

Perceptions of aid in Ukraine - quantitative findings round 1

Introduction

The onset of the full-scale war on 24 February 2022 in Ukraine provoked one of the biggest humanitarian crises Europe has seen in the last decades. More than 17 million people are in need of aid and as of November, over 13 million people have been reached with humanitarian and governmental assistance. Countries were quick to raise funds and mobilise aid for Ukraine, where the first strategic objective of the Humanitarian Response Plan flash appeal states that aid needs to be provided based on the perceptions and feedback of people affected by the war.

Ground Truth Solutions, funded by the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), surveyed over 2,000 people in Ukraine who received or needed aid on how they perceive the quality of the response. By asking their views, priorities, and expectations of how aid is provided, we work towards meeting two objectives:

1. To feed critical perceptions into response coordination in real-time.
2. To understand the quality of the response from the viewpoint of aid recipients and people in need.

Partnering with a local expert, the Kiev International Institute of Sociology, we asked people's views on access to assistance, aid seeking behaviour, information access, knowledge of feedback mechanisms, and fairness.

Key findings



Over half the people contacted and three-quarters of self-identified people in need have received aid or services at least once since the full-scale war began. Despite this high proportion, over half the Ukrainians surveyed say they need more assistance.



Women are more likely to identify as "in need" and are more likely to apply for aid than men (62% vs 46%). This is partly because more women (27%) than men (17%) are internally displaced.



Aid recipients most often receive food (77%) and cash and voucher assistance (CVA) (51%). Cash is the main priority among people in need, despite 51% of people receiving CVA.



Half of people (47%) said they need winterisation support – even before the recent wave of attacks on energy infrastructure. IDPs and people living in rural areas significantly more often indicate winterisation support.



To apply for aid, people most often use official websites and apps from aid providers (51%). Older persons less likely to use social media and other official websites and apps than younger people and more likely to use in-person or phone registration.

This data collection is part of a bigger perceptions tracking project funded by the DEC. For more information, find us on groundtruthsolutions.org or reach out to serhii@groundtruthsolutions.org, marina@groundtruthsolutions.org or rieke@groundtruthsolutions.org.





Older persons (60+ years old) are less satisfied than other groups with the assistance available to them. They identify themselves as in need more often than all other age groups (62% vs 51% overall). Of all older persons, 21% did not receive any assistance despite needing it. They also find accessing aid more difficult than younger people. Too little CVA reaches them. Only 27% of older persons have received CVA, compared to 51% of the total surveyed population. Older persons feel less informed about the aid and services available to them, find that aid is provided unfairly, and do not feel their needs are considered.



One-fifth of our surveyed population (22%) say they are internally displaced. Internally displaced people (IDPs) have received assistance more often than non-IDPs (94% vs 75%), but 89% of IDPs had at least one unmet need in the last month. Overall, IDPs are less satisfied with the humanitarian response than non-IDPs.



Ukrainian respondents have lower expectations about how aid is provided than respondents in other countries. However, they consider aid to be much more relevant. The largest gaps between expectations and perceptions relate to information about what aid is available and how money is spent.



Three-quarters of people do not know how to ask a question, provide feedback, or make a complaint about aid and services, and when asked to those aware only a few (7%) indicated they have done so. For older persons awareness is even lower: 80% does not know how to give their opinion on aid.

Recommendations

From crisis-affected people

- Aid providers should communicate better with communities and volunteers to make assistance more targeted (50%).
- Aid providers should provide more information on who can receive aid, how, and where (17%).
- Action is needed to prevent and mitigate abuse, corruption, and unfairness during distributions (17%).

Based on general findings

- Increase attention to older age groups. Their perceptions are most negative in all dimensions of aid provision. They represent a large share of the population in need. They find it most difficult to access aid and the lowest awareness of complaint and feedback mechanisms.
- Expand the coverage of cash assistance to older persons, persons with disabilities, and rural residents. Currently, the main type of assistance they receive is food and they are not sufficiently covered by this type of humanitarian aid.
- Inform people of their right to provide feedback and about methods for feedback, especially the older age group (60+) and rural residents. People might not be aware of their rights or reluctant to share critique. Considering the recent attacks on energy infrastructure, offline feedback mechanisms should be made available.

We asked respondents about their perceptions on information provision, participation, transparency, consultation, relevance, and fairness of aid.

We asked our survey participants the direct question: "How can aid providers improve their work?"

Detailed findings

People in need and aid recipients in Ukraine: a profile

In total, 2,983 people were reached by our enumerators (see Figure 1). The target population for this study included two categories: people in need and people who received humanitarian aid since the 24th of February.

Of the people reached, 2,023 (68%) were eligible for inclusion in the final sample, of which:

- Fifty-six percent identified as both “in need” and as aid recipient;
- Twenty-five percent identified as person in need (in the last month) who did not receive aid;
- Nineteen percent had received aid since 24 February 2022 and who are not in need.

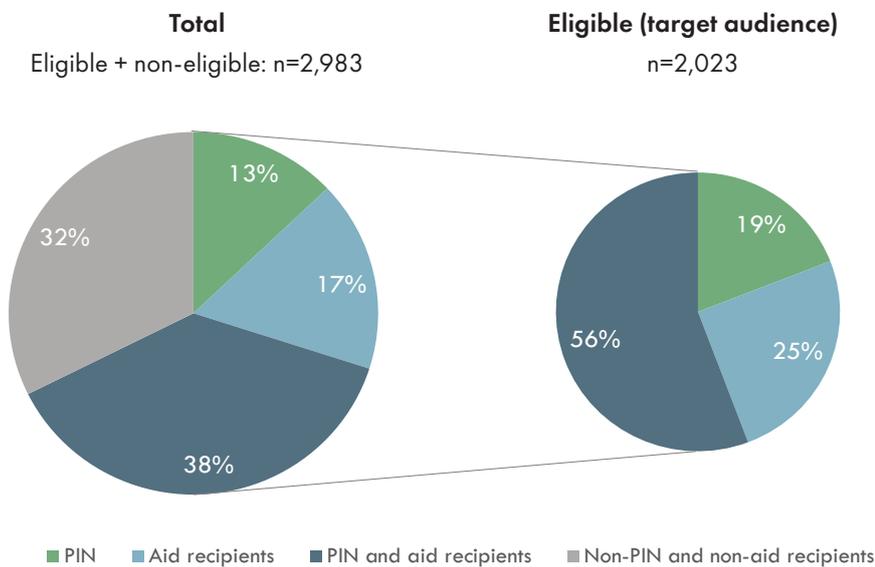


Figure 1. Characteristics of the total and eligible sample. PIN = People in need

We found almost no difference in demographic structure between aid recipients and people in need. Among people in need, relatively more resided in central and western Oblasts, and fewer were IDPs.

Men were less likely to say they are in need than women (78% vs 86%). Even if they did, they applied for aid less often than women (46% vs 62%).

Most people have received aid, but it is not enough

Most people (75%) we talked to had received assistance. Among people living in the East of Ukraine (89%) and IDPs (94%) this share was even higher. Food items (77%) and cash assistance (51%) were most often reported. Older persons and rural residents were less covered by cash assistance than other groups: only 27% and 29% respectively said they received it.

Sample

Quantitative survey

2,023 phone interviews

Gender

- 909 men (45%)
- 1,114 women (55%)

Age

- 226 18-29 years (11%)
- 566 30-44 years (28%)
- 527 45-59 years (26%)
- 704 60+ years (35%)

Aid recipient

- 512 non-aid recipient (25%)
- 1,511 aid recipients (75%)

Internally displaced

- 443 yes (22%)
- 1,580 no (78%)

Main language used at home

- 946 Ukrainian (48%)
- 536 Russian (26%)
- 359 Both (8%)

Note! Some people refused to participate in interviews since they did not receive assistance and, in their opinion, had nothing to talk about. More men refused to answer than women.

Despite many people getting some type of aid, they indicated it was not enough: 75% of our total sample and 89% of IDPs said they had at least one unmet need in the last month. People were most likely to say they needed cash, but IDPs more often said they needed winterisation support (52% vs 40% in general) - and housing or accommodation (32% vs 11%). Also, 89% of IDPs who received cash assistance still said they needed cash support. Older persons identified a greater need for services: 36% vs 29% in general.

Winterisation support includes warm clothes, blankets, insulation or heating of buildings, fuel, repair of damaged houses

Services include health/mental health services, legal help, transportation/evacuation

Note! Some people in need have also received aid. Therefore, the subsamples presented in these charts are not mutually exclusive

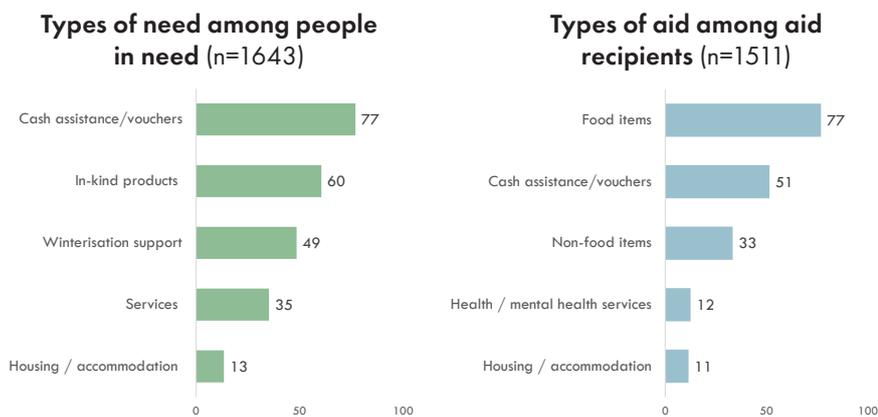


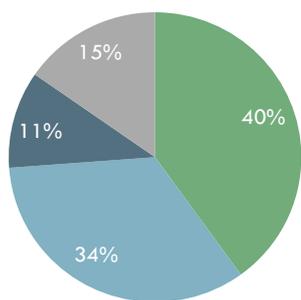
Figure 2. Five most mentioned needs among people in need and the five most mentioned types of aid received by aid recipients.

Most of the people who apply for aid receive it

We asked aid recipients and non-recipients whether they had (successfully) applied for assistance. Eleven percent of people who applied for aid said they did not receive anything. There was also a large share (34%) of people who never applied for assistance but received it, of which 40 % received cash assistance.

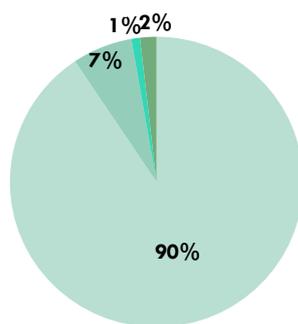
Aid recipients and applications

All respondents: n=2,023



Number of times applied

Applied for aid n=1,046



Legend for Figure 3:
 ■ Applied, received (green)
 ■ Didn't apply, received (blue)
 ■ Applied, didn't receive (dark blue)
 ■ Didn't apply, didn't receive (grey)
 ■ 1-5 times (light green)
 ■ 6-10 times (medium green)
 ■ 11-15 times (teal)
 ■ 16+ times (dark green)

Figure 3. Left: pie chart of people who applied for aid and who received aid. Right: pie chart of number of times applied for aid.

IDPs applied more frequently than other respondent groups: 21% reported applying six or more times. People who did not receive assistance understood the following reasons for it:

- There are insufficient grounds for receiving aid (e.g., not a displaced person, not in a war zone, high income, availability of work) (39%);
- There are people that need help more (18%).

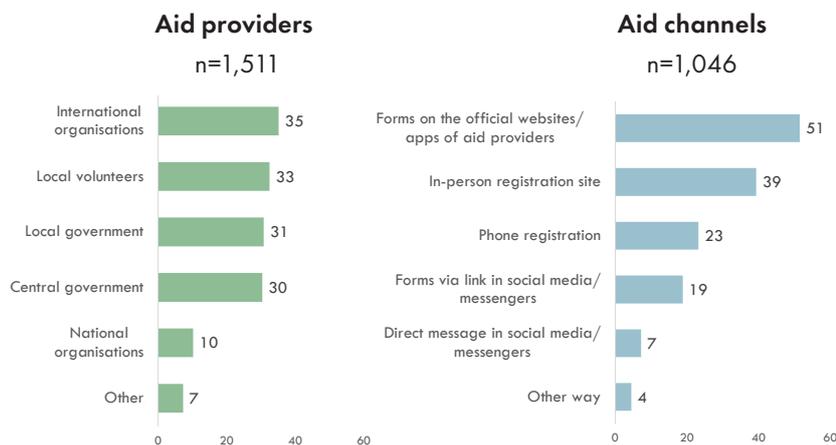


Figure 4. Perceived aid providers and channels aid recipients used to apply for assistance.

When asked about the source of assistance, aid recipients said they received assistance most often from international organisations, closely followed by local volunteers and local and central government.

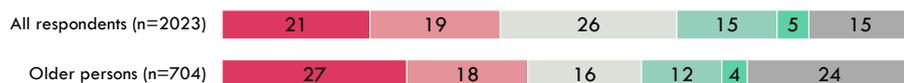
The most common channel to apply for aid were websites and apps of aid providers. Older persons preferred in-person registration sites (42% vs 33%) and phone registration (26% vs 16%) more than young people. IDPs most often used in-person registration sites (62%).

Using multiple application channels did not increase the chance of receiving aid. Only in-person application increased the chance of receiving aid.

Aid is difficult to access for older persons

Twice as many respondents considered access to aid difficult than those who consider it easy. This is worse for older persons: only 16% thought that access to aid is easy, while 45% considered it difficult.

How easy or difficult did you find it to access aid?



1 Not at all 2 Not very much 3 Somewhat 4 Mostly yes 5 Yes completely 6 Don't know/Refused

Note! We did not ask additional questions to verify whether assistance was actually provided by the named sources. This question assessed the perceived aid provider.

When asked who respondents think have most difficulties accessing aid, older persons (50%), persons with disabilities or chronic diseases (25%), and people who lack information about aid (11%) were most often mentioned.

Ukrainians do not have high expectations about how aid is provided

Compared to other countries¹, respondents in Ukraine had lower expectations on different dimensions of aid provision. Despite this, aid still fell short of their expectations.

Consultation: Do you expect that / To what extent did aid providers ask affected people about their needs before providing aid? (Only for aid recipients)

Fairness: Do you expect / Do you think that aid is provided in a fair way in the settlement where you live now?

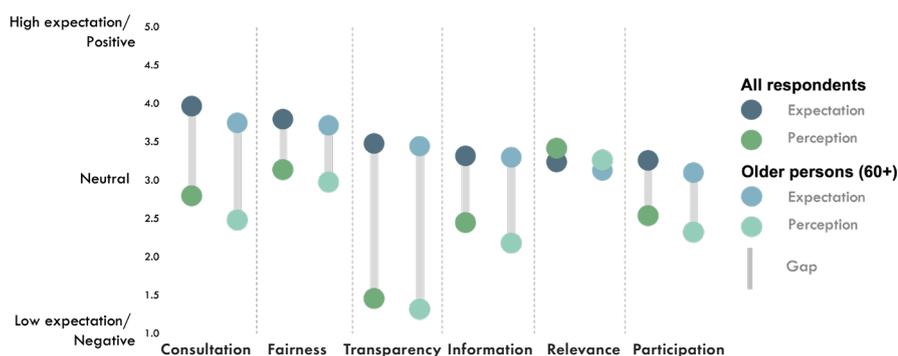
Transparency: Is it important for you to / Do you know how aid agencies spend money in the settlement where you live now?

Information: Do you expect to be informed / Do you feel informed about the aid and services available to you?

Relevance: Do you expect / Do you think that aid cover your most important needs? (Only for aid recipients)

Participation: Do you expect / Do you think that people in the settlement where you live now can influence how aid is provided?

Ground Truth Solutions uses the same set of questions to measure perceptions of humanitarian response in different contexts to enable cross-national comparison. These questions are rooted in consumer satisfaction research and help to identify areas of importance and point humanitarian actors to where investment is needed.



The **blue** dots indicate people’s ratings of the importance questions, while each **green** dot indicates responses to the perception questions. The position of each dot was calculated according to the mean Likert score given for each question, where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. The line in between represents the “gap” between expectations and perceptions of aid.

Figure 5. In our survey, we asked people a set of questions for each aspect of aid, first asking how important they considered it, and then how they saw it working in reality.

The gap between expectations and perceptions is big when it comes to transparency: people did not know how money is spent in their community, but they expected to know. Also, there was a high expectation that needs should be assessed before aid is provided – which they indicated is not the case.

Interestingly, people indicated that the relevance of aid is exceeding their expectation. This might be explained by the fact that many people received multi-purpose cash. People who said they received aid from international organisations had lower perceptions on their ability to influence how aid is provided than people who mentioned other aid providers (national NGOs, central and local government, and local volunteers).

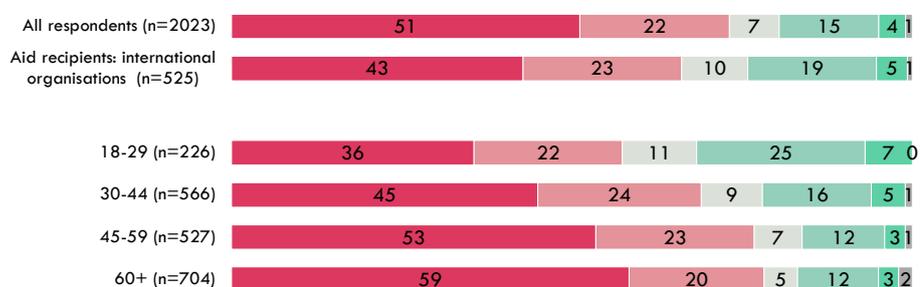
¹ Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Chad, Somalia, Haiti, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.
Global Analysis November 2022 (groundtruthsolutions.org)

Older persons had more negative perceptions across all dimensions of aid provision. Unsurprisingly, among non-aid recipients and people who indicated they have a need, the perceptions on these dimensions were worse too. Gaps between expectations and perceptions of fairness and needs assessment were significantly bigger among people living in eastern Oblasts.

Most people do not know how to give feedback, and those who know rarely do it

Most respondents (74%) said they don't know how to provide feedback to aid providers: only 19% were aware and even fewer (7%) had done so.

Do you know how to ask a question, make a complaint, or provide feedback on humanitarian aid or services?

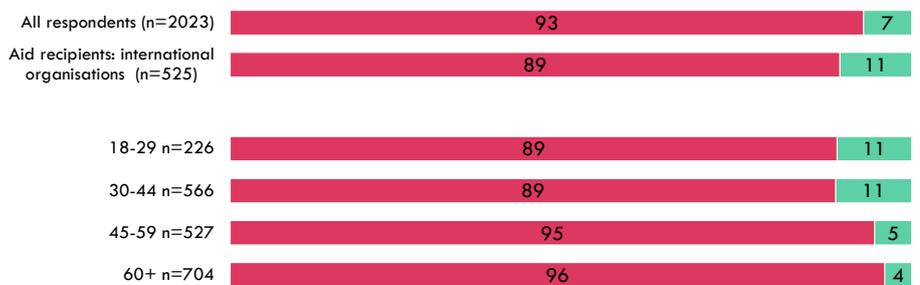


1 Not at all 2 Not very much 3 Somewhat 4 Mostly yes 5 Yes completely 6 Don't know/Refused

Older people and people living in rural areas were least likely to know about feedback mechanisms. The low awareness leads to a low number of complaints/questions/feedbacks among them - while among 18-29 years old and 30-44 years old it was 11%, among 60+ only 4% provided any feedback. People in need and living in western Oblasts were more likely to provide feedback.

Those who received aid from international organisations were more likely to know about (24%) feedback mechanisms and use them (11%).

Have you submitted a question, a complaint, or given feedback on humanitarian aid since 24 February 2022?



1 Not at all 2 Not very much 3 Somewhat 4 Mostly yes 5 Yes completely 6 Don't know/Refused

Note! Percentages for bar charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding

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For more information on Ground Truth Solutions' work in Ukraine, please contact Serhii Tytiuk (serhiigroundtruthsolutions.org) Rieke Vingerling (rieke@groundtruthsolutions.org) or Marina Kobzeva (marina@groundtruthsolutions.org). Visit us on our [website](https://www.groundtruthsolutions.org).

Annex 1. Methodology

This bulletin provides an overview of Ground Truth Solutions' survey funded by the Disasters Emergency Committee. We conducted the survey in collaboration with the Kiev International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) and interviewed 2,023 people in need and aid recipients in Ukraine from 15 September to 2 October 2022.

Ground Truth Solutions is an international NGO based in Vienna. We gather perceptual data from affected people to assess humanitarian responses. Listening and responding to the voices of affected populations is a vital first step in closing the accountability gap, empowering affected populations to be part of the decisions that govern their lives, building relationships with communities, and localising knowledge. Nonetheless, perceptual data alone is clearly insufficient to evaluate the state of the humanitarian system and should therefore not be seen in isolation, but as complementary to other monitoring and data evaluation approaches.

Target population: Self-identified people in need (18 years or older) and aid recipients.

Survey mode: Computer-assisted phone survey (CATI) using random digit dialling method (RDD) – random generation of phone numbers with validation of active numbers. Proportion of numbers per cell-phone provider/three-digit prefix was created based on the previous F2F-survey conducted by KIIS

Geographic scope: All of Ukraine (except for the occupied territories as of February 23rd). The survey was carried out in 771 settlements in all regions of Ukraine except for the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

Sampling approach: Stratified random sample of mobile phones, with the strata being defined by the three-digit main operator's prefixes.

Sample size: Total n = 2,983 (including non-recipients of aid and non-people in need); Eligible n=2023.

Fieldwork dates: 13 September – 2 October 2022

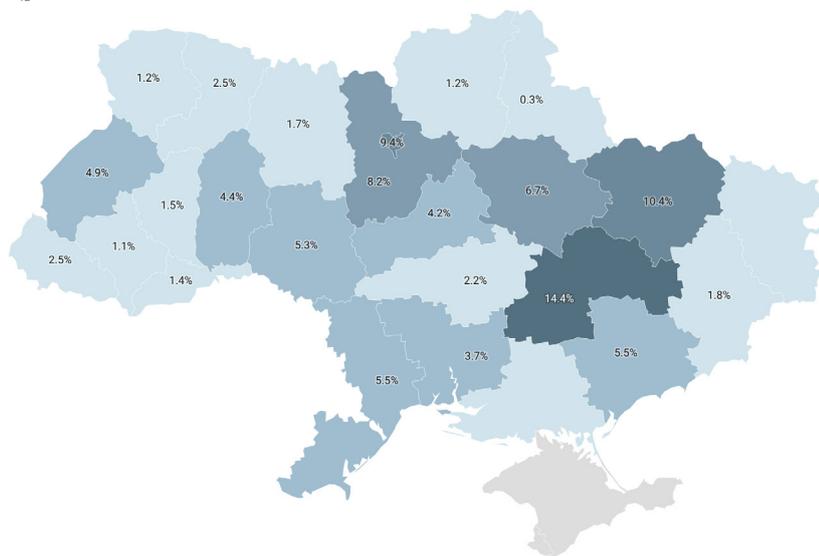
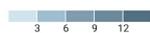
Response rate: 13% (RR1 according to the AAPOR Standard Definitions).

Average length of interview: 23 minutes.

Weighting: By number of SIM-cards and refusals by gender. This approach was chosen because since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Ukrainian population movements have been multidirectional, fluctuating, and hard to monitor. Under such conditions, it seems methodically appropriate to construct the sample completely randomly, because CATI RDD – due to its closeness to simple random sampling – provides the opportunity to obtain a representative snapshot of universe (active SIM-cards of Ukrainians inside Ukraine in this case).

Sampling error: 2.2% for values close to 50% (with a confidence interval of 95% and design-effect of 1.06).

Annex 2. Geographic scope



Created with Datawrapper

Composition of macro-regions:

East: Donetsk, Kharkivska, Luhanska oblasts.

West: Lvivska, Volynska, Rivnenska, Ivano-Frankivska, Ternopil'ska, Chernivetska, Zakarkatska, Khmelnytska oblasts.

South: Odeska, Mykolaivska, Khersonska, Zaporizka, Dnipropetrovska oblasts.

Centre: Vinnytska, Kirovohrad'ska, Cherkaska, Poltav'ska oblasts.

North: Zhytomyrska, Kyiv'ska, Chernihiv'ska, Sumska oblasts.

Kyiv: City of Kyiv.

Annex 3. Composition of the sample by people in need and aid recipient statuses

Among the 2,983 people reached by our enumerators:

- **Sixty-eight percent** of respondents were people in need, aid recipients, or both;
- **Thirteen percent** of respondents have never received assistance since 24 February 2022, although they need it;
- **Fifty-one percent** of surveyed Ukrainians aged over 18 are people in need.

