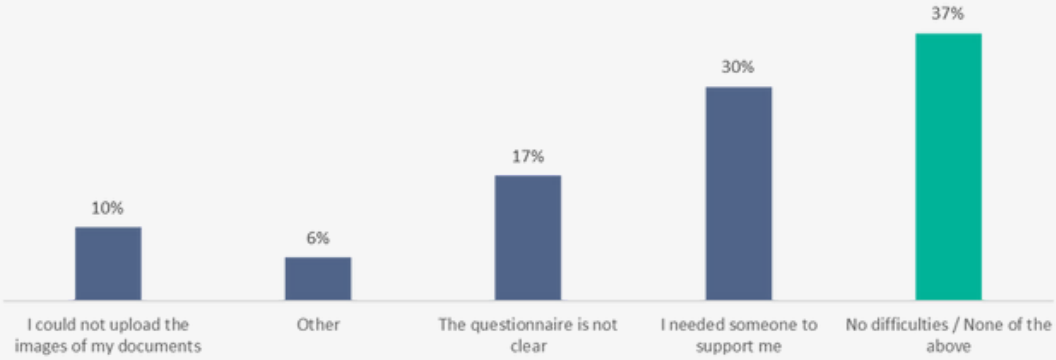
Submission of applications for TP differed significantly between those living in Refugee Accommodation Centers (73%) and those renting apartments or hosted by family or non-family members (37%).

Of those surveyed who had not yet applied for TP, but intended to do so, a significant portion (32%) cited lack of proof of residence in Moldova as the reason for not having yet applied. This included both those living in the host community (31%) and those living in RACs (38%).



EXPERIENCES

REPORTED BARRIERS WITH THE ONLINE APPLICATION



With regard to the experiences of the 51% of respondents who had applied for TP, 79% said that they did not face any major difficulties with the TP application and interview process as a whole. Obstacles highlighted by respondents related to difficulties in completing the online form (11%), proving residency (5%), and difficulty with identity documents (1%). Difficulties applying for TP for those with disabilities was slightly different, with 74% stating that they did not face any major difficulties in the process overall.

For those who had completed the online form, approximately 63% stated that they faced some challenges, either needing someone to help them complete the on-line form (30%) or had other difficulties such as the questionnaire not being clear (17%) or had issues uploading documents or images (10%). For those respondents who identified as having some form of disabilities, the need for someone to help complete the on-line form increased to 40%.

PARTNERS

**The partners listed here are those that have been trained on the survey tool and/or captured survey data using it.*

Contact

Andrew Painter, Sector Coordinator, UNHCR, painter@unhcr.org
Carolina Cazaciuc, Sector Co-Chair, Ombudsman's Office, carolina.cazaciuc@ombudsman.md
Sean Sager, UNHCR, sager@unhcr.org