

Research Terms of Reference

Longitudinal Study of Refugees from Ukraine

REG2204

Ukraine

October 2026

REACH Informing
more effective
humanitarian action

1. Executive Summary

Country of intervention	Host countries for refugees from Ukraine following the 2022 full-scale invasion					
Type of Emergency	☐	Natural hazard	X	Conflict	☐	Other (specify)
Type of Crisis	☐	Sudden onset	☐	Slow onset	X	Protracted
Mandating Body/ Agency	N/A					
IMPACT Project Code	REG2204					
Overall Research Timeframe	September 2026 – January 2027 ¹					
Research Timeframe (planned deadlines)	1. Pilot/ training: 05/11/2026-06/11/2026		4. Data analysed and validated: 22/12/2026			
	2. Start collecting data: 09/11/2026		5. Consolidated output sent for validation: 15/01/2027			
	3. Data collected: 27/11/2026		6. Consolidated output validated and published: 31/01/2027			
Number of assessments	☐	Single assessment (one cycle)				
	X	Multi-assessment (more than one cycle) <i>One round of data collection (Round 35 of the Longitudinal study of Refugees from Ukraine)</i>				
Humanitarian milestones	Milestone		Deadline (can be tentative)			
	☐	Donor plan/strategy	--/--/----			
	☐	Inter-cluster plan/strategy	--/--/----			
	☐	Cluster plan/strategy	--/--/----			
	☐	NGO platform plan/strategy	--/--/----			
	X	Other (Specify): Policymakers and NGOs within the EU; domestic	(no deadline)			

¹ This ToR covers the period from September to January 2027; all previous iterations of the ToR are presented here:
2022: https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/impact/4a56be21/IMPACT_GLO_UKR_TORs_longit-study_June-2022_ext.pdf
March 2025 (Refugees): https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/impact/85834dde/REG2204_-_REACH_TOR_Longitudinal_study_2025_for_sharing.pdf
August 2025 (Returnees): https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/impact/6293222c/REG2204_IMPACT_TOR_Longitudinal_study_returnee_2025_public.pdf
August 2025 (Refugees): https://repository.impact-initiatives.org/document/impact/ba7144de/REG2204_-_REACH_TOR_Longitudinal_study_Aug2025_for_sharing.pdf

		policymakers and NGOs working on returns and reintegration (Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy, and Ministry of Communities, Territories, and Internally Displaced Persons of Ukraine).		
Audience Type & Dissemination <i>Specify who will the assessment inform and how you will disseminate to inform the audience</i>	Audience type X Strategic X Programmatic ☐ Operational		Dissemination X General Product Mailing (e.g. mail to NGO consortium; Donors) X Mailing through an established partnership network X Regional WG Mailing X Presentation of findings X Website Dissemination (Relief Web & REACH Resource Centre)	
	Stakeholder mapping <i>Has a detailed stakeholder mapping been conducted during research design to identify all actors that could contribute to and/or benefit from the research?</i>	X	Yes	☐
General Objective	To analyse how the refugee situation evolves over time across key host countries and the key factors shaping these changes, using a longitudinal approach with multi-sectoral coverage. Given the prolonged stay of Ukrainian refugees abroad, the study aims to focus on long-term integration – particularly in the areas of employment, accommodation, documentation, and broader socio-economic aspects of integration, including social cohesion and social ties between Ukrainians and the host country community, as well as in relation to Ukrainians in Ukraine. The study aims to provide time-sensitive insights into evolving trends, exploring refugees' lived experiences, as well as supporting regional policy-makers within the EU with evidence-based data on evolving situations of Ukrainian refugees living there. Additionally, it aims to inform the Government of Ukraine about refugees' intentions to return and their connections with Ukraine.			
Specific Objective(s)	- Analyse the profiles of refugees, focusing on household composition, demographic characteristics and how they change over time. - Explore households' current documentation status, plans to change their status, and how uncertainty around their documentation situation may affect their lives and future intentions. - Assess the extent to which refugees are integrated into host countries, mapping their pathways toward integration, including education for children and adolescents, language acquisition, accommodation, and employment trajectories, in particular: - Analyse language acquisition among refugees, including the role of language barrier in getting better job opportunities, as well as the accessibility of language learning opportunities. - Examine the employment situation of refugees, tracking changes over time, professions, and alignment with pre-displacement qualifications. - Evaluate the socio-economic conditions of refugee households during their stay in the host country, examining financial stability, housing situation, and the adequacy of household income over time.			

	- Investigate the extent of integration of refugee children into the host country's educational system, including the matter of double-school attendance (host-country school and online in Ukraine). - Explore the dimension of transnational life through: - Connection to the host society: Analyse Ukrainian refugees' social ties with people in the host country, including their sense of acceptance, as well as, conversely, experiences of social distance, isolation or loneliness. - Connection to Ukraine: Explore refugees' emotional and social ties to Ukraine as a country and as a former or continuing home: how refugees perceive life in Ukraine now, how they perceive attitudes towards them from Ukrainians in Ukraine, and how they remain connected to and participate in Ukrainian life while abroad, including among children. - Intersection of ties to Ukraine and the host society: Examine how these two dimensions coexist and interact, as well as how stronger or weaker ties to one context relate to their attachment to the other. - Analyse refugees' intentions and aspirations regarding integration, further movement and return, assessing how mobility intentions evolve over time and the key factors influencing decisions to stay, move or return to Ukraine, while also exploring children's and young people's future plans regarding education, employment and place of residence, and how these align with or differ from those of their parents.
Research Questions	1 – What are the household composition and demographic characteristics and how do they change over time? <i>1.1 What is the age and gender composition of displaced Ukrainians, and does it differ between host countries and compared to non-displaced Ukrainians?</i> <i>1.2 How does household composition change over time or compared to the initial post-displacement composition, including through separation and reunification, the dissolution and formation of new multinational partnerships, and the birth of children?</i> <i>1.3 To what extent do refugees' families remain geographically divided between Ukraine and countries of displacement?</i> <i>1.4 What are the demographic-related vulnerabilities of Ukrainian refugees? Specifically, what is the share of single-parent households, households with young children, older people, people with disabilities, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and how does it differ between refugee host countries?</i> 2 – How does refugees' documentation status evolve, and what are their plans for their future legal status? <i>2.1 How has refugees' documentation and legal status evolved over the time of displacement? What transitions have they already made between statuses?</i> <i>2.2 What are refugees' plans regarding their future legal status, including whether they intend or expect to transition from temporary protection to another status, and how certain are they about the options available to them?</i> <i>2.3 To what extent does uncertainty around future legal status affect refugees' longer-term decisions and plans, including employment, housing, family life and intentions to stay, return to Ukraine or move elsewhere?</i> 3 – To what extent refugees are currently integrated into the host countries? What was their path towards this integration? <u>Language of the host country</u> <i>3.1 How does language skill improve within refugees over time?</i> <i>3.2 To what extent is the language barrier influencing refugees' employment?</i> <u>Employment</u> <i>3.3 What share of the working-age population is employed and how does this change over time?</i> <i>3.4 What professions are taken up by refugees, and how do they correlate with people's pre-displacement qualifications?</i>

Livelihoods and housing

3.5 What is the financial situation among refugee households and how it changes over time? To what extent is the household income of refugees sufficient to maintain existence in the host country?

3.6 What is the housing situation among refugee households and how it changes over time?

Education

3.7 What is refugee children's attendance at kindergartens, schools and other educational institutions in the host country?

3.8 Do refugee children still attend Ukrainian schools online and how does it correlate with the household's intentions of returning to Ukraine?

Integration trajectories and profiles

3.9 To what extent have refugees accumulated key integration milestones across employment, financial self-sufficiency, housing and host-country language proficiency, and what distinct profiles emerge from different combinations of these outcomes?

3.10 Who continues to face difficulties across multiple dimensions after several years of displacement, what individual and household characteristics are associated with these situations, and how do different integration profiles relate to refugees' intentions to stay, return to Ukraine or move elsewhere?

4– How are Ukrainian refugees' lives connected across Ukraine and host societies, and how do these connections relate to their broader circumstances and future trajectories as displacement becomes prolonged?

Connection to the community of the host country:

4.1 To what extent do refugees feel welcomed in the host society? How has their perception of host communities' attitudes towards Ukrainians changed over time?

4.2 To what extent have Ukrainian refugees developed social ties with members of the host society?

Connection to Ukraine:

4.3 How do refugees perceive current life in Ukraine, and how have their perceptions changed since leaving the country?

4.4 How do refugees perceive attitudes towards Ukrainians living abroad among those who remain in Ukraine?

4.5 How and to what extent do refugees remain engaged in Ukrainian life while abroad, including through social, cultural, community and civic activities?

4.6 To what extent do children maintain connections to Ukraine through language, friendships, education and participation in Ukrainian communities and activities abroad, as reported by adult household members? How do these connections vary depending on children's age?

Transnational patterns:

4.7 How are refugees' social ties distributed across Ukraine and countries of displacement, including ties with Ukrainians in Ukraine, Ukrainians abroad and members of host societies?

4.8 How do refugees' connections to Ukraine and the host society align with their employment and housing situation, family circumstances and intentions to stay, return or move elsewhere?

5 – What are refugees' intentions and aspirations in terms of further movement or integration and how do they change over time?

5.1 How do the mobility intentions of refugees change over time? What are the main factors influencing their decisions to move or stay?

5.2 To what extent are refugees still willing to return to Ukraine?

5.3 To what extent do parents' intentions to stay abroad or return to Ukraine align with their perceptions of their children's preferences, particularly those of adolescents and young adults? How do these perceived differences influence household decisions, and under what circumstances could family members follow divergent mobility trajectories, including parents returning while adult children remain abroad?

5.4 To what extent do children's perceived preferences to remain abroad influence parents' return plans, including decisions to postpone or reconsider return? If return is postponed

	because of children, what milestones, such as completing education, entering employment, becoming financially independent or living independently, are seen as potential points for reconsidering return? 5.5 What post-school pathways are older adolescents and young adults perceived to be considering, as reported by adult household members, including higher education, vocational education and training, employment or other options?
Geographic Coverage	Host countries for refugees from Ukraine ²
Secondary data sources	Surveys: • IMPACT Longitudinal Study (2022-2025) • UNHCR - Socio-Economic Insights Survey (SEIS) 2025: • Regional Factsheet 2025 • Poland (Executive Summary) • Moldova (Situation Overview) • Romania (Final Results Presentation) • Slovakia (Final Report) • CES - Ukrainian Refugees After Three Years Abroad. Fifth Wave of Research • BiB - Ukrainian Refugees in Germany Developments and Changes in Socio-Demographic Structures, Families, Participation, and Return By topic: Employment and livelihoods: • UNHCR, Deloitte - Poland: Analysis of the impact of refugees from Ukraine on the economy of Poland - 3rd edition (October 2026) • UNHCR - Labor market integration of Ukrainian refugees in Europe: Employment gaps, skill mismatches and economic gains (January 2026) Legal statuses: • European Council on Refugees and Exiles. Legal statuses available after temporary protection for people displaced from Ukraine (February 2026): • Working Paper 1. Germany, Austria, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova • Working Paper 2. Belgium, France and Spain • Working Paper 3. Poland and Italy • UNHCR - Transitioning from Temporary Protection: Projected Stay, Legal Pathways, and Policy Options for Refugees from Ukraine (May 2026) Return, intentions and transnational engagement: • UNHCR – Lives on Hold: Regional Intentions survey #7 (July 2026) • OECD - Ukraine's Strategic Response to the Displacement Crisis: Return, Reintegrate, Reconnect (March 2026) • LSE Growth Lab - Ukraine Diaspora Engagement and Returnees' Policy (October 2025) • IOM - Returning Home from Abroad: Reintegration Barriers, Outcomes and Implications for Ukraine's Recovery (August 2026) Other documents (statistics, frameworks, etc.): • Eurostat - beneficiaries of temporary protection at the end of the month by citizenship, age and sex - monthly data • UNHCR - Operational Data Portal -Ukraine Refugee Situation • UNHCR -Ukraine Regional Refugee Response Plan 2025-2026 (Revised) • UNHCR- Global Compact on Refugees - Indicator Framework 2022

² The survey does not cover respondents in the Russian Federation and Belarus.

Population(s)	☐	IDPs in camp	☐	IDPs in informal sites	
	☐	IDPs in host communities	☐	IDPs	
	☐	Refugees in camp:	☐	Refugees in informal sites	
	☒	Refugees in host communities: Refugees from Ukraine following the full-scale invasion in 2022	☐	Refugees [Other, Specify]	
	☐	Host communities	☐		
Stratification	☒	Geographical: host country Population size per strata is known? ☒ Yes ☐ No			
Data collection tool(s)	☒	Structured (Quantitative)	☒	Semi-structured (Qualitative)	
	Sampling method		Data collection method		
Structured data collection tool #1 <i>Quantitative individual survey</i>	☒ Purposive: using the sample from LS 2022-2025; new top-ups from 2026 consent campaigns ☐ Probability / Simple random ☐ Probability / Stratified simple random ☐ Probability / Cluster sampling ☐ Probability / Stratified cluster sampling		☐ Key informant interview (Target #): _ _ _ ☐ Group discussion (Target #): _ _ _ _ _ ☐ Household interview (Target #): _ _ _ _ _ ☒ Individual interview (Target #): ~1000-1500		
Disaggregation by gender and age	Gender		Age		
	☒	Yes	☒	Yes	
	☐	No	☐	No	
	Sampling method		Data collection method		
Semi-structured data collection tool #2 <i>Qualitative individual survey</i>	☒ Purposive: using the sample from LS 2022-2025; new top-ups from 2026 consent campaigns ☐ Snowballing		☐ Key informant interview (Target #): _ _ ☒ Individual interview (Target #): 8-15 ☐ Focus group discussion (Target #): _ _		
Data management platform(s)	☒	IMPACT	☐	UNHCR	
Expected output type(s)	☒	Situation overview (single consolidated output)	☐	Report	☐ Profile
	☐	Presentation (Preliminary findings)	☐	Presentation	☐ Factsheet
	☐	Interactive dashboard	☐	Webmap	☐ Map
Access	☒	Public (available on REACH resource centre and other humanitarian platforms)			
	☐	Restricted (bilateral dissemination only upon agreed dissemination list, no publication on REACH or other platforms)			
Visibility	IMPACT				
	Donor: n/a				
	Coordination Framework: N/A				
	Partners: KSE (Kyiv School of Economics)				

5 Rationale

2.1 Background

Since the escalation of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, over 6.7 million Ukrainians have sought refuge across Europe, leading to the activation of the European Union's Temporary Protection Directive (TPD)³. This directive grants beneficiaries immediate rights to live, work, education and social services in host countries. As of June 2026, Germany (about 1.3 million⁴), and Poland (982,820 persons⁴) hosted the largest number of people under Temporary Protection.

In response, UNHCR and humanitarian partners launched the Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) in March 2022. While the first RRP for 2022 and 2023 primarily focused on emergency assistance, as displacement became increasingly protracted, the 2025–2026 RRP shifted towards a more forward-looking approach, prioritising long-term socio-economic integration and emphasising the importance of national and local ownership. In 2027, the RRP will effectively end, with no further extensions anticipated, underscoring the gradual phase-out of emergency response. In practice, this phase-out extends beyond the humanitarian response and is also reflected in national policies, continuing an already established trend towards gradual reduction in some forms of dedicated assistance available to Ukrainian refugees. Such as restrictions on access to temporary protection for certain groups (Switzerland), reduced entitlement to collective accommodation and accommodation allowances (Slovakia), restrictions on certain benefits and healthcare services (Poland), and increased beneficiary contributions towards accommodation and other reception costs (the Netherlands)⁵.

At the same time, the TPD is set to expire in early 2028⁶, with a likelihood of non-renewal, leaving Ukrainians' legal status subject to other legislative frameworks and statuses, some of which are already being developed or introduced in certain host countries⁷. Existing statuses designed to replace temporary protection, as well as the rights and safeguards attached to them, already vary considerably across host countries; similar variation can likely be expected in the new statuses that other host countries may develop. This creates further uncertainty around Ukrainians' future legal status: fragmented and unequal legal conditions across host countries may create a risk that some more vulnerable groups are left without adequate pathways to transition to alternative statuses.

At the same time, the transition from emergency response towards longer-term solutions is taking place against a changing political context in Europe, including gradual shifts in the balance of political forces⁸ and in discourse around migration and asylum⁹. While these shifts have not been accompanied by a comparable decline in public support for Ukraine and Ukrainians at the EU level,¹⁰ the specific mechanisms for transitioning out of temporary protection will be developed within this environment, which may therefore shape the long-term legal and practical options ultimately available to Ukrainians. Changes in public discourse may likewise affect how Ukrainians themselves perceive attitudes towards them and their place within host societies.

³ EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service, [Temporary Protection Directive](#)

⁴ UNHCR, Operational Data Portal, [Ukraine Refugee Situation](#)

⁵ EUAA | European Union Agency for Asylum, [Asylum Report 2026, Temporary protection for displaced persons from Ukraine](#)

⁶ EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service, [Temporary protection for displaced people from Ukraine extended until March 2028](#)

⁷ For example, Czechia introduced a five-year special long-term residence permit for selected temporary protection holders meeting residence and economic self-sufficiency requirements; Poland introduced the three-year CUKR residence permit, limited to those who already held UKR status (temporary protection status in Poland) on 4 June 2025 and therefore excluding later arrivals. In both cases, obtaining the new residence status requires giving up temporary protection, while eligibility is limited to specific categories of temporary protection holders.

⁸ [According to The PopuList 4.0](#), an academic database tracking populist, far-left and far-right parties across 31 European countries, the share of voters supporting far-right parties stood at 23% across Europe in 2026, compared with around 11% a decade earlier.

⁹ Signs of this changing environment are also reflected in humanitarian monitoring. [UNHCR's Regional Refugee Response Plan for Ukraine Situation](#) notes that, despite the extraordinary generosity shown by host communities since the onset of the war, "this welcome has begun to show signs of strain"; the 2025 SEIS found that nearly one-quarter of respondents had encountered hostile attitudes or behaviour from the local population, most commonly verbal aggression.

¹⁰ [According to Eurobarometer](#), support for welcoming people fleeing the war in Ukraine remained high, declining from 88% in 2022 to 80% in spring 2026.

Taken together, these developments point to a growing asymmetry: while the response is moving beyond emergency assistance towards longer-term integration, and refugees themselves are increasingly building lives that are long-term in practice, the legal basis for their stay is not evolving at the same pace. Employment, education, housing, family decisions and social ties are gradually anchoring people in host countries. Still time, legal and policy frameworks often provide certainty for a much shorter period. This creates a mismatch between the horizon over which refugees increasingly need to plan their lives and the horizon over which they have certainty about their ability to remain.

At the same time, discussions in Ukraine around the return of Ukrainians, once adequate security conditions are in place, are becoming increasingly prominent. These discussions are gradually being translated into national strategies and policy frameworks, including the Demographic Strategy through 2040¹¹ and the Employment Strategy through 2030¹², where return is viewed as an important component of rebuilding Ukraine's human capital, both demographically and economically.

In support of Ukraine's longer-term recovery and return objectives, European host countries are simultaneously seeking to pursue two directions: supporting Ukrainians' integration and self-reliance while abroad, while preserving opportunities for voluntary, safe and sustainable return when conditions allow¹³. Part of this approach involves supporting Ukrainians abroad in maintaining ties with Ukraine, so that integration in host countries does not automatically entail weakening these ties or closing off the possibility of future return¹⁴. Keeping both options open is important for preserving individual choice and allows people to avoid making a definitive choice between two potential trajectories — further establishing their lives in the host country or returning to Ukraine. Over time, however, keeping both possibilities open may become increasingly difficult, while the need to live with uncertainty about where their future ultimately lies may itself become a growing source of tension.

In this context, the next round of the study will pay particular attention to how Ukrainians plan their futures under these two forms of uncertainty. On the one hand, this concerns legal status: the transition from temporary protection, the accessibility and clarity of alternative statuses, and the plans, barriers and concerns associated with them. On the other, it concerns the broader uncertainty around where people see their future. This requires examining integration through both its more tangible dimensions — such as employment, housing and language proficiency — and its less tangible social and transnational dimensions: the extent to which Ukrainians are becoming established in host countries while remaining connected to Ukraine, how their social ties and participation in Ukrainian life are evolving, and how they perceive attitudes towards them both in host societies and among Ukrainians in Ukraine. Importantly, the study will examine how these different dimensions of integration, uncertainty, and connection intersect with intentions to stay, return or move elsewhere. Such evidence can help host countries better plan the transition from temporary protection and Ukrainians' longer-term integration, while supporting Ukraine in shaping policies aimed at maintaining ties with Ukrainians abroad and facilitating their potential return and reintegration.

2.2 Overview of the evolution of the Longitudinal Study and a summary of changes in 2026

The Longitudinal Study of Refugees from Ukraine was initially launched in March 2022, in response to the outbreak of full-scale war (Table 1). Its primary objective was to track Ukrainian refugees' displacement trends, humanitarian needs and evolving intentions over time by following the same respondents across multiple rounds. Initially designed as a qualitative study, it collected only basic quantitative data related to demographics and geography of displacement. After the piloting stage, in the summer of 2022, the study was transformed into a quantitative one. To address the increasing trend of

¹¹ See [Ukraine's Demographic Development Strategy through 2040](#), which includes facilitating the return of Ukrainians from abroad among its strategic objectives.

¹² See [Ukraine's Employment Strategy through 2030](#), which includes the economic and professional reintegration of Ukrainians returning from abroad.

¹³ This has been conceptualised by the OECD as a “dual intent” approach to integration, aimed at supporting socio-economic integration abroad while avoiding the creation of barriers to possible future return. See OECD, [Ukraine's Strategic Response to the Displacement Crisis](#) (2026).

¹⁴ [One example is the establishment of Unity Hubs in European host countries](#), designed to support and maintain cultural and practical links with Ukraine, as well as to provide information on opportunities for voluntary return.

respondents returning to Ukraine, a new section was added to focus on returning Ukrainians (former refugees) and their reintegration needs.

As the context evolved, the 2023-2025 survey was adapted to ensure relevance. While the core questions remained unchanged to measure long-term trends, new in-depth, one-off, ad hoc thematic modules were gradually introduced to address emerging information needs. These additions provided a more nuanced understanding of refugee needs, including topics such as child protection (added in rounds 7, and 15), diploma recognition (added in round 15), income and expenditure questions (added in rounds 8-10), pendular movements (added in rounds 23, and 24), access to consular services (added in 25 round), debts (21, 22, 27 and 28 rounds), recovery (added in rounds 27, and 28), children's education (added in rounds 30, and 31), employment conditions (32 and 34 rounds), and others.

In 2026, the survey continues this approach, retaining the core questions to track changes over time, while focusing on integration-oriented questions to respond to protracted displacement, moving further away from humanitarian aspects. The analysis will look at the accumulation of tangible integration milestones to identify profiles of refugees who have been more or less successful in building a stable and self-sufficient life in their host countries. This will help understand who continues to face difficulties after several years of displacement, what may be holding them back, and how these different situations relate to their future intentions. The survey will also explore refugees' family situations in greater depth, alongside the less tangible dimensions of integration. This will include social cohesion and relationships with host communities, participation in Ukrainian community life abroad, and connections with Ukraine and people who remain there. Particular attention will be given to children and younger household members, including their social ties and connections to both Ukraine and the host country. The study will also examine uncertainties shaping refugees' longer-term plans, particularly around their future legal status and whether they see viable pathways to remain in their host countries after temporary protection. It will also explore broader uncertainty around their future place of residence, family situations and circumstances in Ukraine, and how this relates to their ability to plan ahead.

Given the nuanced and personal nature of certain questions, the study will also introduce a qualitative component to complement the quantitative survey. Qualitative interviews will therefore provide an additional layer of understanding, helping to explore how refugees themselves make sense of their experiences, how different aspects of their lives interact, and how these experiences and perceptions shape their choices and future plans.

The study will be conducted in collaboration with the Kyiv School of Economics (KSE), which will contribute to the development of the research framework, including questionnaire design, the formulation of additional research questions, and analytical approaches.

Table 1. The timeline of the longitudinal study, 2022-2026

Phase	Timeline	Frequency	Modality	Rounds	Population
1	March 2022 – June 2022	One-off (combined round was collected in 4 months)	Pilot, qualitative	1-2 (merged)	Refugees and returnees; interviewed together within one round
2	July 2022 – September 2023	Monthly	Quantitative	3-16	Refugees and returnees; interviewed together within one round
3	September 2023 – December 2024	Bi-monthly	Quantitative	17-31	Refugees and returnees; interviewed separately (odd-numbered round is refugee, even-numbered – returnee)

4	January – December 2025	Semi-annually	Mixed qualitative and quantitative (32), quantitative (34)	32, 34	Refugees
		Annually	Quantitative	33	Returnees
5	January – December 2026	Annually	Mixed qualitative and quantitative	35	Refugees

Table 2. Timeline of the longitudinal study rounds (2022-2025)

Phase 1 (pilot, qualitative)

round	start	end
1-2	27.03.2022	30.06.2022

Phase 3 (quantitative, bi-monthly)

round	start	end
17	21.09.2023	11.10.2023
18	26.10.2023	08.11.2023
19	21.11.2023	10.12.2023
20	20.12.2023	04.01.2024
21	17.01.2024	04.02.2024
22	14.02.2024	28.02.2024
23	07.03.2024	31.03.2024
24	11.04.2024	28.04.2024
25	08.05.2024	29.05.2024
26	10.06.2024	24.06.2024
27	09.07.2024	04.08.2024
28	15.08.2024	03.09.2024
29	13.09.2024	08.10.2024
30	18.10.2024	12.11.2024
31	21.11.2024	20.12.2024

Phase 2 (quantitative, monthly)

round	start	end
3	07.07.2022	03.08.2022
4	10.08.2022	03.09.2022
5	14.09.2022	06.10.2022
6	12.10.2022	06.11.2022
7	16.11.2022	07.12.2022
8	13.12.2022	04.01.2023
9	13.01.2023	07.02.2023
10	13.02.2023	06.03.2023
11	10.03.2023	03.04.2023
12	06.04.2023	01.05.2023
13	09.05.2023	30.05.2023
14	07.06.2023	29.06.2023
15	12.07.2023	03.08.2023
16	17.08.2023	10.09.2023

Phase 4 (mixed quantitative and qualitative, semi-annually for refugees and annually for returnees)

round	start	end
32 quantitative	14.04.2025	12.05.2025
32 qualitative	07.05.2025	19.05.2025
33	15.09.2025	30.09.2025
34	25.09.2025	22.10.2025

2.3 Intended impact

This longitudinal study will provide evidence on how Ukrainian refugees' lives and longer-term trajectories are evolving as displacement becomes prolonged, covering socio-economic integration, legal status, family circumstances, social cohesion, connections to Ukraine and future intentions. By examining both socio-economic integration outcomes and the social and transnational dimensions of refugees' lives, the study will help identify different integration trajectories, groups continuing to face difficulties, and the factors shaping refugees' ability to plan their futures.

The findings will support host-country actors in planning for refugees' longer-term integration and the transition from temporary protection, while helping the Government of Ukraine better understand refugees' connections to Ukraine, mobility and return intentions, and factors that may shape future return and reintegration. Findings will be shared with relevant government, humanitarian and development actors and through regional coordination platforms to support evidence-based policy and programming.

6 Methodology

3.1 Methodology Overview

Before data collection, a secondary data review will be conducted to refine the methodology based on evolving policy developments and integration trends.

The study will employ convenience sampling, targeting (1) respondents who have already participated in previous rounds of the longitudinal study, and (2) newly recruited respondents, to complement the existing sample. New respondents will be recruited through consent collection at train and bus stations in Ukraine, social media outreach, and external recruitment providers using online panels and telephone screening.

One round of structured surveys will be conducted, maintaining a similar questionnaire structure for basic indicators, while adjusting thematic blocks to reflect emerging trends and evolving policy contexts. The data collection will take place exclusively by phone, with surveys administered via phone.

To complement the quantitative data, 8–15 in-depth qualitative interviews will be conducted with selected participants across several of the main host countries. While the quantitative component will identify patterns, changes over time and relationships across key dimensions of refugees' lives, the qualitative component will provide explanatory depth by exploring how and why these patterns emerge. It will focus on refugees' lived experiences, perceptions, motivations, trade-offs and decision-making processes, providing insight into aspects of integration and future planning that cannot be fully captured through structured survey questions. Recruitment for in-depth interviews will be facilitated through the contact database of study participants. Selected respondents will be contacted directly, ensuring voluntary participation and informed consent.

Table 3. Research questions disclosure through the use of various research methods.

Research question	Quantitative	Qualitative
What are the household composition and demographic characteristics and how do they change over time?	Household and demographic profiles and their change over time.	-
How does refugees' documentation status evolve, and what are their plans for their future legal status?	Legal status and future plans: current and previous statuses, transitions between statuses, intended next steps and levels of uncertainty.	Experiences of legal uncertainty.
To what extent refugees are currently integrated into the host countries? What was their path towards this integration?	Integration outcomes and trajectories across language, employment, financial self-sufficiency, housing and education; identification of different integration profiles	Experiences behind different integration trajectories, perceived turning points, barriers and enabling factors, and trade-offs.

	and groups facing persistent difficulties.	
How are Ukrainian refugees' lives connected across Ukraine and host societies, and how do these connections relate to their broader circumstances and future trajectories as displacement becomes prolonged?	Ties to host societies and Ukraine, engagement with Ukrainian life, perceptions of attitudes in both contexts, and how different configurations of connections relate to refugees' circumstances and intentions.	How refugees perceive and navigate relationships with Ukraine and host societies, and how these shape their understanding of where their lives and futures are situated.
What are refugees' intentions and aspirations in terms of further movement or integration and how do they change over time?	Intentions and their evolution over time: their association with individual, household and integration-related circumstances; differences within families and across age groups.	Decision-making behind future trajectories: motivations, considerations and trade-offs underlying intentions; how family members negotiate different preferences and how these affect joint household decisions

Key definitions relevant to the research:

Refugee from Ukraine – A person who fled Ukraine after February 2022 due to the full-scale invasion, sought protection in another country, and remained abroad for at least one month. This includes individuals under the EU Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) and other national protection schemes, regardless of their legal status.

Temporary Protection – An emergency mechanism activated by the European Union (EU) in March 2022, providing immediate residence, access to employment, education, and social services to Ukrainian refugees in member states without the need for an individual asylum procedure.

Integration – The process by which refugees establish economic and social stability in the host country through employment, education, language acquisition, and access to essential services, allowing them to participate in society independently.

Mobility Intentions – Refugees' aspirations and decision-making regarding further movement, including staying in the host country, moving to another country, or returning to Ukraine.

Host country – The country in which a refugee resides following displacement from Ukraine.

Host society / host community refers to the broader social environment in the country where refugees currently reside, including the local population and the communities with which they interact in their everyday lives.

Social cohesion – In this study, social cohesion is examined through social relations and connections, interactions between refugees and host communities, and perceptions of host communities' attitudes towards Ukrainians.

Social ties / social connections refer to refugees' interpersonal relationships and social networks, including connections with family, friends, other Ukrainians, and members of the host society / host community, both in the host country and across borders.

Transnational life/ties – Ongoing relationships, activities and connections spanning Ukraine and the host country, and the ways in which refugees' lives are shaped by maintaining links across both contexts.

3.2 Population of interest

- **Geographical area assessed:** key host countries in Europe (Poland, Germany, Czechia, Slovakia, Romania, Moldova and other host countries, based on sufficiency of sample size).
- **Population assessed:** refugees from Ukraine. Sub-groups will provide different experiences of displacement (area of origin, host country) and socio-demographic profiles (vulnerabilities, livelihoods, family composition).
- **Unit of measurement:** individual interviews and general information given on the respondent's HH.

3.3 Secondary data review

Secondary source	Purpose of source
Previous rounds of the Longitudinal Study - IMPACT Longitudinal Study (2022–2025)	• Maintain continuity of core indicators and methodological comparability across rounds • Provide longitudinal benchmarks for analysing changes in refugees' circumstances, integration and intentions
Large-scale refugee surveys • UNHCR – Socio-Economic Insights Survey (SEIS) 2025: Regional Factsheet and country-level findings for Poland, Moldova, Romania and Slovakia • CES – Ukrainian Refugees After Three Years Abroad. Fifth Wave of Research • BiB – Ukrainian Refugees in Germany: Developments and Changes in Socio-Demographic Structures, Families, Participation, and Return	• Inform indicator and questionnaire development • Contextualise and triangulate findings from the longitudinal study against other refugee surveys
Employment and livelihoods • UNHCR/Deloitte – Poland: Analysis of the Impact of Refugees from Ukraine on the Economy of Poland, 3rd edition (2026) • UNHCR – Labor Market Integration of Ukrainian Refugees in Europe: Employment Gaps, Skill Mismatches and Economic Gains (2026)	• Inform analysis of employment trajectories, labour-market participation and skill/qualification mismatch • Provide context for interpreting differences in economic integration across refugee groups and host countries
Legal status and transition from temporary protection • ECRE – Legal Statuses Available After Temporary Protection for People Displaced from Ukraine, Working Papers 1–3 (2026) • UNHCR – Transitioning from Temporary Protection: Projected Stay, Legal Pathways, and Policy Options for Refugees from Ukraine (2026)	• Map current post-temporary-protection pathways and differences across host countries • Inform questions on documentation trajectories, future legal-status plans and uncertainty • Provide policy context for interpreting how legal uncertainty relates to refugees' longer-term decisions

Return, intentions and transnational life • UNHCR – Lives on Hold: Regional Intentions Survey #7 (2026) • OECD – Ukraine’s Strategic Response to the Displacement Crisis: Return, Reintegrate, Reconnect (2026) • LSE Growth Lab – Ukraine Diaspora Engagement and Returnees’ Policy (2025) • IOM – Returning Home from Abroad: Reintegration Barriers, Outcomes and Implications for Ukraine’s Recovery (2026)	• Provide evidence on factors shaping return and reintegration • Inform analysis of refugees’ continued connections and engagement with Ukraine and their relevance to future mobility trajectories
Population statistics and response/policy frameworks • Eurostat – Temporary protection statistics • UNHCR – Operational Data Portal: Ukraine Refugee Situation • UNHCR – Ukraine Regional Refugee Response Plan 2025–2026 (Revised) • UNHCR – Global Compact on Refugees: Indicator Framework 2022	• Provide population and geographic context, including the distribution and demographic composition of Ukrainian refugees across host countries • Inform sampling and interpretation of differences between the study sample and the wider refugee population • Situate findings within the evolving refugee-response and longer-term integration framework • Support alignment of relevant concepts and indicators with existing response frameworks

3.4 Primary Data Collection

Method: Mixed qualitative and quantitative longitudinal data collection

All tools will be developed in consultation with key stakeholders, incorporating insights from secondary data reviews, previous survey rounds, and emerging policy frameworks.

- **Quantitative Data Collection:**

- **Tools:** The structured interviews will use a standardised questionnaire, designed to track longitudinal trends. While maintaining a consistent core structure which enables measuring the change between rounds through a longitudinal approach, thematic blocks will be added and adjusted between rounds to capture evolving dynamics and emerging policy-relevant insights.
- **Sampling:** 1 round with 1000-1500 individual interviews carried out from LS 2022-25 refugee sample, as well as newly recruited respondents. The final number of newly recruited respondents will be determined during data collection, as recruitment will continue throughout the data collection period. Recruitment efforts will place particular attention on Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom, Czechia, Romania and the Netherlands, with the aim of improving coverage of major refugee-hosting countries and addressing gaps in the existing sample. Where feasible, recruitment will seek to bring the country distribution of the sample closer to the broader distribution of Ukrainian refugees across Europe. Longitudinal change will be assessed among respondents observed across comparable rounds, while newly recruited respondents will primarily strengthen the cross-sectional coverage of the 2026 round. Analyses combining panel and newly recruited respondents will clearly distinguish compositional differences from within-respondent change.
- **Triangulation/briefing and debriefing of enumerators:** use of a phone call monitoring dashboard to provide an overview of enumerators’ calls in real time. Where feasible, enumerators will call from the same SIM card respondents were called from before to increase the probability of respondents picking up the phone. The Senior Assessment Officer (hereafter, SAO) will provide comprehensive training to the enumerators on the nuances and methodology of research.

- **Qualitative Data Collection:**

- **Tools:** The in-depth interview guide will include semi-structured questions, tailored to explore key themes as outlined in the Methodology Overview section. These interviews will provide qualitative depth to complement survey findings, focusing on personal experiences, decision-making processes, and challenges.

- **Sampling:** 8-15 in-depth interviews with refugees across several of the main host countries through the database of existing respondents. No fixed quotas will be applied to the qualitative sample.
- **Triangulation/briefing and debriefing of enumerators:** Interviews will be conducted by the SAO.

3.5 Data Processing & Analysis

- The structured individual interviews will be collected through the Kobo Toolbox within the IMPACT Global Kobo account. During primary data collection, the IMPACT Data Officer will download and clean the data daily to ensure the collection methodology is being followed by enumerators and investigate any problematic data to ensure the sampling methodology is being carried out by the data analysis plan. Additionally, the collected data will be analysed for “Other” and Open-ended inputs (translated and recoded if needed) and cross-checked for linked questions and to review enumerators’ comments. The data cleaning process will adhere to IMPACT’s Minimum Standards Checklist for Data Cleaning and Processing for Structured (Quantitative) Data as well as IMPACT’s Data Protection SoPs. An analysis will also be conducted using R, and outputs will be based on that analysis.
- All interviews and debrief forms will be transcribed and translated. Audio recordings will be securely stored on IMPACT’s Global Cloud server and deleted once the transcription is complete. Personally identifiable information (PII), such as surnames and addresses, will not be collected. However, first names and phone numbers of informants will be collected during data collection for logistical purposes but will be deleted following transcription to ensure confidentiality. Following transcription and translation, the qualitative data will be analysed using a qualitative data saturation grid.

3.6 Limitations

- **Sampling Bias:** The study relies on convenience sampling of respondents who have previously participated in the longitudinal survey. While this approach ensures continuity and allows tracking of individual trajectories, it does not provide a representative sample of the broader refugee population. Findings should be interpreted as indicative rather than statistically generalisable. In order to mitigate the limitations, ongoing checks of secondary sources will be conducted to contextualise and triangulate the findings and recommendations.
- **Participant Retention:** Given the longitudinal nature of the study, attrition is a risk, as some participants may become unreachable due to relocation, loss of interest, or changing personal circumstances. Efforts will be made to maintain engagement through periodic follow-ups and reminders. Additionally, enumerators will interview respondents by calling them from the same SIM card, to increase the probability of respondents picking up the phone.
- **Online and Phone-Based Data Collection:** The exclusive use of remote data collection may limit participation among refugees with unstable internet access or limited phone availability. This could introduce bias toward respondents with more stable living conditions, potentially underrepresenting the most vulnerable groups. Additionally, respondents relocating to another country can change their phone numbers which can lead to additional attrition and bias of losing more mobile respondent groups. Efforts will be made to collect new phone numbers of existing respondents, for example, by contacting them using other methods of communication in various messengers through alternative phone numbers.
- **Thematic Scope of Qualitative Component:** While the qualitative component of the study provides rich insights, it does not capture the full diversity of refugee experiences across all aspects at once.
- **Contextual and Policy Changes:** As the study spans multiple rounds, external factors such as shifts in host country policies, economic conditions, and the security situation in Ukraine may significantly influence refugees’ decisions and integration paths. These changes may complicate direct comparisons between rounds and require careful interpretation of evolving trends.

- **Self-reporting and Proxy-reporting Bias:** The study relies primarily on self-reported information, which may be affected by recall bias, social desirability bias, and respondents' subjective perceptions, particularly for questions concerning sensitive topics, attitudes, experiences, and intentions. In addition, some information (related to intentions, plans and social ties) concerning children and adolescents is reported by their parents or caregivers. Such proxy reporting may not capture/ or fully capture children's own experiences, perceptions, or preferences.

1. Key ethical considerations and related risks

The proposed research design meets/does not meet the following criteria:

The proposed research design...	Yes/ No	Details if no (including mitigation)
... Has been coordinated with relevant stakeholders to avoid unnecessary duplication of data collection efforts?	Yes	
... Respects respondents, their rights and dignity (<i>specifically by: seeking informed consent, designing length of survey/ discussion while being considerate of participants' time, and ensuring accurate reporting of information provided</i>)?	Yes	
... Does not expose data collectors to any risks as a direct result of participation in data collection?	Yes	
... Does not expose respondents / their communities to any risks as a direct result of participation in data collection?	Yes	
... Does not involve collecting information on specific topics which may be stressful and/ or re-traumatising for research participants (both respondents and data collectors)?	Yes	
... Does not involve data collection with minors i.e. anyone less than 18 years old?	Yes	
... Does not involve data collection with other vulnerable groups e.g. persons with disabilities, victims/ survivors of protection incidents, etc.?	NO	Vulnerable groups are part of the population of interest (refugees). The team will integrate input from HQ, and the experienced Field Team (both managers, as well as enumerators) in terms of the sensitivity of the questions. Enumerators have support from the team lead and the field team.
... Follows IMPACT SOPs for management of personally identifiable information ?	Yes	

2. Roles and responsibilities

Task Description	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Research design	Senior Assessment Officer, Assessment Officer	Research manager	Research manager, HQ	HQ
Supervising data collection	Senior Assessment Officer, Senior Field Officer, Field Officer, Data Officer	Senior Assessment Officer, FIELD Operations Manager	Field Team, SOPs	HQ
Data processing (checking, cleaning)	Data Officer	Senior Assessment Officer, Cross-cutting Data Specialist, HQ	Cross-cutting Data Specialist, HQ	HQ
Data analysis	Data Officer, Senior Assessment Officer	Senior Assessment Officer	Cross-cutting Data Specialist, HQ	HQ
Output production	Senior Assessment Officer	Research manager, HQ	Deputy Country Director, HQ	HQ
Dissemination	Senior Assessment Officer	Comms team	Comms team	Deputy Country Director
Monitoring & Evaluation	Research manager	Deputy Country Director	HQ	HQ
Lessons learned	Senior Assessment Officer	Research manager	Deputy Country Director	HQ

Responsible: the person(s) who executes the task

Accountable: the person who validates the completion of the task and is accountable of the final output or milestone

Consulted: the person(s) who must be consulted when the task is implemented

Informed: the person(s) who need to be informed when the task is completed

3. Data Analysis Plan

Data Analysis Plan, including all tools, is available upon request

4. Data Management Plan

Available upon request

5. Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

Available upon request