



WHAT MOTIVATES UKRAINIANS TO STAY IN UKRAINE?

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3. Desire and reasons for staying in Ukraine
4. Vision of the future and desire for staying in Ukraine
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6. Potential triggers for leaving abroad
7. Conclusions and recommendations



METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

- Data gathering – by the company “Rating Online”
- On January 23-30, 2025 in all regions of Ukraine, except for the temporarily occupied territories
- **Women in the age group 18-60 (2018 respondents)**
- In addition to the survey, a discrete choice experiment (DCE) was conducted to identify triggers for leaving abroad
- The analysis is complemented by the data from the study ‘Ukrainian refugees after three years abroad. Fourth Wave of the Study’¹, conducted by the Centre for Economic Strategy (CES) in November-December 2024

¹ [Ukrainian Refugees After Three Years Abroad. Fourth Wave of Research - Centre for Economic Strategy](#)

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

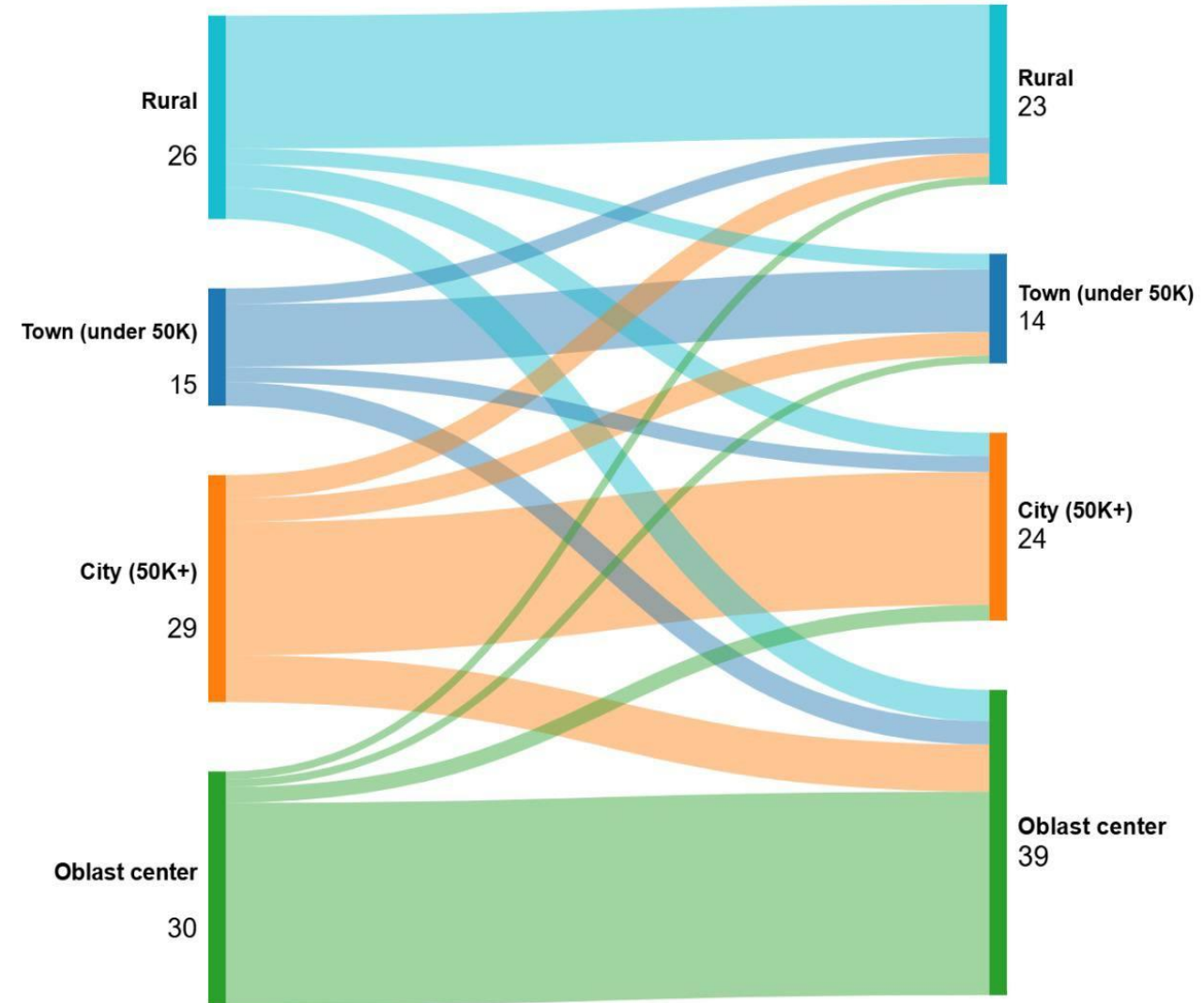


CATEGORIES OF FEMALE RESPONDENTS

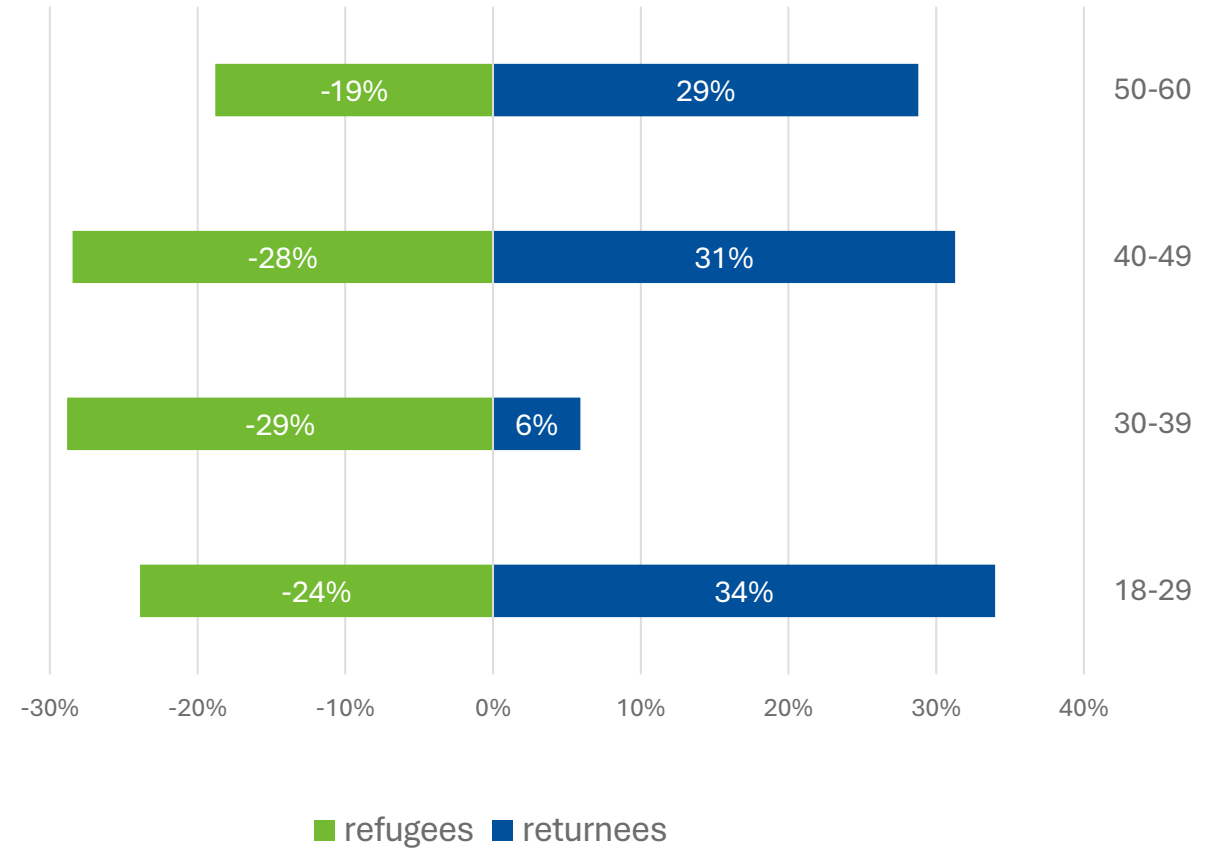
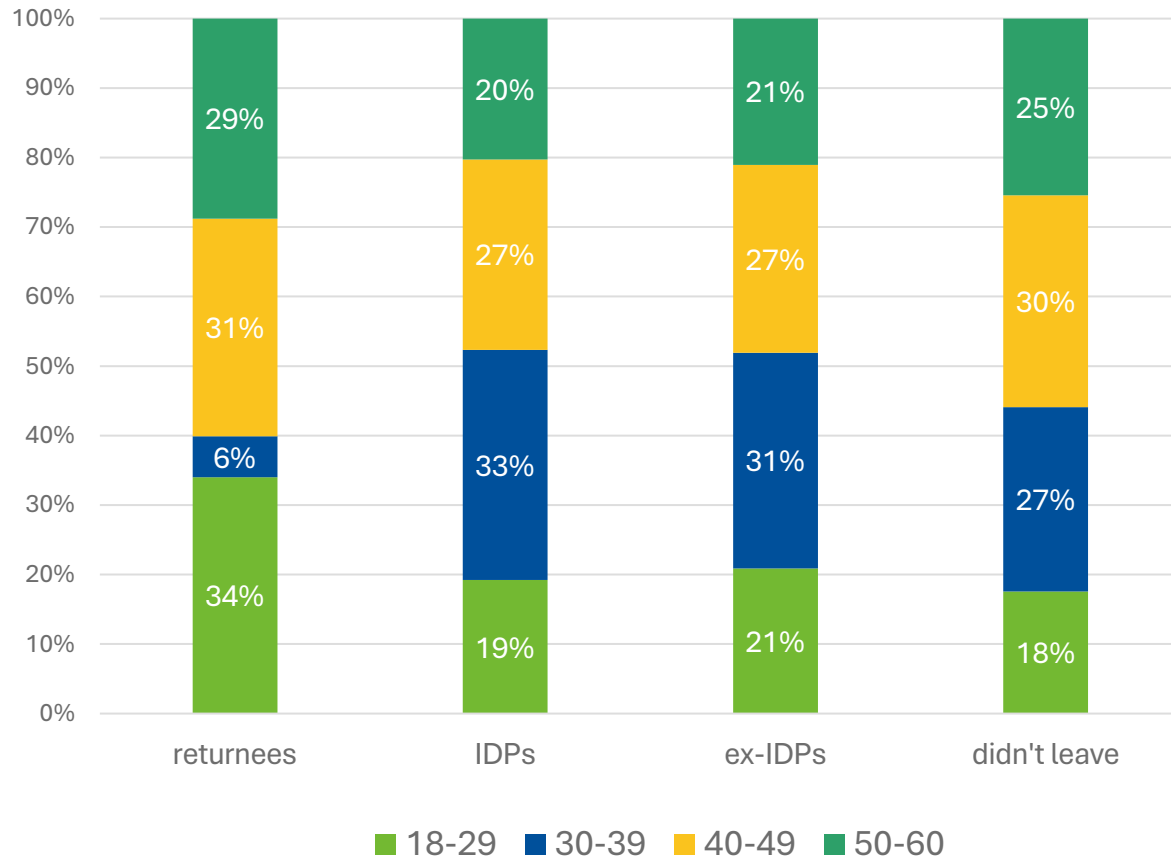
- Did not leave their settlement
- Internally displaced persons (IDPs) – left their settlement after February 24, 2022 and did not return. If they left after 2014 but did not move after 2022, they are not considered IDPs.
- Returnees – left the country after February 24, 2022 and returned (home or to another settlement).
- Ex-IDPs – left their settlement within Ukraine and returned home.
- Refugees - Ukrainian women who fled abroad during the full-scale invasion and are still living there.

MOVEMENTS DURING THE WAR

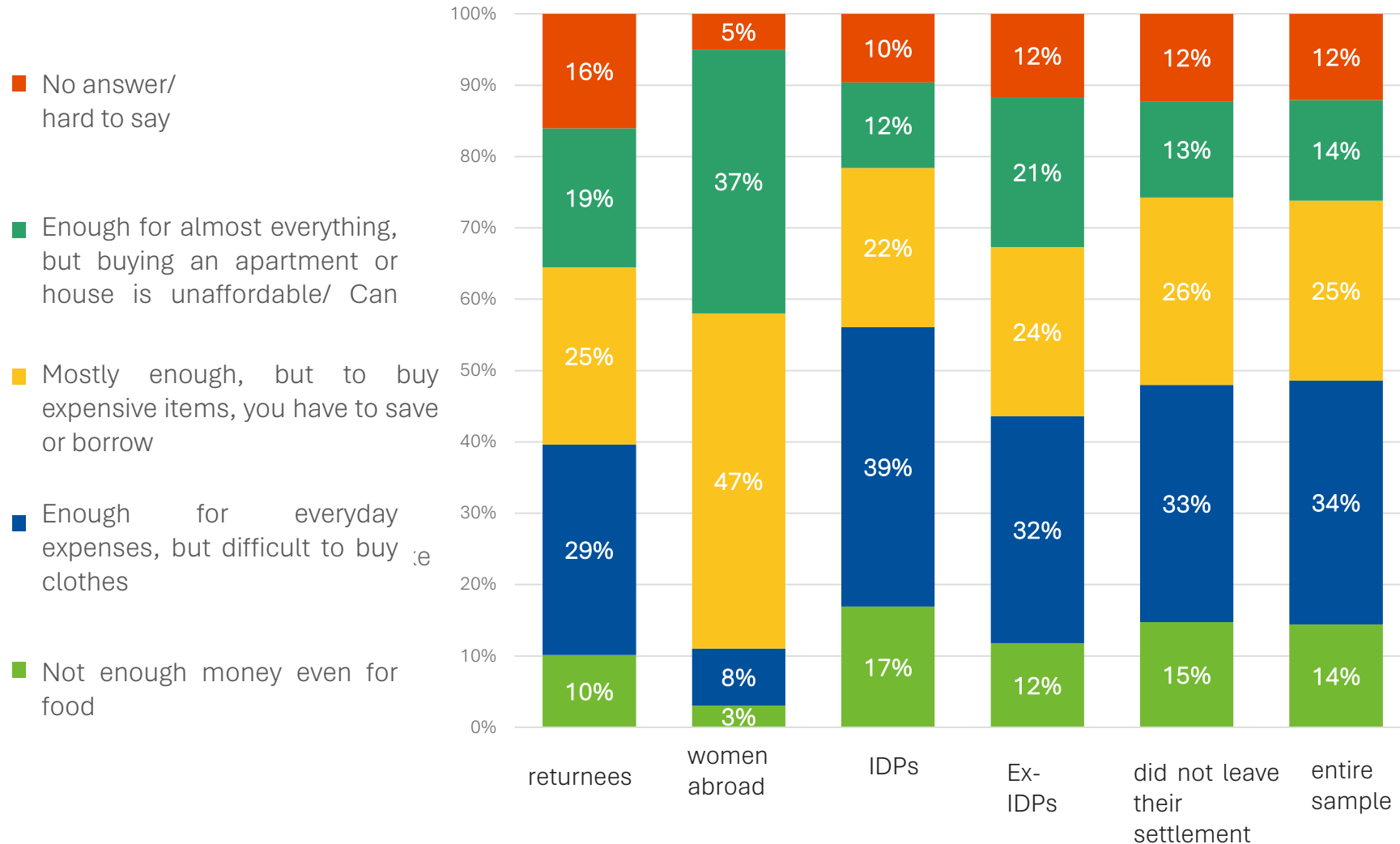
- 39% left their settlement, of which more than half (53%) returned home.
- 69% moved within Ukraine, 24% moved abroad, 7% moved both abroad and within Ukraine.
- Mostly women left for a long period of time - more than a year (39%).



WOMEN AGED 30-39 ARE THE LEAST LIKELY TO RETURN FROM ABROAD

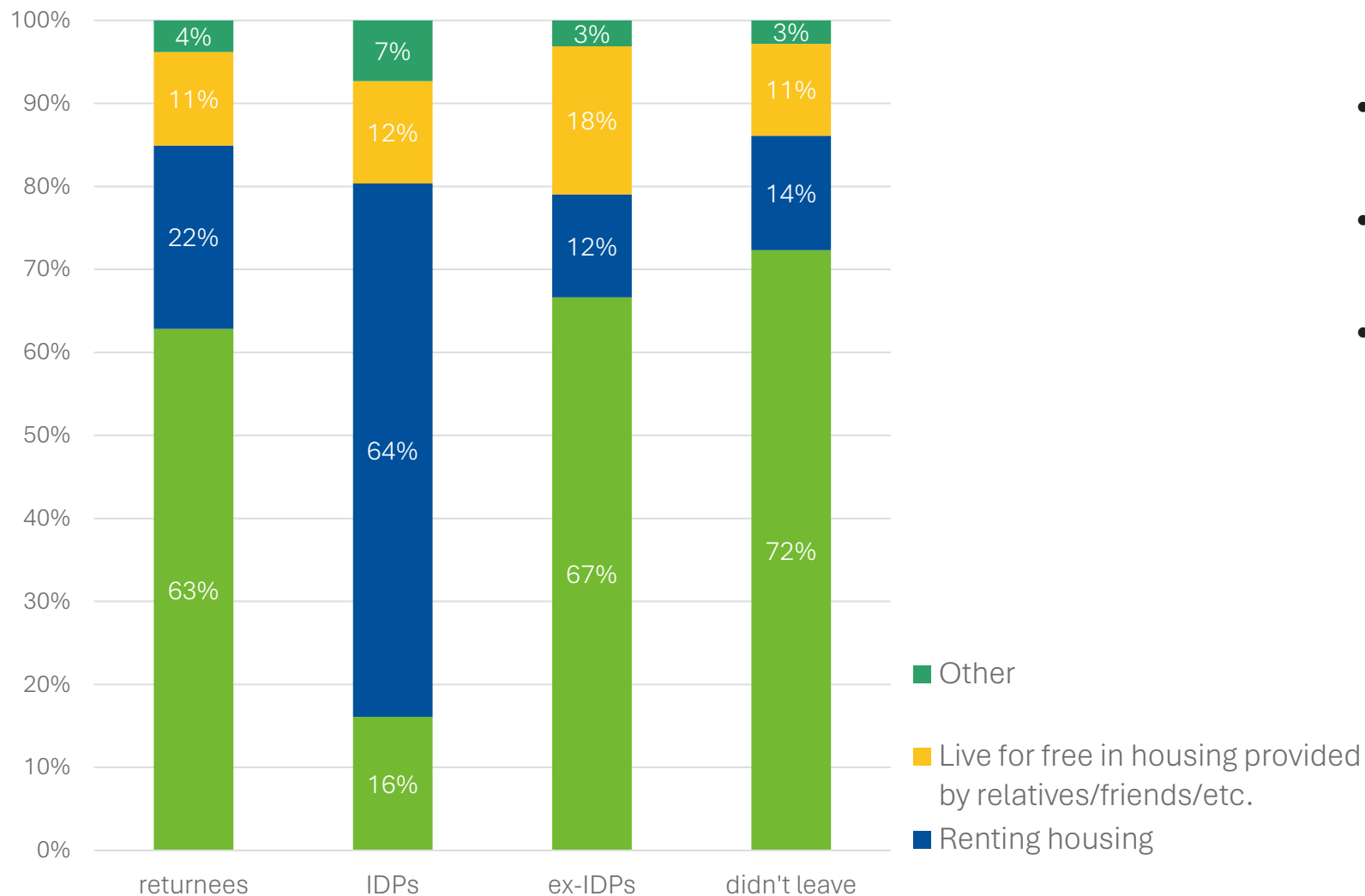


IDPS HAVE THE MOST DIFFICULT FINANCIAL SITUATION



- IDPs have the lowest incomes.
- Women abroad have the highest.
- During the full-scale invasion, the financial situation of 74% of respondents worsened. Only 6% have seen their incomes increase.
- Women living in the northern, southern and eastern regions have seen their incomes fall more than those in the central and western regions.

HOUSING: IDPS EXPERIENCE THE MOST DIFFICULT SITUATION

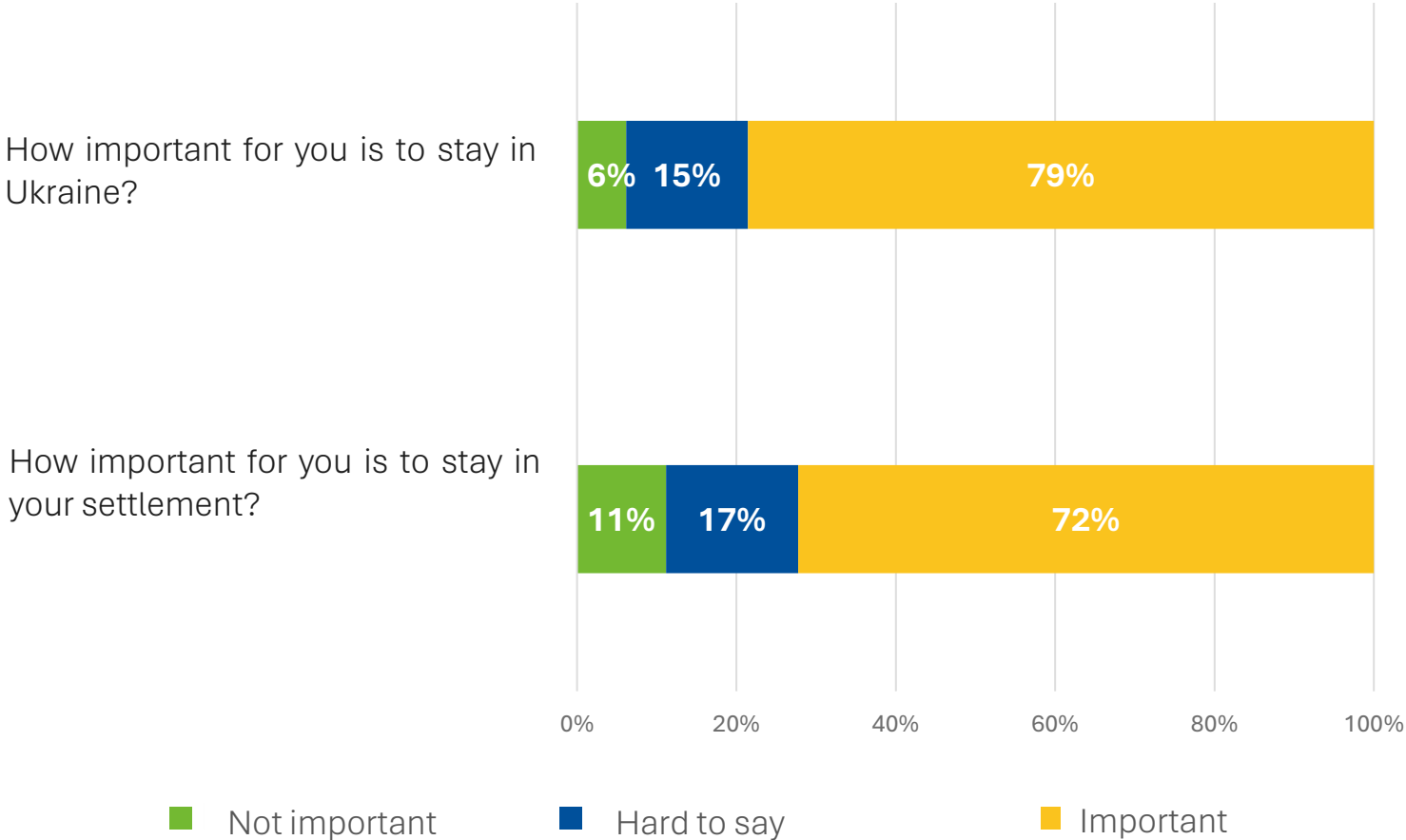


- IDPs: 16% own their own housing, 64% rent.
- Before the war, 76% of IDPs owned their own housing.
- Among those who returned from abroad and previously owned their own housing, 15% now live in rented accommodation. Among ex-IDPs, this number is 4%.



DESIRE AND REASONS FOR STAYING IN UKRAINE

FOR 79%, IT IS IMPORTANT TO STAY IN UKRAINE



The following groups want to stay in Ukraine:

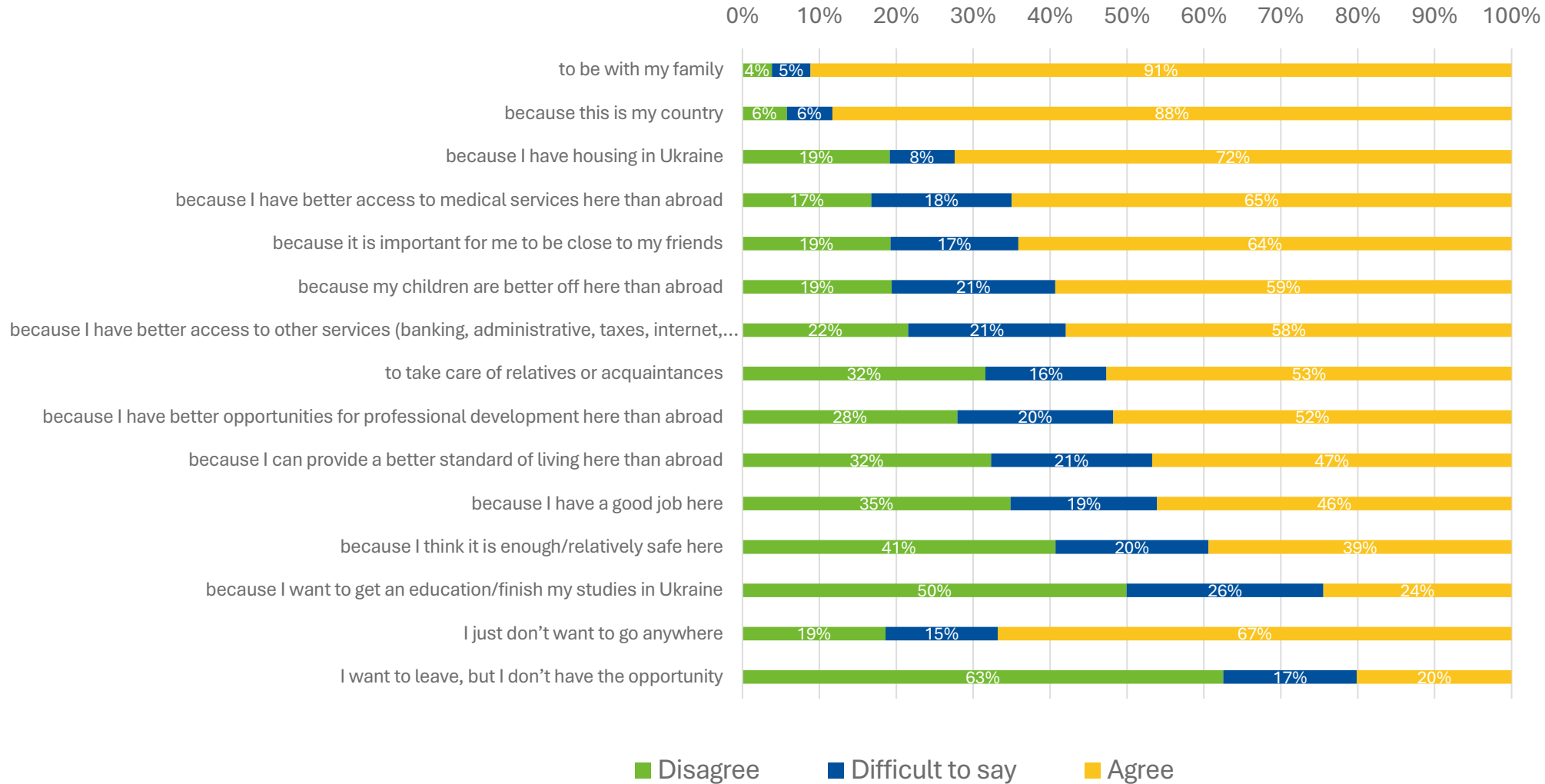
- Older females
- Those with higher incomes
- Homeowners (compared to renters)
- Those who speak Ukrainian

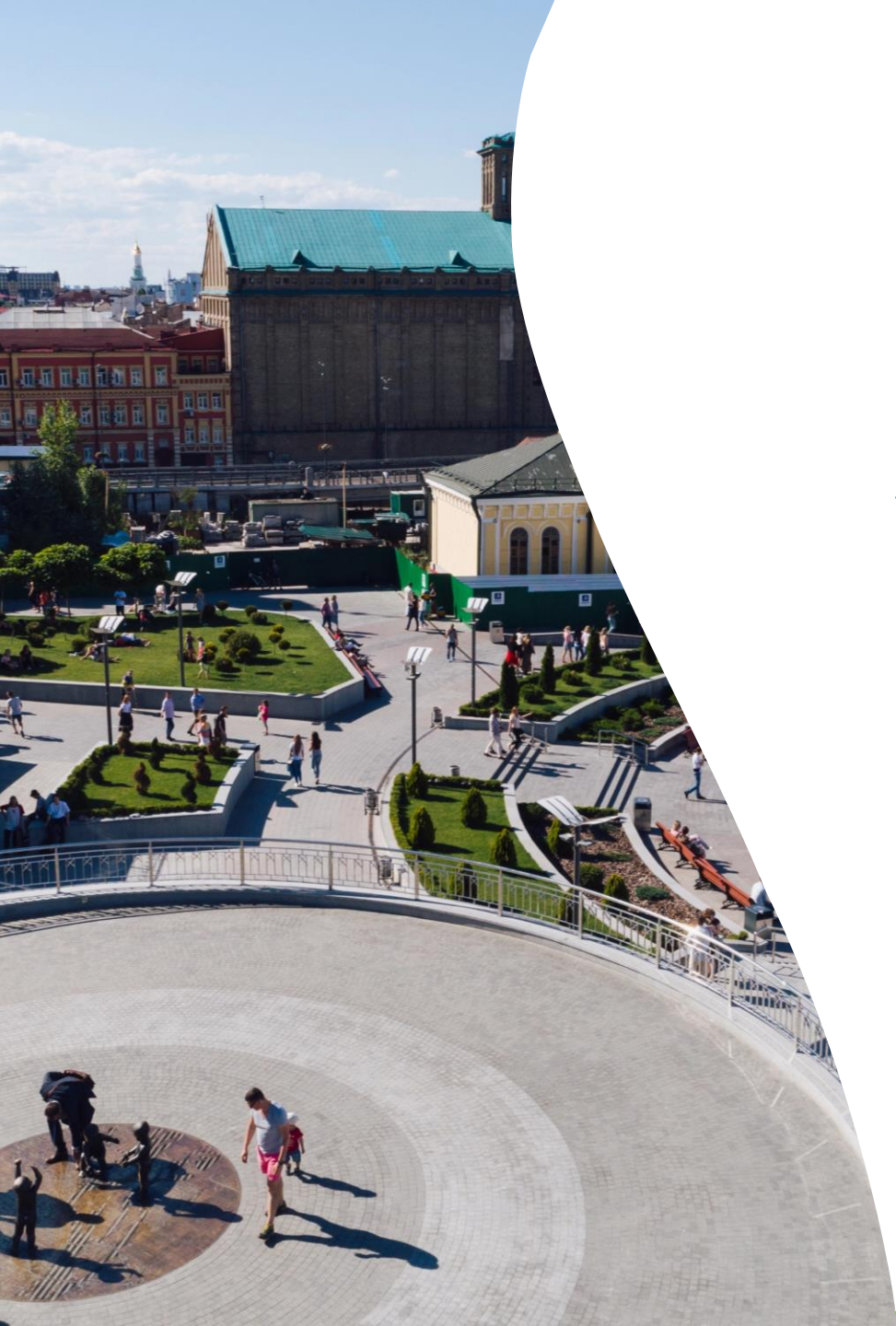
WHO WANTS TO STAY IN UKRAINE

Contrary to expectations and widespread stereotypes:

- women with **children** have the same desire to stay in Ukraine as those without children
- **rural** residents do not show stronger intentions to live in Ukraine or in their native village than urban residents
- for women whose settlements are currently **under occupation** or in the area of active **hostilities**, it is equally important to stay in Ukraine

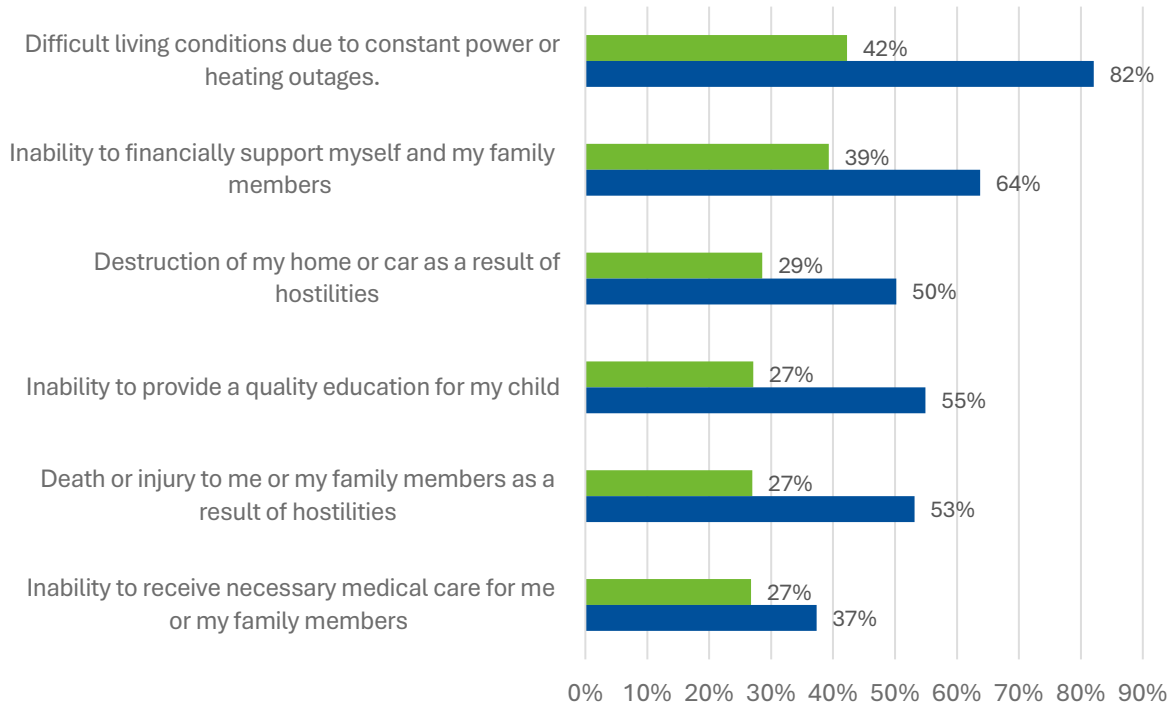
REASONS TO STAY IN UKRAINE



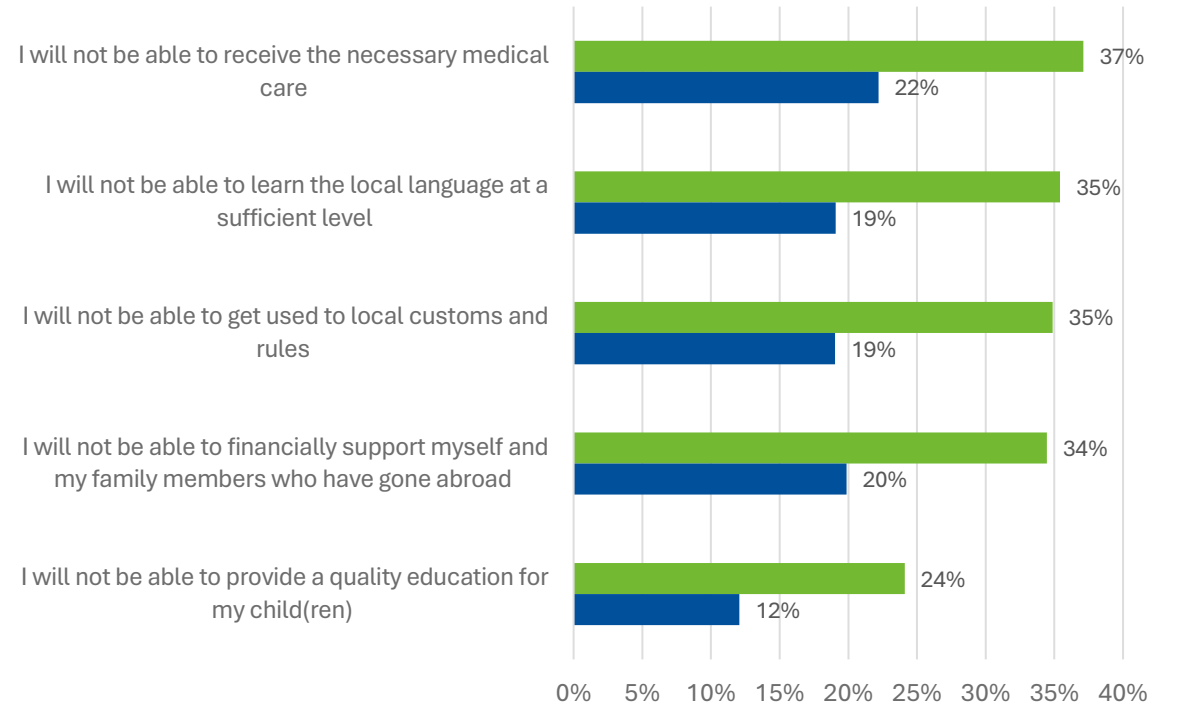


VISION OF THE FUTURE AND DESIRE TO STAY IN UKRAINE

RISK PERCEPTIONS IN UKRAINE AND ABROAD

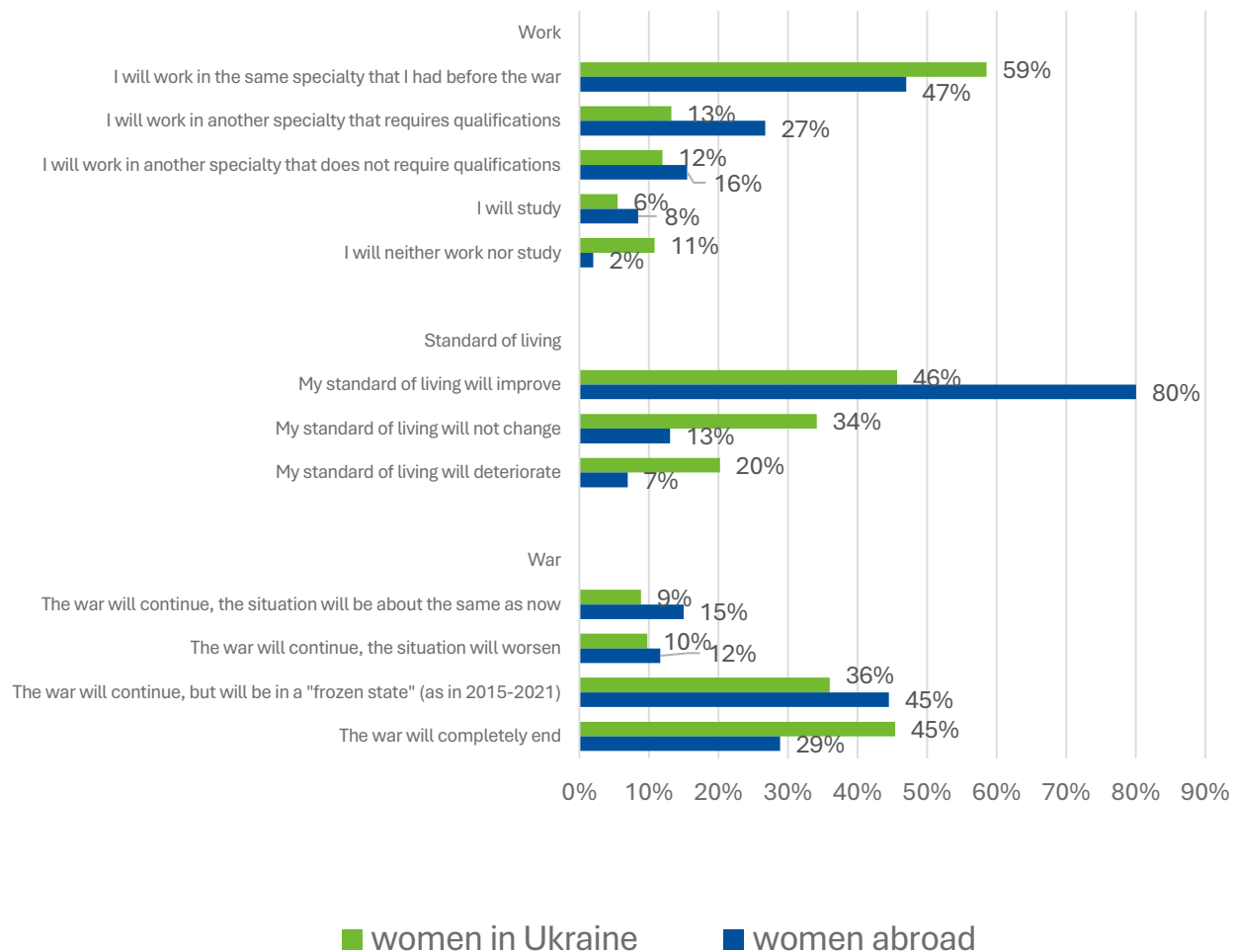


■ women in Ukraine ■ women abroad



■ women in Ukraine ■ women abroad

WHAT LIFE WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS



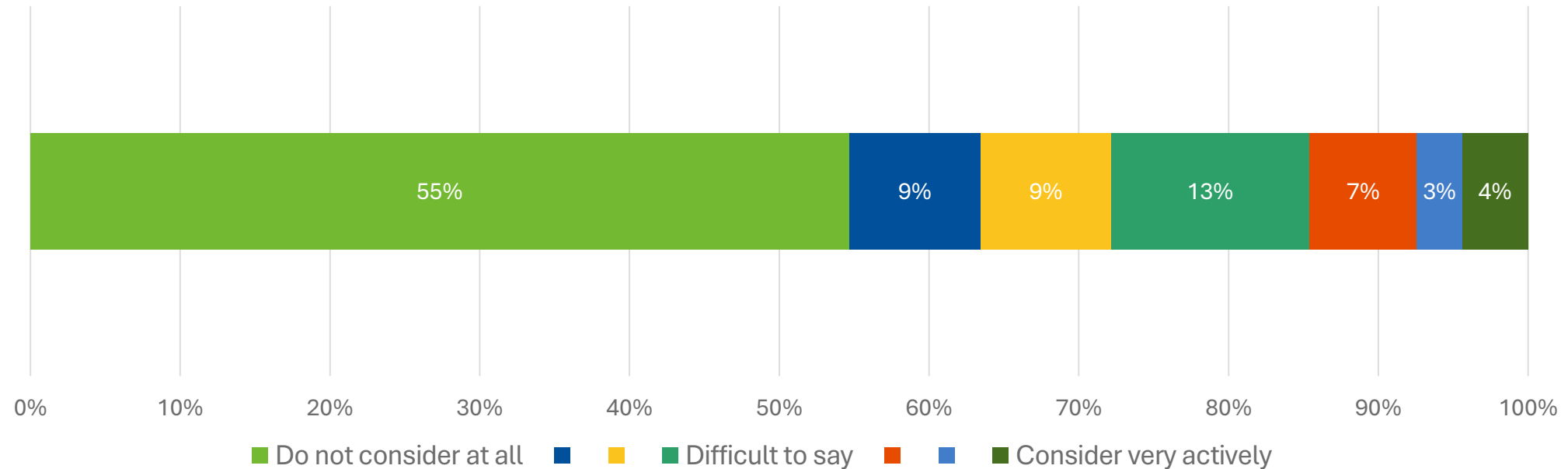
The desire to stay in Ukraine is higher if the respondent:

- expects that in three years the war in Ukraine will be completely over.
- believes that she will not be able to receive medical care if she goes abroad.
- expects that she will not be able to get used to local customs and rules if she moves abroad.

LEAVING ABROAD: INTENTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES



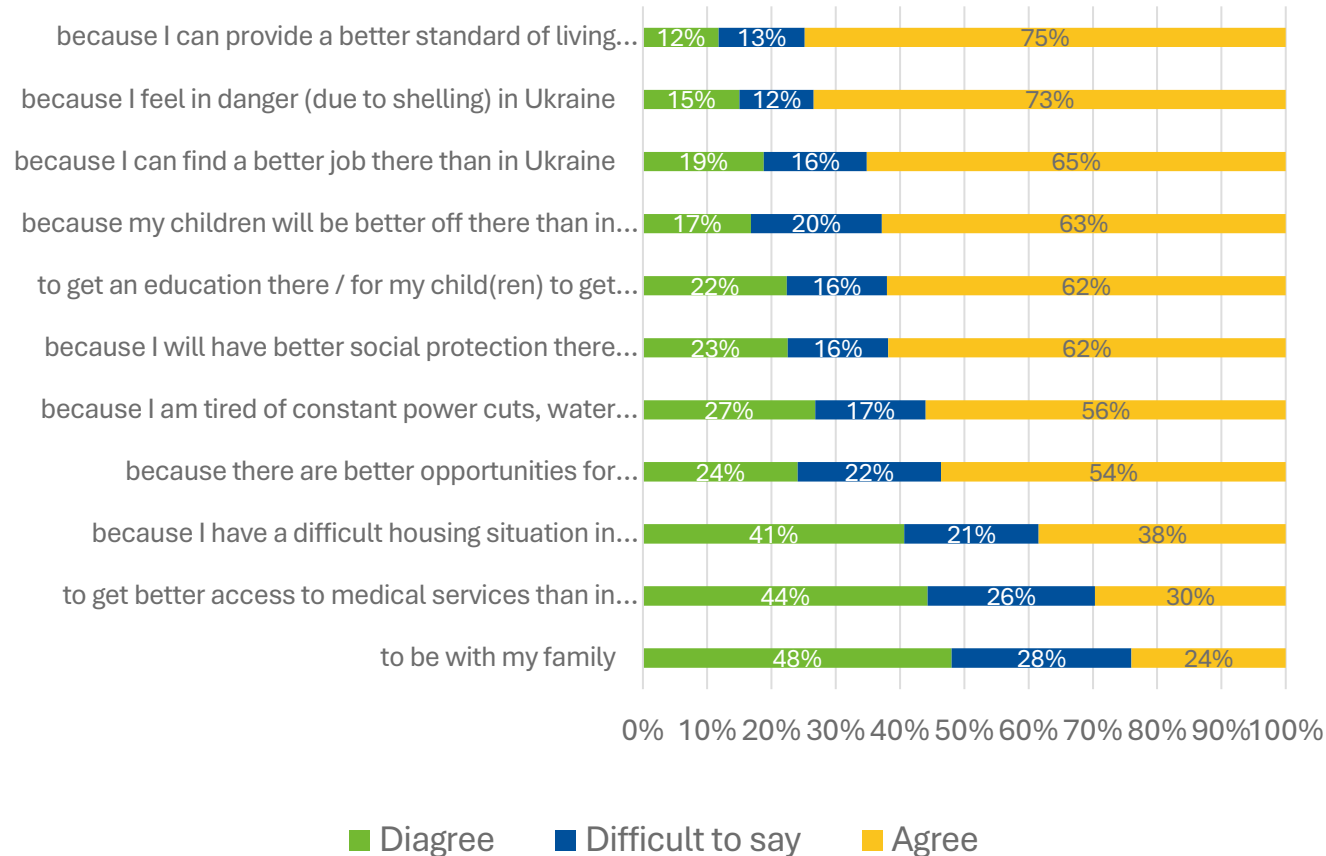
72% OF UKRAINIAN WOMEN HAVE NO PLANS TO LEAVE



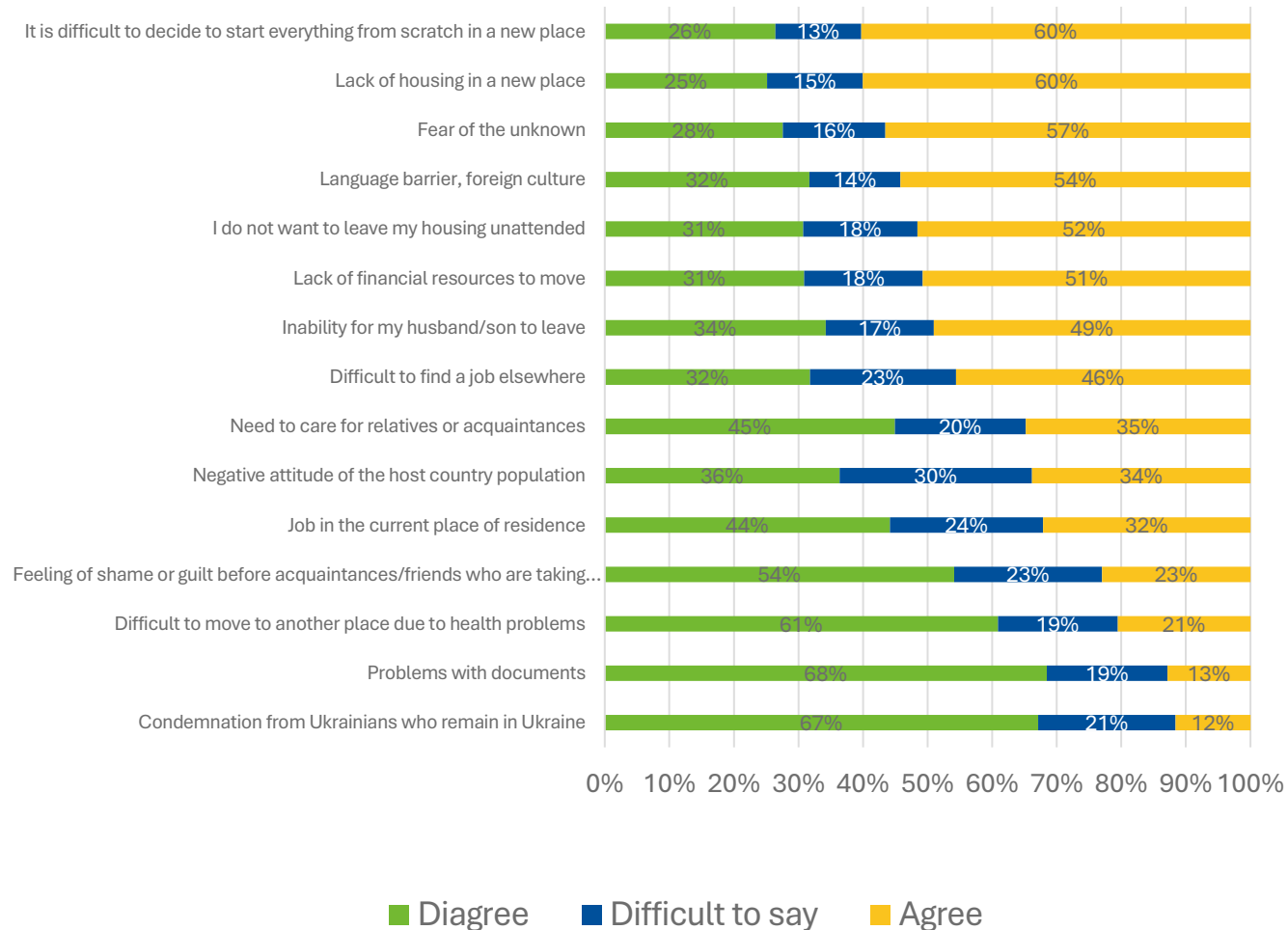
Most often, the following groups of women want to leave:

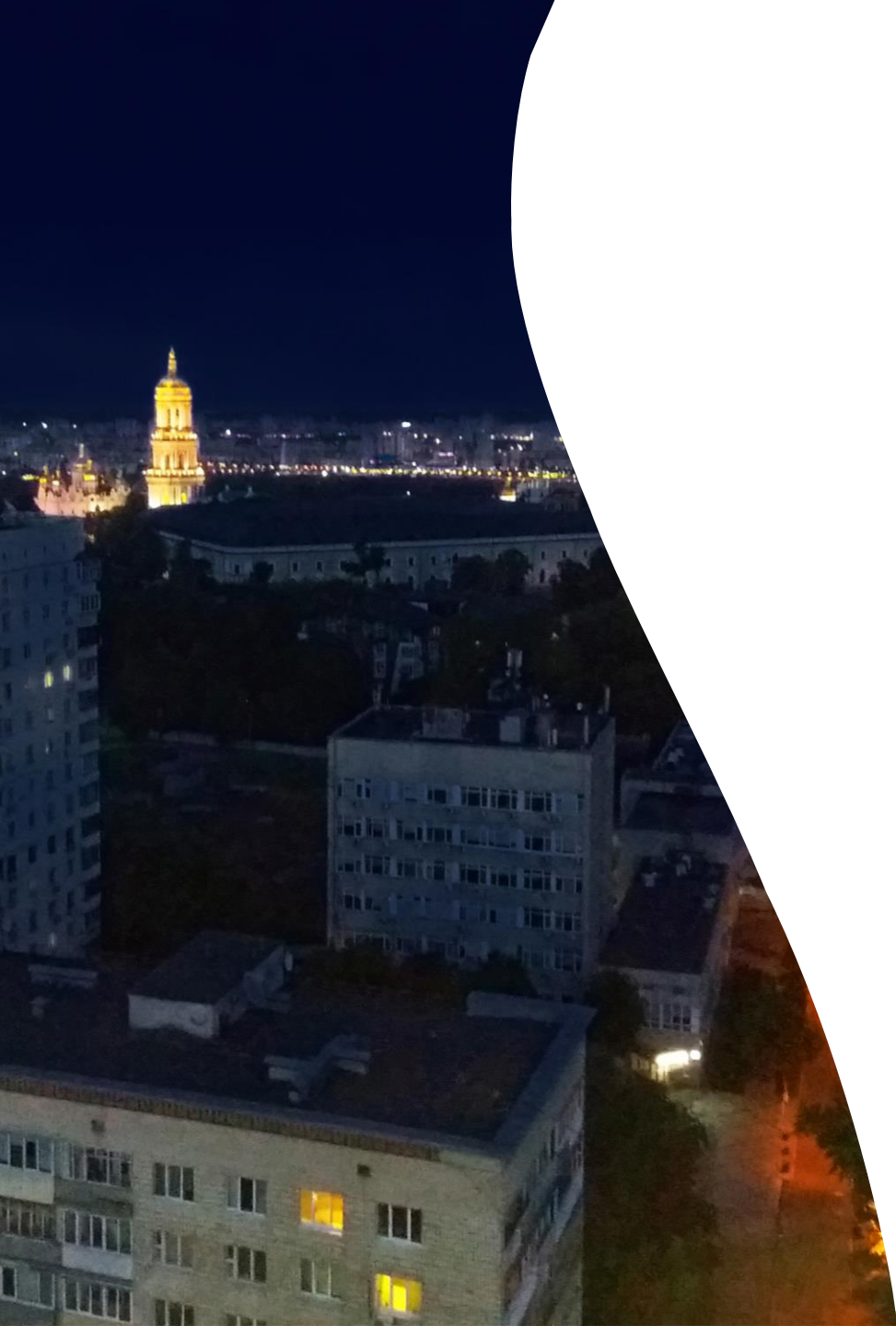
- aged 18 to 29 (students) (1.5 times more likely)
- single or divorced (twice as likely as married)
- who had experience of leaving the country after 2022 (by 14 p.p.)
- whose parents or other relatives moved abroad after 2022 (but not children!) (by 5-19 p.p.)
- Russian-speaking residents of frontline and western regions (by 8-12 p.p.)

REASONS FOR LEAVING: DREAMS OF A BETTER LIFE AND DANGER FROM SHELLING



THE MOST FREQUENT BARRIERS TO LEAVE ARE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND FINANCIAL





POTENTIAL TRIGGERS FOR LEAVING ABROAD

EXPERIMENT

Attributes/Levels	1 did not change	2 got a little worse	3 got much worse
Security	The general security situation in the country has not changed.	The situation at the front has worsened (russia is advancing, capturing new cities, shelling of cities has intensified).	The situation at the front is catastrophic. There is a threat of occupation of the country.
Income	Your income has not changed.	Your income has decreased by 50%.	Your family has lost sources of income.
Basic utilities	Power outages continue as they are now.	There is no energy supply for up to 12 hours a day.	There is no heat and energy supply for more than 20 hours a day.
Social ties	Most of your friends remain in your settlement.	Most of your friends have left your settlement.	Most of your friends have left Ukraine.
Housing	Your current housing has not been damaged.	Due to war hostilities, your current housing is not suitable for living. You are offered free housing in a new place.	Due to war hostilities, your current housing is not suitable for living. You will have to rent housing in a new place by yourself.
Internal aid, political situation crisis	The political situation and the volume of international aid have not changed.	The political situation has not changed. The volume of international aid has decreased sharply.	The country is in a political crisis. Street protests have begun. International aid has almost stopped.

EXPERIMENT

В якій з двох наведених ситуацій Ви будете більш схильні виїхати з Вашого населеного пункту?

Ситуація 1	Ситуація 2
Загальна безпекова ситуація катастрофічна. Виникла загроза окупації країни.	Ситуація на фронті різко погіршилась. (росія наступає, захоплює великі міста, обстріли міст посилюються)
Ваші доходи впали на 50%	Ваші доходи впали на 50%
Відключення світла тривають так само як зараз	До 12 годин на добу немає енергопостачання
Більшість ваших знайомих залишаються у вашому населеному пункті	Більшість ваших знайомих залишаються у вашому населеному пункті
Ваше нинішнє житло постраждало і не придатне до проживання. У новому місці вам доведеться самостійно знімати житло	Ваше нинішнє житло не постраждало
В країні політична криза. Почалися вуличні протести. Міжнародна допомога майже припинилася.	В країні політична криза. Почалися вуличні протести. Міжнародна допомога майже припинилася.
Ситуація 1	Ситуація 2

Ви будете більш схильні виїхати з Вашого населеного пункту у...

У ситуації 1 (ліворуч)

У ситуації 2 (праворуч)

THE THREAT OF OCCUPATION INCREASES EMIGRATION BY UP TO 45%

Triggers	Relative importance
Security	Threat of occupation for the country – 1.00
Income	Loss of 50% income – 0.50
Basic utilities	No heat and power supply for more than 20 hours a day – 0.35
Social ties	Most of acquaintances left abroad – 0.21
Housing	Loss of housing – 0.57
International aid, political crisis	The volume of international aid has fallen sharply – 0.09

THE THREAT OF OCCUPATION INCREASES EMIGRATION BY UP TO 45%

Triggers	Relocation within Ukraine, p.p.	Leaving abroad, p.p.
Security	Partial deterioration +7* p.p.	Partial deterioration +6* p.p. Significant deterioration +12*** p.p.
Income	Significant deterioration +8** p.p.	
Basic utilities		Significant deterioration +5**
Social ties		Partial deterioration +5** p.p. Significant deterioration +9*** p.p.
Housing	Partial deterioration +9*** p.p. Significant deterioration +9*** p.p.	
International aid, political crisis	Significant deterioration -6* p.p.	Significant deterioration +7* p.p.



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS: THE MAIN NEEDS OF WOMEN IN UKRAINE

- **Need for stability and predictability:** Women stay in Ukraine because they have their own homes, jobs, familiar surroundings, and relationships that have been formed over the years. For many, owning their own home is a symbol of **stability**, connection to a place, and security.
- **Need for family and community:** For many women, the decision to stay is not about the economy, but about **relationships**. It is about caring for family members (children, parents, husbands) and a broader sense of ‘my people are here’, ‘they know and need me here’.
- **Need for confidence in the future:** many responses contain a request not just for security, but for a clear understanding of whether there will be a **future** in this country, whether it is possible to plan and invest time and effort here.
- **Need for self-realization:** those who have the opportunity to grow **professionally** in Ukraine are much less likely to plan to emigrate.

Nine out of ten women said they stayed in Ukraine because ‘this is my country!’

RECOMMENDATIONS: TO STAY IS A CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CHOICE

Support for those who consciously chose to stay in Ukraine

- The stories of people who stayed despite the war, their resilience and motivation should be a more prominent part of the public narrative. **Simple and accessible resources** should be developed to help ‘stay here’ (how to find housing, work, support).

Strengthening ties with the place of residence

- Encouraging participation in local initiatives is not just activism, but a way to strengthen the **connection with the place** where a person lives, with people around them, with the local community.



RECOMMENDATIONS: TO STAY IS A CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CHOICE

Active housing policy and expanding local employment and income opportunities

- Housing and work give many people a sense of **‘rootedness’**. In this context, it is necessary to continue rental assistance programmes for IDPs, subsidies for the repair of damaged property, and to actively cooperate with businesses that create decent jobs despite the war.

Support for IDPs

- Deep understanding of the effectiveness of existing IDP support programmes, their limitations and scalability. IDP support programmes should be **comprehensive** and focus on security, access to housing and socialization.

Encouraging internal mobility

- **‘Mobile support’** programmes for women caring for loved ones in case of relocation.

RECOMMENDATIONS: TO STAY IS A CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CHOICE

Support policy for returnees

- Targeting (generally more wealthy than other groups)
- Change ‘We have nowhere to go back to’ to **‘New roots in another region, but in our own country, at home’**

Keeping a sense of stability and confidence despite difficult times

- Fear of the unknown abroad is one of the main barriers to emigration. That is why it is important to support this barrier, not through intimidation, but by shaping the image of Ukraine as **a space where the future is.**





THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION!