

# Research on Ukrainian evacuees in G7 countries



Until we are all equal

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# Introduction

## About the Survey

About three years have passed since the outbreak of the full-scale conflict in Ukraine in February 2022. In response to the humanitarian crisis and the need for an urgent response, not only neighboring countries, but also distant ones have begun to accept and assist Ukrainian refugees. Since then, around 6,863,400 (Last updated 16 January 2025, UNHCR collation of statistics made available by the authorities)<sup>1</sup>, the majority of whom are women and children, have fled their homes and found shelter in countries around the world. From the time of the evacuation to now, the specific challenges and needs of Ukrainians fleeing the conflict have changed quite a lot, which is also highly dependent on the support available and its variations over time.

Depending on the economic level, existing capacities, total number and policy of accepting displaced persons in a particular state, the conditions for assisting asylum seekers are different. Due to the territorial closeness to the border with Ukraine, and for other reasons, the EU countries (from G7, France, Germany and Italy) have received most Ukrainian refugees, becoming a shelter for more than 4 million people. These countries provide temporary protection for Ukrainians, which is an exceptional measure authorized by a decision of the Council of the European Union on 4 March 2022 and currently extended until March 2026<sup>2</sup>. However, even though it equally guarantees forced migrants accommodation, access to the employment and housing, medical and social assistance, as well as education for children, etc., there are specific features, requirements and different challenges for Ukrainians depending on the country.

Besides European countries, such distant states as Japan, Canada and the United States have also offered shelter. Despite their different experiences in hosting refugees, each of the G7 countries, which includes Japan, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom, and the United States, did not stand indifferent to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. By providing various kinds of support at the beginning of their stay and in many cases to the present day, the countries expect that it will help Ukrainians to adapt and integrate more easily, allowing them to become self-sufficient and contribute to local society in the future. To make the process of adaptation more effective, it is important to find out about the effectiveness of the practices and support programs used in different countries, as well as the actual needs of Ukrainians for better integration.

The G7 countries were chosen because although they have a high economic level and influence on the world stage, they have quite different experiences and use various practices regarding asylum. Some of them have hosted large numbers of refugees and migrants in their history, while others had very limited experience in this regard, so the accepting Ukrainians was a unique process for them. However, in some cases, these different backgrounds may have both positive and adverse effects on the living conditions for asylum seekers. In countries with many displaced persons, the overall system may be better suited to integration (education, employment of foreigners, etc.), but at the same time, due to overload, it can be difficult to provide sufficient assistance to evacuees, which is very necessary in the beginning. Similarly, the situation may be the opposite in countries that have little or no experience in these matters before

1 : Ukraine Refugee Situation. Operational Data Portal: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

2 : Ukrainian refugees: Council extends temporary protection until March 2026. European Council <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/06/25/ukrainian-refugees-council-extends-temporary-protection-until-march-2026/>

due to various reasons.

Probably because of the gradual termination of support and other circumstances, approximately one in four evacuated Ukrainians has left Japan and this tendency continues. Through learning about the situation and living conditions of Ukrainians in Japan and other G7 countries, this research contributed to identify the reasons why and the urgent challenges that need to be addressed to enable them to continue to live and fulfil themselves here.

The analysis also helped to identify the impact of different existing conditions as well as the effectiveness of specific support programs on the integration and self-realization of displaced persons depending on the situation in a particular country. Moreover, considering the situation of evacuated Ukrainians to the G7 countries, the research allowed to learn about effective practices and develop appropriate recommendations that can help improve the situation and have a positive impact not only on the lives and self-realization of forced migrants, but also help them become financially independent members of society to contribute to economic development of the country.

## Research methodology

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For this research, between July and November, we conducted interviews and surveys with Ukrainians who fled to the G7 countries following the outbreak of the full-scale conflict in Ukraine (after 24 February 2022), as well as with some representatives of organizations that support Ukrainians in these countries. The interviews involved 27 girls and women of different age groups, professions, family backgrounds, etc. The number of interviewees varied from country to country, as the selection depended on the network of acquaintances and consent to the interview. The questions mainly focused on their personal experience of living in a particular country, the impact of existing support for their lives and the challenges they face there. Each of the girls or women had a choice about the anonymity of her interview (regarding the publication of personal information, photos, etc.), which is why some information may be hidden or partially provided. Most interviews were conducted using various online platforms and social networks (such as ZOOM, Goggle Meet, Facebook, Telegram, Wats App, etc.), except for some interviews with Ukrainian women in Japan, which were held in person.

There also was conducted the online survey on the Google Form platform, which was completed by 239 Ukrainians, the vast majority of whom are women. The content of the questionnaire was slightly similar with interviews, but the survey mostly consisted of testing questions, some of which were mandatory, while others could be answered by Ukrainians at their own discretion or according to their situation. For each G7 country, separate online forms were created and distributed in various online chats of Ukrainians through the Telegram platform, as well as in Facebook groups according to the country. Respondents had the choice of leaving the questionnaire anonymous or providing contact details for the purpose of contacting them and receiving the results of the survey.

The survey made it possible to find out and identify the difficulties faced by forcibly displaced Ukrainians, as well as their concerns while living in the G7 countries. Besides, the survey and interview covered issues such as the situation and difficulties with employment, children's education and language learning, as well as general well-being and comfort of living. Overall, we managed to find out about the impact of certain features of support on the situation with existing difficulties. However, because of the rather limited number of participants in the survey and interviews, this research cannot be completely reliable. Nevertheless, the survey allowed us to see the tentative situation on various issues, and the interviews provided a deeper understanding of the living experience as well as the causes and consequences of existing difficulties.

# Features of acceptance and support programs for Ukrainian refugees in the G7 countries. The analysis of the situation based on interviews and sources



The Canadian government has launched a special programme called CUAET (Canada-Ukraine authorisation for emergency travel) to shelter Ukrainians in the context of the crisis in Ukraine, which provides for temporary resident status for a period of 3 years with the possibility of extending it for the same period. Under this programme, 298,128<sup>3</sup> Ukrainians have arrived in Canada, but it is currently closed to new applicants.

## Features of the CUAET programme and additional support in Canada

Upon arrival in Canada under the CUAET programme, each Ukrainian could receive a one-time benefit of CAN \$3,000 per adult to make it easier for them to start living in Canada. Additionally, some Canadians acted as hosts for Ukrainians on their own initiative, offering them temporary housing. The specifics of support also depended on the state, as in some provinces, the local government offered the possibility of staying in hotels for up to several weeks to help Ukrainians settle in and find housing during this time. Depending on the region, there are also various language learning opportunities, both specific to Ukrainians and migrants in general. Due to the large number of migrants, some courses offer scholarships to help them integrate into the local community, but this is mainly common in French-speaking regions<sup>4</sup>.

Through various social support programmes in Canada, Ukrainians can also benefit from some additional assistance, depending on the area of residence. Additionally, thanks to the activities of charitable centres, organisations and volunteers, Ukrainians could also seek information and humanitarian assistance, as well as advice and support with paperwork and job search.

## Challenges and concerns of Ukrainians in Canada

Despite the large number of migrants in Canada and the well-adjusted systems for immigration, the issue of the possibility permanent residence is the most concerning for Ukrainians in Canada. Taking into account the fact the conditions to obtain a residence permit and the languages differ depending on the region (English or French), some Ukrainians choose states where it is easier to do this, and then change the region of settlement.

Another issue that causes inconvenience is difficulties with employment and the ability to cover all the necessary expenses. First of all, with an existing CUAET work permit visa, there are restrictions on working in quite a few areas, and to obtain a permit, additional applications must be submitted, although this does not guarantee that the permit will be granted. Moreover, even if a visa without restrictions is granted, there are still some areas where it is not possible to hold positions due to the necessity to re-educate for the profession. For example, the non-recognition of medical degrees obtained in another

3 : Canada-Ukraine authorization for emergency travel: Key figures. Government of Canada:  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/ukraine-measures/key-figures.html>

4 : Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel. Government of Canada:  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2022/03/canada-ukraine-authorization-for-emergency-travel.html>

country results in a lack of medical personnel and overloading of medical facilities, which is a serious issue for residents in Canada.

## France

There are currently almost 64,000 Ukrainians<sup>5</sup> living under temporary protection in France who arrived after February 24, 2022, and who are entitled to social support in various areas. However, to be able to continue legal residence and keep their status, they must renew their temporary protection card every six months, which is very challenging in the context of overloaded systems.

### Features of temporary protection and difficulties faced by Ukrainians in France

Upon arrival in France, Ukrainians with temporary protection status can receive a financial allowance for living expenses, which is calculated according to the family's situation, as well as the possibility of living in temporary housing (dormitory type) for the first time. After that, depending on the circumstance, there are options for living in social housing, which is very limited and requires partial payment, temporary accommodation with a French family, and possible support for partial rent coverage from the CAF Family Benefits Fund<sup>6</sup>. In addition, France also provides Ukrainians who flee the conflict with free medical care, discounted travel, various opportunities to learn French, and food assistance if needed, etc<sup>7,8</sup>.

While living in France, besides the complexity and length of various administrative processes, Ukrainians are also greatly troubled by the need and difficulty of renewing the temporary protection document every six months. For this reason, some Ukrainians think about or receive advice about changing their visa status, but in this case, all assistance will be lost so that they have to be prepared for complete self-sufficiency. As with other displaced persons, one of the biggest challenges is employment and self-realization, which is complicated by the language, necessity to recognize the education received, and peculiarities of the mentality. Ukrainians also notice the gradual withdrawal of support, and they are thinking more and more about their plans for the future.

## Germany

Since the outbreak of the full-scale conflict in Ukraine, Germany has accepted and granted temporary protection (under § 24 of the Residence Act) to the largest number of Ukrainians compared to other countries, and currently hosts around more than 1,240,000 forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine<sup>9</sup>. Some of them mention the well-established, structured and well-designed support in this country, which helps them to integrate and adapt more easily. At the same time, for some people, the existing rules are considered too strict, and the systems as well as the specifics of living conditions cause them some inconvenience.

### Features of temporary protection and difficulties of living in Germany for Ukrainians

In Germany, as in other EU countries, Ukrainians with temporary protection are granted permission to work, educate, and access free healthcare, but there are certain requirements to be able receive support

5 : Ukraine Refugee Situation. Operational Data Portal: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

6 : Register and request assistance from CAF. French government website: <https://parrainage.refugies.info/ukraine/arriver-en-france/index.html>

7 : Applying for temporary protection in France. French government website: <https://parrainage.refugies.info/ukraine/protection-temporaire/index.html?ln=uk>

8 : Pour L'Ukraine. French government website: <https://parrainage.refugies.info/ukraine/arriver-en-france/index.html>

9 : Ukraine Refugee Situation. Operational Data Portal: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

for living expenses and rent. Besides the absence of any income, it is mandatory to attend integration courses which allow to learn German up to the intermediate level (or depending on the situation) and which require an exam. The system is closely connected to the Job Centre, which requires employable adult Ukrainians under temporary protection to visit it regularly and report on their progress in language learning and job search<sup>10</sup>. To find vacancies that might be more satisfactory in terms of professional experience and desired self-realization, searching for jobs on an independent basis will be more effective, but in case of refusal of the offered vacancies from the Job Centre, this can be a reason for stopping the support program. At the same time, in the case of certain aspirations for self-realization in a particular field, additional support can be provided to achieve it.

After arriving in Germany, Ukrainians are first placed in a temporary dormitory-type settlement, and then they look for housing mostly on their own or with the help of volunteers, the rent of which is covered by the state in case if they meet the requirements (however, due to the large number of Ukrainians, the process of finding housing has been very complicated in some periods). Moreover, Ukrainians under temporary protection have certain additional benefits, such as discounts on travel and the opportunity to buy food for a symbolic price. There are also certain peculiarities depending on the land (region of residence), for example, in some regions, there are jobs offered for a symbolic payment of 1 euro (e.g. stamping stamps, etc.) to thank Germany for its support.

## Italy

Temporary protection is available in Italy for Ukrainians fleeing the conflict, which allows them to receive various social support at the state level as well as the opportunity to participate in special assistance programmes from charitable organisations. Currently, more than 171,000 Ukrainians<sup>11</sup> live in Italy under the temporary protection status, which has been extended until 2026.

### Features of the support programme and difficulties for Ukrainians living in Italy

While residing under temporary protection in Italy, Ukrainian evacuees are provided with housing, living expenses, health insurance and access to the job market, etc. Moreover, there is various assistance with learning Italian, including limited language courses with scholarships, as well as opportunities to receive humanitarian support<sup>12</sup>.

In most cases, free accommodation is available in special centres or certain hotels that temporarily serve as shelters for forced migrants, which also provide them with meals. However, after staying in such centres for a long time, it becomes a kind of permanent residence, and Ukrainians increasingly begin to feel certain restrictions and inconveniences. First and foremost, in order not to lose their temporary protection status, they have to report their presence at the accommodation centre every 48 hours, and in case of travelling to Ukraine, it is necessary to obtain permission by writing a letter to the prefecture explaining the reason for the visit. Besides, prolonged accommodation of several people in one room, food, financial difficulties and employment restrictions create inconveniences and affect the overall well-being of many Ukrainians living in the centres.

Apart government support, there are also limited programs provided by some organizations, the terms

10 : The Germany4Ukraine Informational Guide. Federal Office for Migration and Refugees: <https://www.germany4ukraine.de/hilfeportal-en/the-germany4ukraine-informational-guide>

11 : Operation Data Portal. Ukraine Refugee Situation <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

12 : Presidency of the Council of Ministers. Information for people from Ukraine. Civil Protection Department. Italian Government. <https://www.protezionecivile.gov.it/en/pagina-base/information-people-ukraine/https://refugees-welcome.it/>

and conditions of which may somewhat differ. One of them is 'Hospitality', implemented by the association Refugees Welcome Italy, which provides for the hosting of Ukrainians in Italian families or temporary coverage of rent in some cases.

However, there are increasingly fewer families willing to host Ukrainians, and the project is gradually closing, making it an urgent issue to find accommodation and full-time employment to cover all expenses. The issue of renting is particularly complicated for migrants in Italy, because due to the system of tenant protection, landlords have concerns and prefer those with stability and a regular income. At the same time, there are great difficulties in finding a job, even in areas that do not require language proficiency, and the employment possibility requires a long process as well as recommendations from other people.

To assist in solving such issues, as well as to facilitate better integration and make life in Italy more interesting, a mentoring project was created by Refugees Welcome. It involves finding a mentor according to the interests and needs of Ukrainians, and after introducing them, a contract is drawn up for half a year. In many cases, due to the successful matching of a mentor and an internally displaced person, such an acquaintance has not only a positive impact on the emotional state and integration of the migrant, but also is mutually beneficial in terms of further friendship and cooperation.



While Japan has limited experience in accepting forced migrants and providing them with shelter, given the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, over 2700 Ukrainians have been accepted by the country, granting them the status of evacuees. These Ukrainians could come to Japan either under the Nippon Foundation program (in case of a guarantor in Japan) repeated twice a program from the government, where it acts as a guarantor. The features and duration of the programs differ some areas, and due to the gradual termination of assistance and other reasons, currently more than one in four Ukrainian evacuees has left Japan, and there are currently about 1982 people left (as of 31 of January 2025)<sup>13</sup>.

## Features of the support programs and issues that currently concern Ukrainian evacuees in Japan

Evacuated Ukrainians in Japan were provided with financial support for living expenses, municipal housing for temporary use (the terms and conditions of which depended on the support program and municipality), medical insurance, various language learning opportunities, as well as other additional assistance and they also have access to the employment and education opportunities.

However, depending on the evacuation program, the duration of financial support for living expenses differs (for 3 years under the Nippon Foundation program and for 2 years under the state support program). Considering that most Ukrainians arrived in Japan in 2022, for those who are on the government support program, their living allowance has already ended at the time of the two-year period, and likely due to the inability to provide for themselves in the future, this was the reason for some Ukrainians to leave Japan<sup>14</sup>.

However, to extend support for Ukrainians, the RHQ (Refugee Assistance Headquarters) Settlement

13 : Immigration Service Agency, Information on displaced persons from Ukraine: [https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/fresc/01\\_00234.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/fresc/01_00234.html)  
14 : 出入国在留管理庁「ウクライナ避難民の受入れ支援等の状況について」<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/content/001388202.pdf>

Support Program was launched in autumn 2024, which is available to Ukrainians who have obtained temporary protection in Japan, including a 5-year visa. The settlement support program provides for partial coverage of rent and minimal living allowances for a period of 6 months to one year, however, all of this is only possible in case of regular attendance at special Japanese language courses<sup>15,16</sup>. Moreover, the possibility of participating in this program is considered individually, considering the situation and conditions of each individual or family.

But despite the existence of the settlement support program, which will also be available for new group in the spring and is likely to be extended in the autumn, Ukrainians consider it only as a temporary option that will make it possible to stay in Japan for a little longer if combined with part-time employment in free from courses time. That is why, with the gradual termination of support with living expenses and housing, more and more Ukrainians are trying to find full-time employment to be able to provide for themselves. However, finding a job has become a great challenge for many evacuees, as depending on the situation, language skills and other factors, full-time employment can be very hard to find, which is why many of them try to combine several part-time jobs. Besides the difficulties of looking for a job just to be able to provide for oneself, due to language difficulties and the inability to recognize diplomas, another extremely difficult issue is the impossibility to work in a sphere close to a professional one and build a career here. This, as well as the issue of lack of awareness of the system of searching and drawing up a rental contract with appropriate conditions and costs, is currently a major concern for many Ukrainian evacuees in Japan.

## The United Kingdom

Great Britain has significant and long experience of accepting refugees from different countries and providing them with support. In response to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, the government of the United Kingdom decided to create special programs for the evacuation of Ukrainians, and as on 7 October 2024, 267,200 Ukrainians were registered here and granted complementary protection. The largest number of Ukrainians came to the UK under two main support programs: the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship program (also known as the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, 194,800 visas issued to Ukrainians) and the Ukraine Family Scheme (72,400 visas issued to Ukrainians)<sup>17</sup>. As of the beginning of 2024, 70% of adult Ukrainians who arrived under these two main schemes were women, and 27% of all arrivals were children under 18 years old<sup>18</sup>.

### Programmes to support Ukrainians in the UK

The Homes for Ukraine programme, which brought the largest number of Ukrainians to the UK, originally was initiated by the British themselves, after which the government supported the initiative and developed the programme and its conditions. To take advantage of this programme, Ukrainians first need to find a person who is willing to sponsor them in the UK, assisted by online groups and special organisations. Moreover, the government has certain requirements for people willing to act as sponsors. As the programme involves placing Ukrainians with local families, it is crucial that they have a separate room or accommodation, depending on the number of Ukrainians they are going to host<sup>19</sup>.

15 : Immigration Service Agency, Support for Persons Subject to Complementary Protection: [https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/fresc/12\\_00124.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/fresc/12_00124.html)

16 : 出入国在留管理庁「補完的保護対象者への支援」について <https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/content/001406301.pdf>

17 : Ukraine Family Scheme, Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) and Ukraine Extension Scheme visa data. GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukraine-family-scheme-application-data/ukraine-family-scheme-and-ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-homes-for-ukraine-visa-data-2>

18 : Ukrainian migration to the UK. The Migration Observatory informs debates on international migration and public policy:

<https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/ukrainian-migration-to-the-uk/>

19 : Homes for Ukraine: guidance for organisations making matches. GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-matching-organisations#support-for-sponsors-and-guests>

Apart of this programme, many Ukrainians have been able to come to the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme, which provides for family reunification with relatives living in the UK. However, visas under the Ukraine Family Scheme were terminated in early 2024, and two programmes - Homes for Ukraine and the Ukraine Extension Scheme - are currently operating to provide evacuation opportunities<sup>20</sup>.

Under the existing support programmes, Ukrainians received a 3-year residence permit in the UK, which can be extended for an additional 1.5 years.

Moreover, their special residence status grants them similar rights to the British, including work permits and medical support, as well as the opportunity to use the Universal Credit social support programme. This programme is designed for various vulnerable groups of people experiencing financial difficulties. It provides benefits for living expenses and partial coverage of housing rent, the proportion of which depends on the level of income. However, in order to receive the living allowance, the requirement for employable people is to regularly attend the Job Centre to find a job and further self-sufficiency.

## **Additional support and opportunities for Ukrainians in the UK**

In the United Kingdom, support for Ukrainians is provided at various levels, including government, county, city and local residents. Additionally, due to religious and cultural values, volunteering and charity are an integral part of the British way of life. The role of churches and volunteers in helping Ukrainians is extremely powerful, well-established and widespread.

Churches, with the support of volunteers, provide language courses, various events for the integration and communication of Ukrainians, as well as creating conditions and providing space for various events. Besides church-based language courses, there are also opportunities for learning English from universities and various volunteer initiatives. However, the teaching is not fundamentally organised and there is a lack of number and regularity of classes.

There is also a variety of additional support, which in many cases depends on the region. This includes one-off payments from charitable organisations, food aid, trips, opportunities to receive grants for equipment or training for their own integration (for example, in Winchester), etc<sup>21</sup>.

## **Difficulties of living and issues that concern Ukrainians in the UK**

One of the most troubling issues for Ukrainians in the UK is the difficulty of finding and renting accommodation, which is why many Ukrainians continue to live in sponsors' homes. The Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme allows Ukrainians to live in host homes for six months, with the possibility of extending the period by mutual agreement, but this trend has been going on for three years now, as Ukrainians face rental difficulties to relocate.

Even though Universal Credit, to which displaced Ukrainians are granted, can partially cover living expenses depending on their income, there are difficulties in finding and concluding a rental contract. Due to the queue on the rental market, preference is often given to people with stable banking histories and regular income instead of those receiving unemployment benefits. Another reason for such a long stay may be the difference in mentality. Because of politeness, many British find it difficult to openly ask Ukrainians to move, while Ukrainians may perceive such silence as approval to continue living with them. Moreover, to be able to cover the rent and self-sufficiency, the issue of employment also arises, which is quite a challenge for displaced persons. From Ukrainians experience, finding a full-time job in the UK is

20 : Apply to stay in the UK under the Ukraine Extension Scheme. GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-to-stay-in-the-uk-under-the-ukraine-extension-scheme>

21 : Guidance. Move to the UK if you're coming from Ukraine. GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/move-to-the-uk-if-youre-from-ukraine>

difficult, and short-term contracts are very common, which are not stable and often do not cover even basic needs. Although the UK has a procedure for recognising diplomas and retraining courses, it is still very challenging to find skilled work even with language knowledge, and physical labour with low pay is quite common among migrants.

Besides, many Ukrainians are concerned about finding a full-time job to continue living in the UK. As the current visa status does not provide for the possibility of extending legal stay in the country after the expiry of the residence permit, Ukrainians are considering finding a job with visa support.



The United States provides an alternative to temporary protection for Ukrainians seeking refuge in the form of the U4U (Uniting for Ukraine) program, which has benefited more than 200,000 Ukrainians. This program provides a one-time humanitarian passport to enter the United States, which allows residence in the country for two years with the possibility of extension for the same period. However, in the case of moving abroad, this status will be lost, and it is possible to get back only if there was an emergency and urgent reason for leaving<sup>22</sup>.

## **Features of support in the United States and issues of concern to Ukrainians**

To be able to evacuate to the USA, it is mandatory to have a sponsor who not only deals with the paperwork for relocation, but also provides assistance with housing, etc. for the first time. Ukrainians who wish to come to the United States under the U4U program either look for sponsors on their own, such as in Facebook groups, or seek help from organizations that provide support in finding sponsors. Those Ukrainians with a humanitarian passport are entitled to benefits and social assistance under the federal Matching Grant program, which must be applied for additionally upon arrival. It provides support for accommodation and food, health insurance, language learning opportunities, and some additional benefits besides rent assistance. However, depending on the state, there are some specific features and additional programs with slightly different conditions (for example, temporary housing costs), but mostly they are designed for a limited number of people<sup>23</sup>.

While staying in the United States with a humanitarian passport and being unable to leave the country, one of the biggest concerns of Ukrainians is the possibility of further residence here after its expiration. For this reason, some of them are trying to find opportunities to change their status of residence to be able to gain a foothold in this country in the future. Moreover, the issue of full-time employment and the possibility of full self-sufficiency is still a big challenge for many Ukrainians.

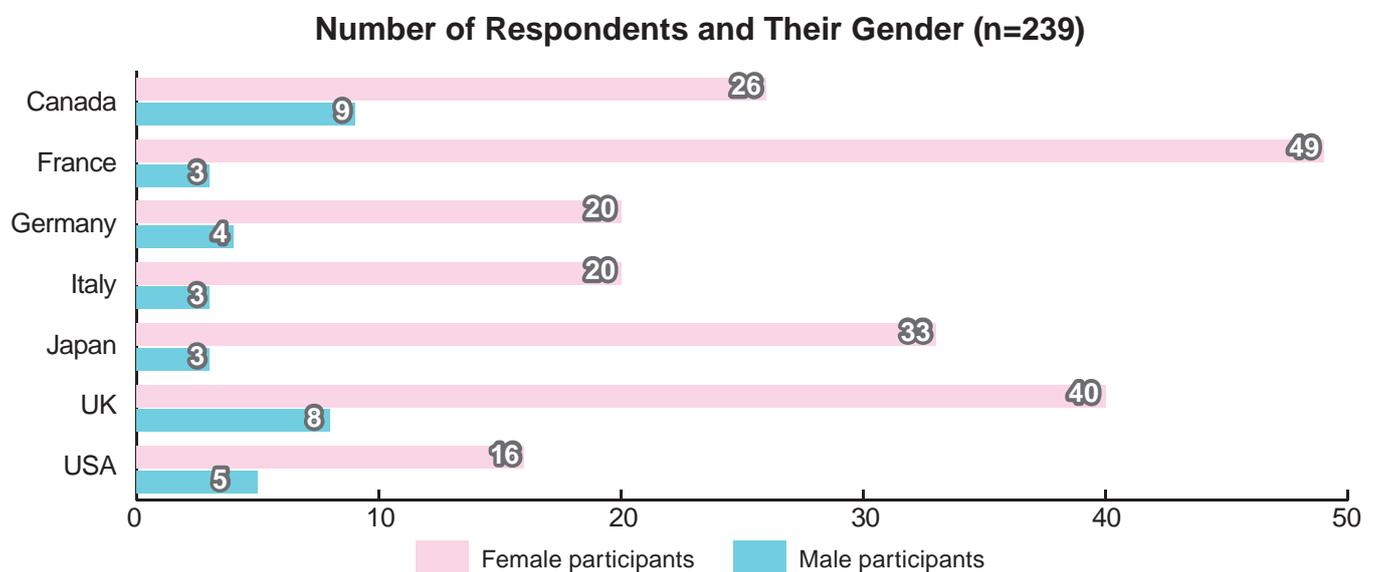
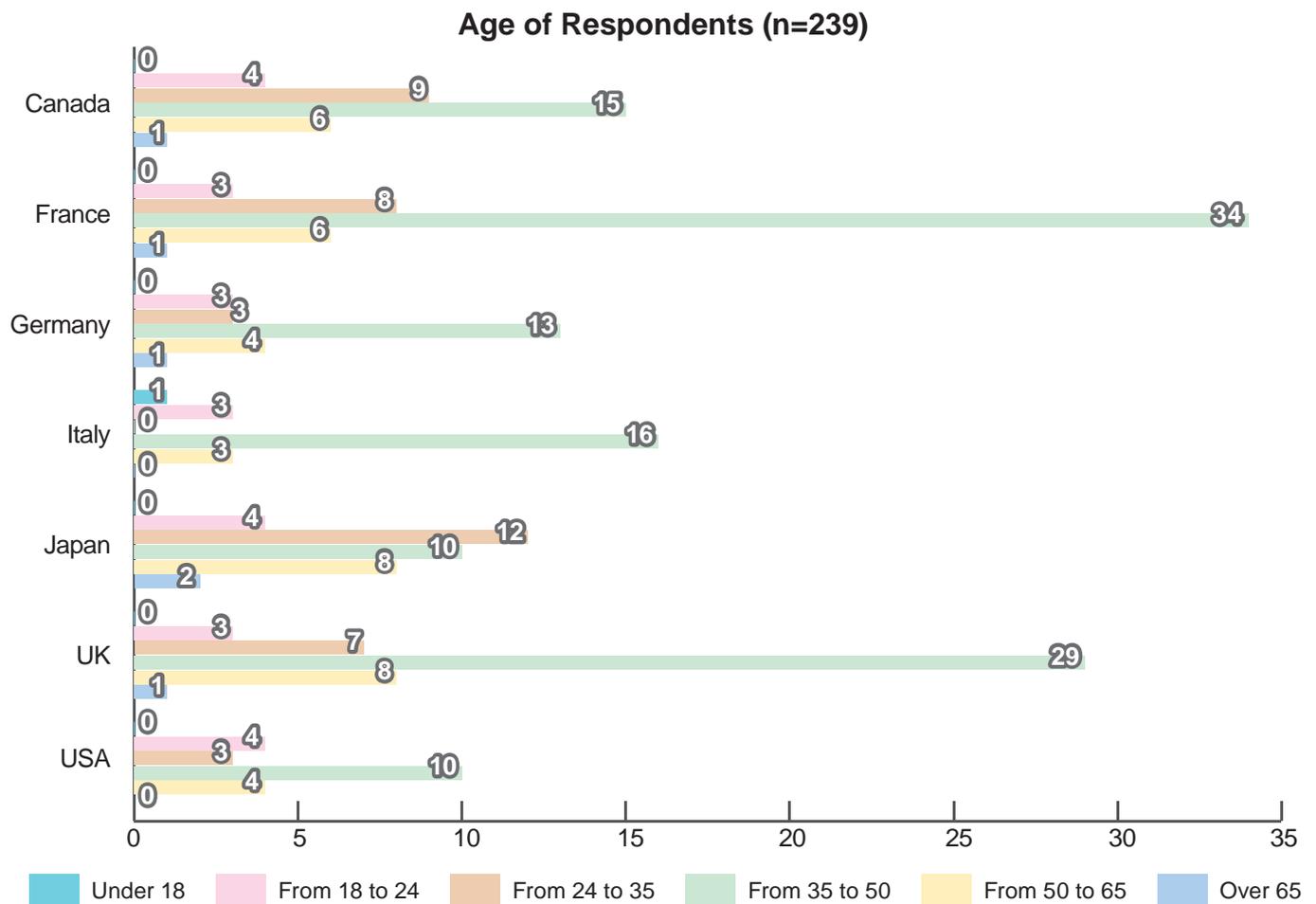
<sup>22</sup> : Uniting for Ukraine. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services: <https://www.uscis.gov/ukraine>

<sup>23</sup> : Welfare Aid. Nova Ukraine Refugee Portal: <https://refugees.novaukraine.org/welfare-aid/>

# Results of the survey of conflict-displaced Ukrainians in G7 countries

## General information

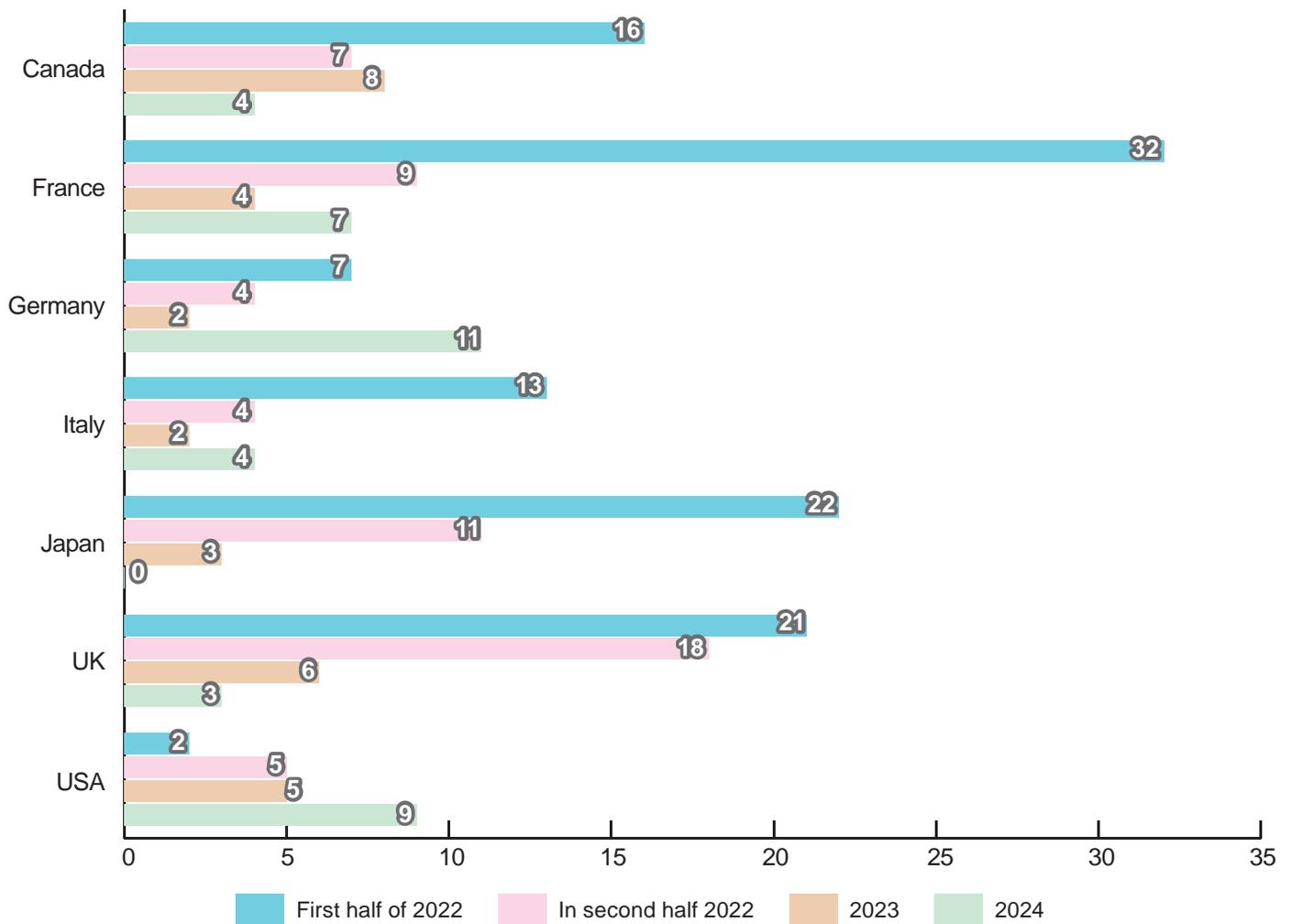
The survey on living conditions and challenges involved 239 Ukrainians who came to the G7 countries because of the conflict and received support there. The number of respondents in the survey varies from country to country: Canada - 35, France - 52, Germany - 24, Italy - 23, Japan - 36, UK - 48, USA - 21.



The majority of respondents are female (85%, or 204 people), and only 15% (35 people) are males. Among the most widely represented age group is 35-50 years old (53% or 127 people), followed by 24-35 (18%, 42 people), 50-65 (16%, 39 people) and 18-24 (10%, 24 people). But the ages under 18 (6 people) and over 65 (1 person) are almost not covered in this survey.

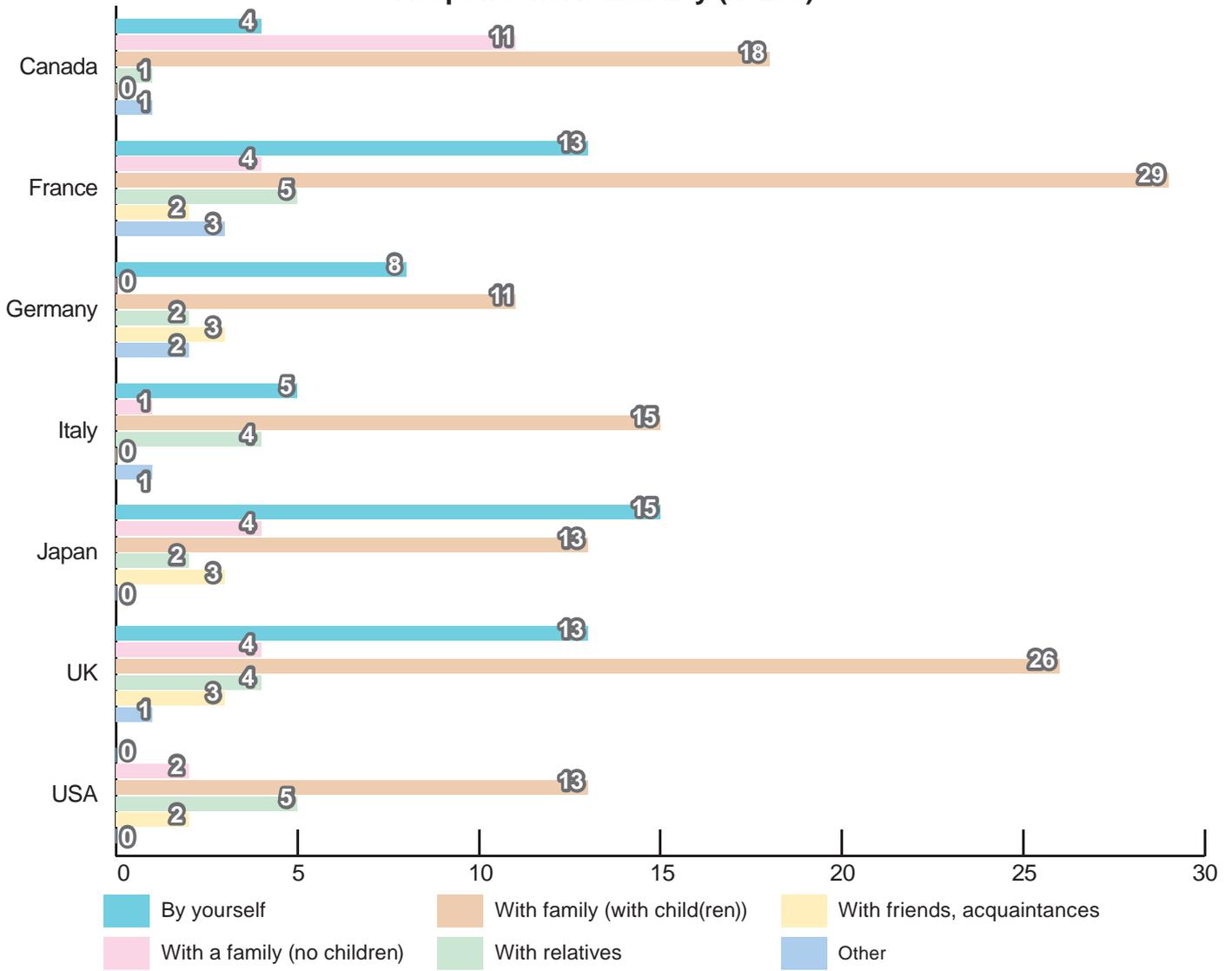
More than 70% (or 171 people) of all respondents arrived in their respective country in 2022 (first or second half). This is the case for every country except the United States (where more than 40% arrived in 2024) and Germany, where the number of arrivals in 2022 and 2024 is the same in the survey.

### Arriving to the country (n=239)

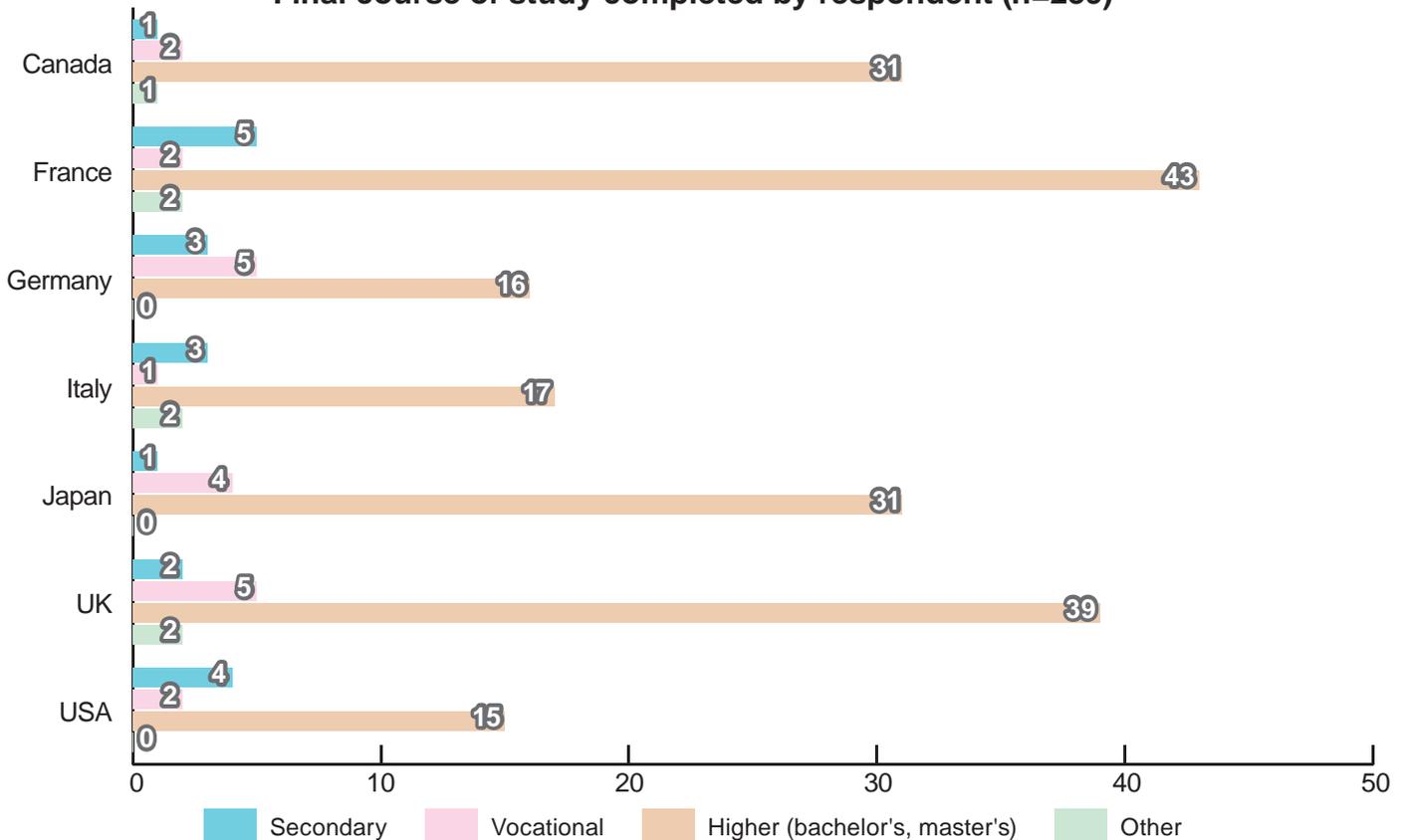


The most Ukrainians arrived in the G7 countries with their families, including children (about 50% or 123 people), or on their own (over 20% or 58 people). The smallest number of respondents went with friends or acquaintances, representing just 5%. However, some of the surveyed Ukrainians came with different categories of people (e.g. family and friends), which is why they chose several options at once. In terms of education, 80% of the respondents (192 people) have higher degrees, with almost 10% (21 people) having vocational qualifications, and about 8% (19 people) with secondary education.

### Respondent Availability (n=239)



### Final course of study completed by respondent (n=239)

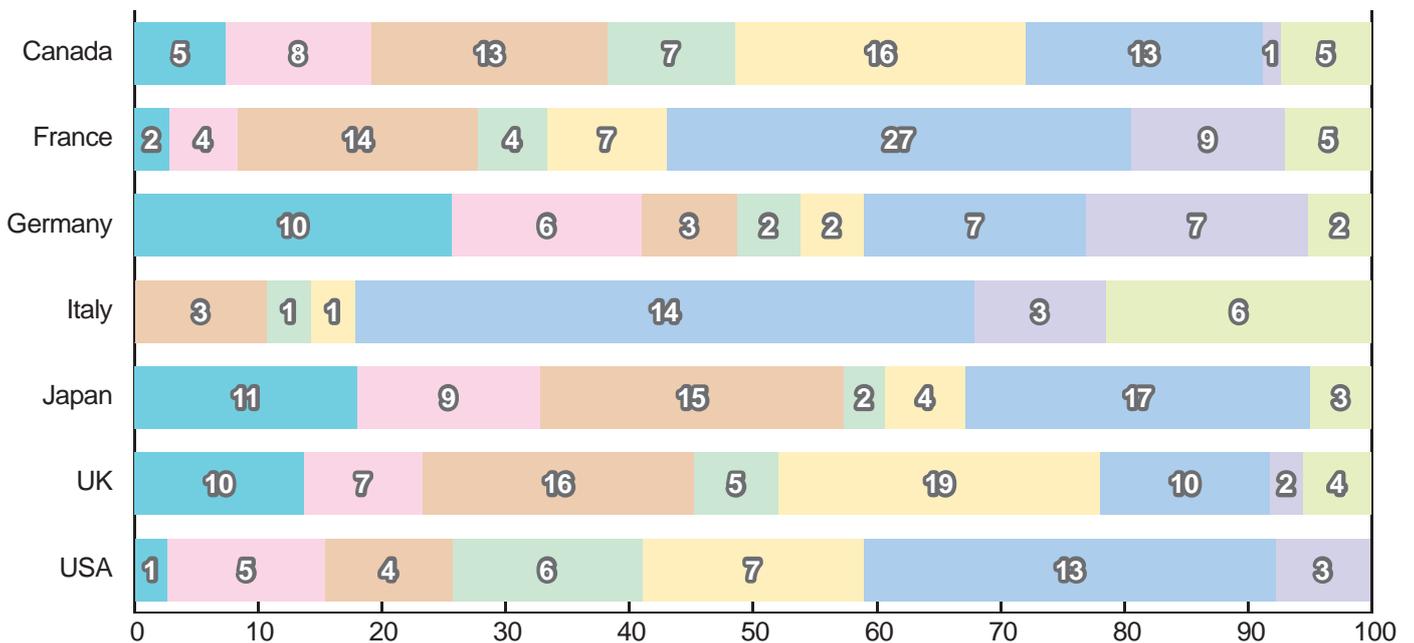


Before evacuation to the G7 countries, the Ukrainians surveyed resided in different regions of Ukraine, but the most widely represented is Kyiv region (31% or 75 people), which is the capital. Also, many respondents (about 45% or 107 people) came from the Southern, Northern and Eastern regions of Ukraine (such as Kharkiv, Dnipro, Odesa, Sumy, etc.), which are more often subject to shelling or are areas of active hostilities.

Within the G7 countries, the participants of this survey mainly live in the following regions or provinces: in Canada - Ontario (71%), in France - Provence- Alpes-Côte d'Azur (73%), in Germany - Bavaria (37%), in Italy - Lazio (22%) and Puglia (17%), in Japan - Tokyo (almost 45%), in the UK - Scotland (over 60%) and England (35%), in the USA - Washington (33%) and Texas (28%).

One in four Ukrainians (26% or 101 people) chose a particular country for evacuation because they have relatives or friends living there for a long time. Other common reasons that influenced their choice of a country were interest in the culture and desire to live there (18% or 68 people), as well as partial knowledge of the language spoken in that country (15% or 56 people). The survey results show that in the case of English-speaking states (the United Kingdom, United States and partially Canada), the selection was mostly due to the language skills they had before evacuation, while the reason for choosing Japan, Germany and the United Kingdom was mostly based on the availability comprehensive support provided in various areas in these countries.

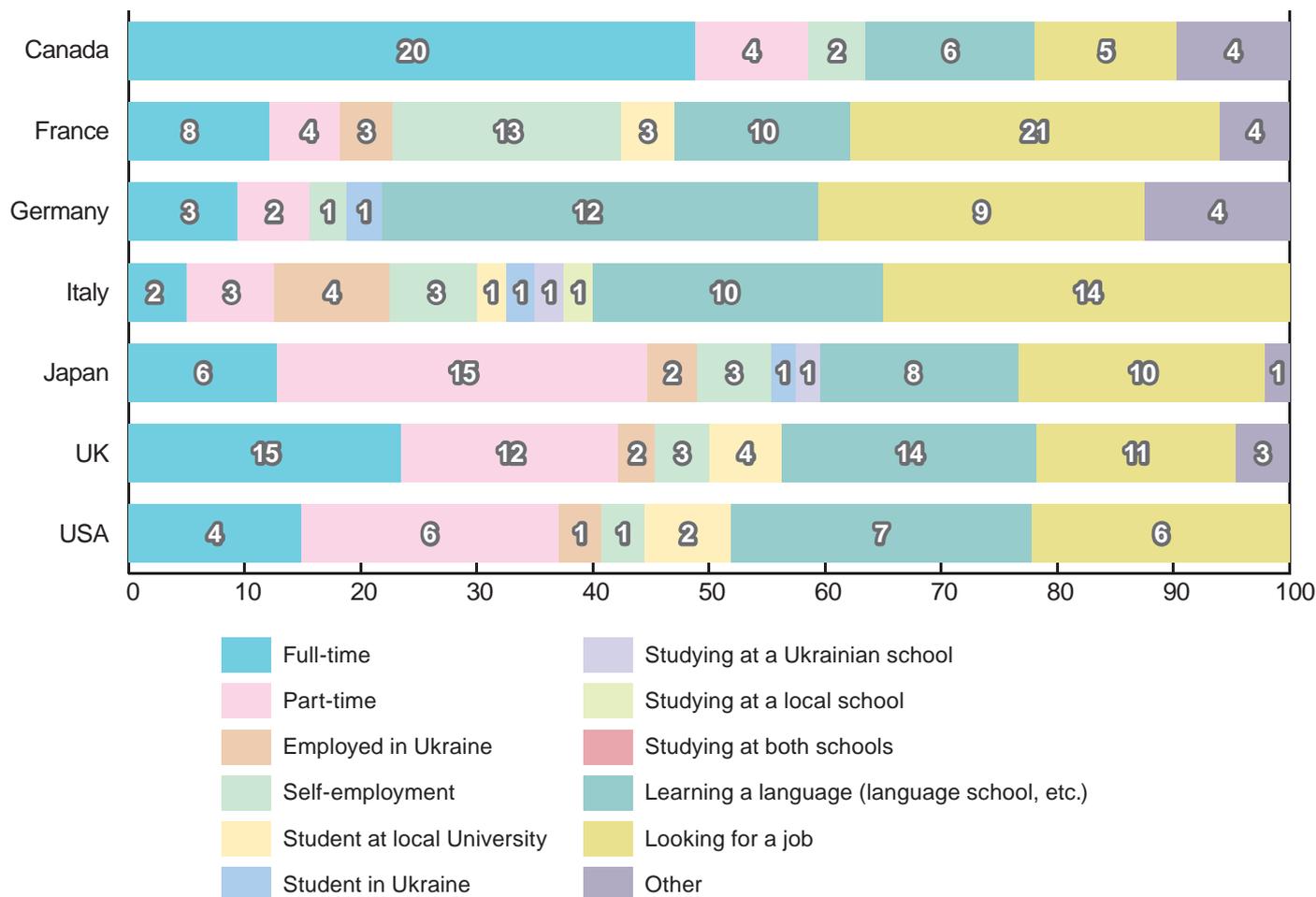
### Reasons for choosing that country as a refuge (n=239)



- Comprehensive support and various assistance for Ukrainians
- High living standards
- Like the culture and the country in general, would like to live here
- There are many opportunities for self-realisation in this country
- Before evacuation here, knew and partially spoke the language
- Have relatives or familiars who have lived in this country for a long time
- Many acquaintances and friends have evacuated to this country
- Other

## Current occupation and employment situation

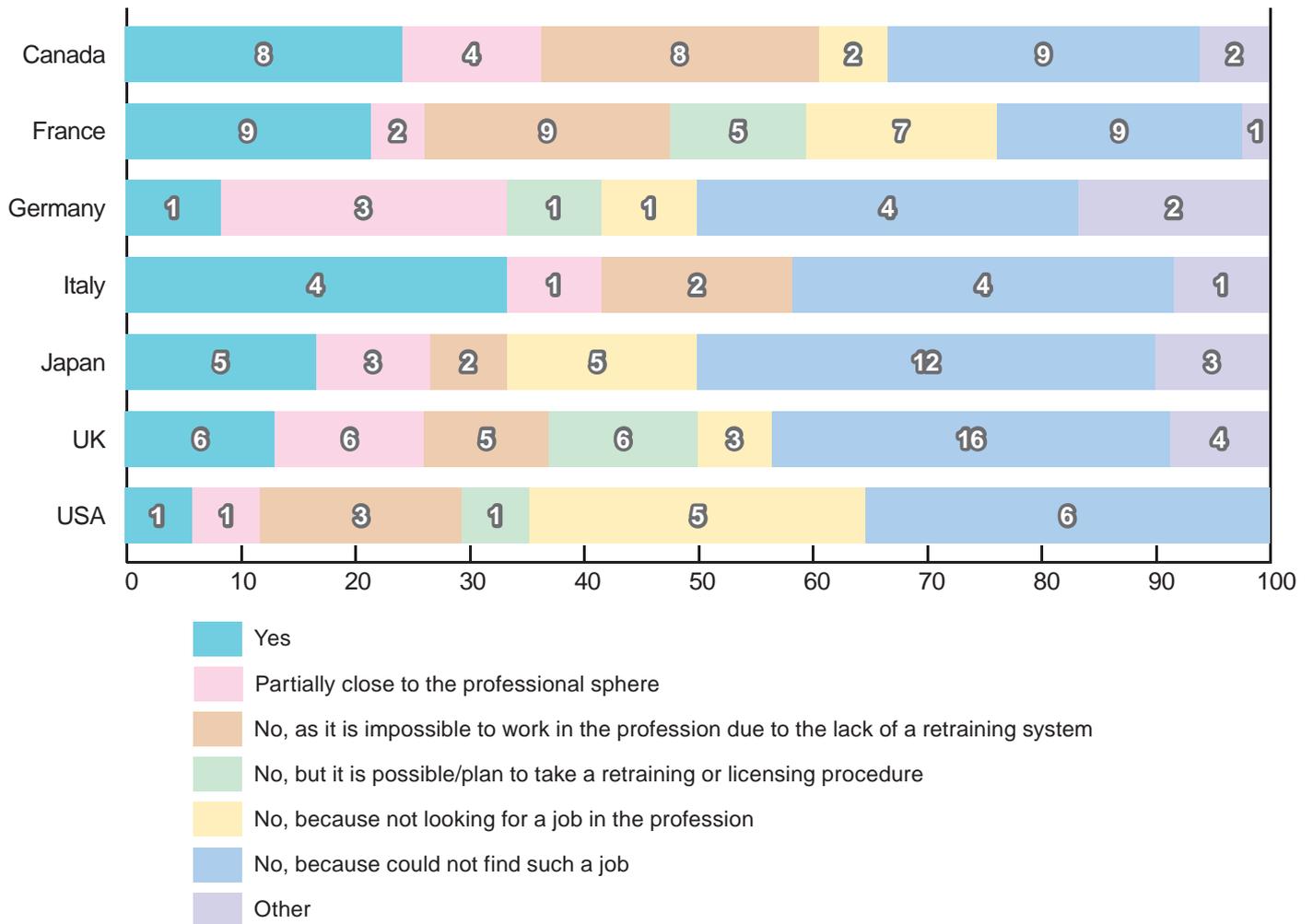
Current social status in the evacuated area (n=239)



The majority of Ukrainians who took part in the survey are currently looking for a job (24% or 76 people) or their main employment is language learning (21% or 67 people). At the same time, the employment rate is quite low, as only about 18% (58 people) are working full-time (mostly in Canada and the United States), and 15% (46 people) have part-time jobs (most common in Japan).

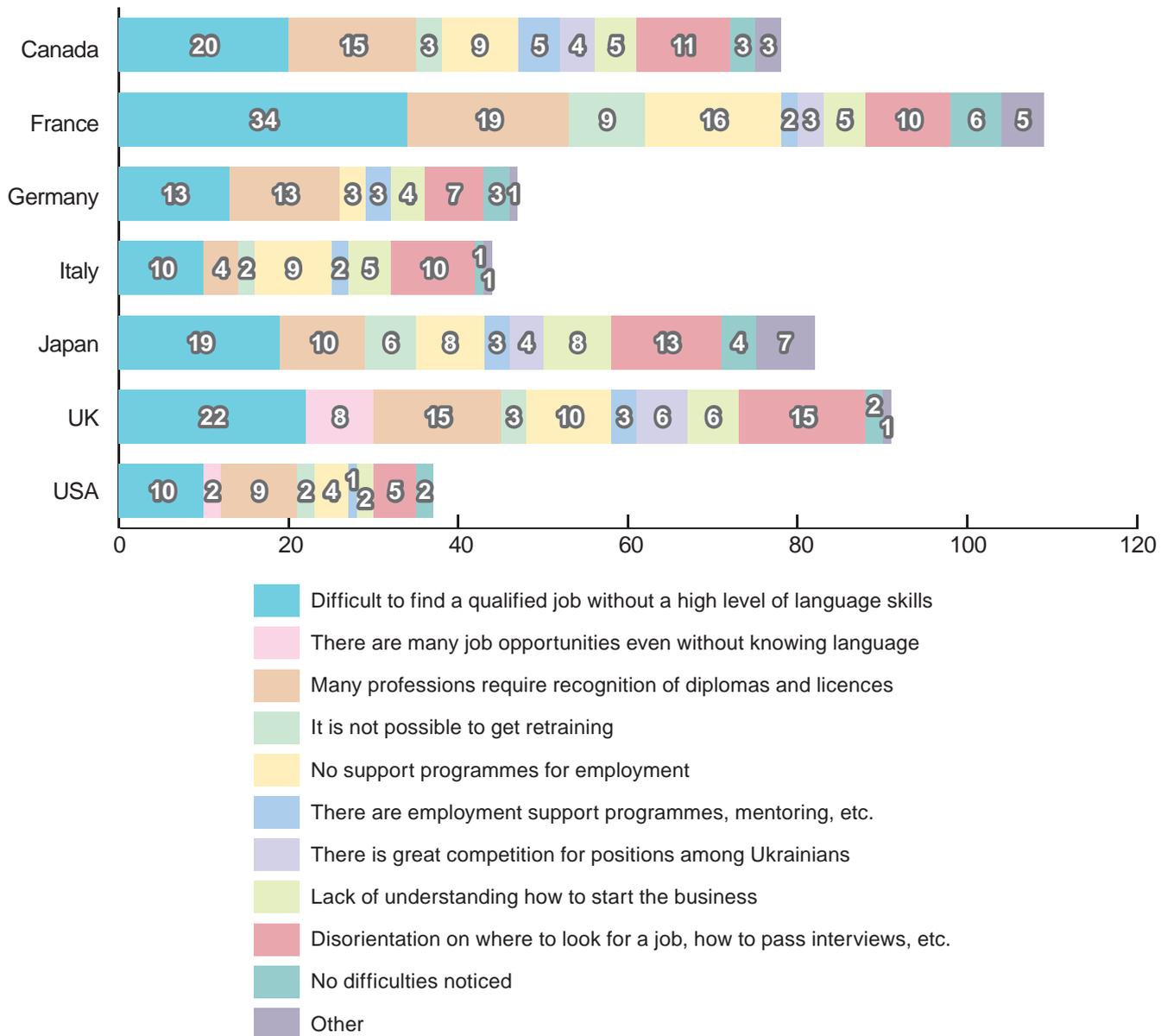
Of those employed full or part-time, only about 30% (54 people) are working in a field that is fully or partially related to their profession, which is the highest among Ukrainians in Canada and the UK. At the same time, more than 15% (29 people) answered that they cannot perform their profession due to the absence of a retraining system, and about 35% (60 respondents) are could not find a job according to their education, which is the most widely represented among Ukrainians in the UK and Japan.

## Does the respondent's expertise match their current occupation? (n=172)



More than half of the Ukrainians surveyed (128 people) believe that it is very difficult to find a qualified job without a high level of knowledge of the local language, which is also a challenge for evacuees to the English-speaking (UK, USA) and partially English-speaking (Canada) countries. At the same time, in states such as France, Germany, Italy and Japan, Ukrainians reported an almost complete lack of employment opportunities with English proficiency. Moreover, more than 35% (85 people) faced the fact that many professions require licensing and recognition of diplomas, and 30% (71 people) experienced difficulties due to disorientation about the job seeking and employment process in general.

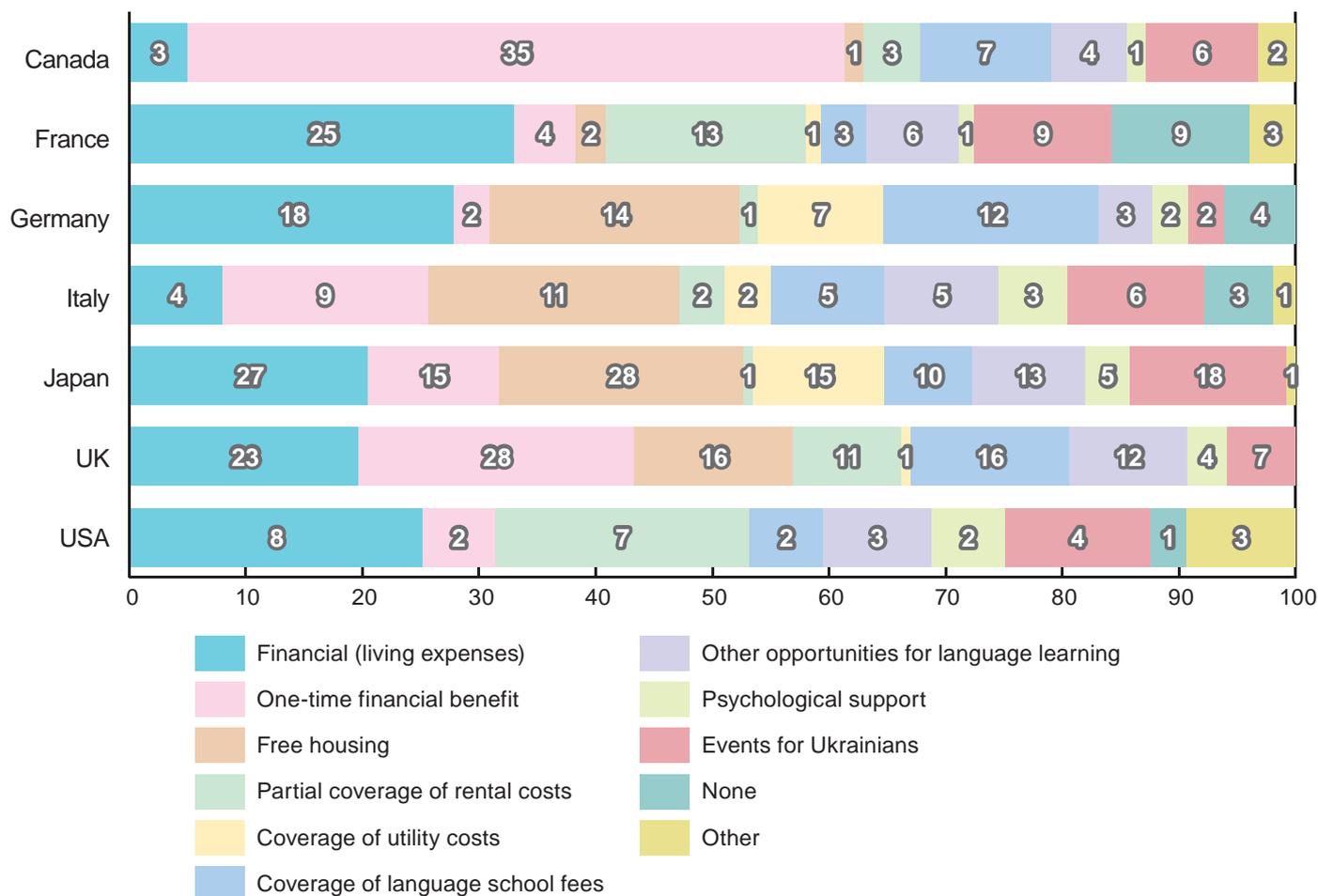
## Employment Issues and Work Opportunities (n=238)



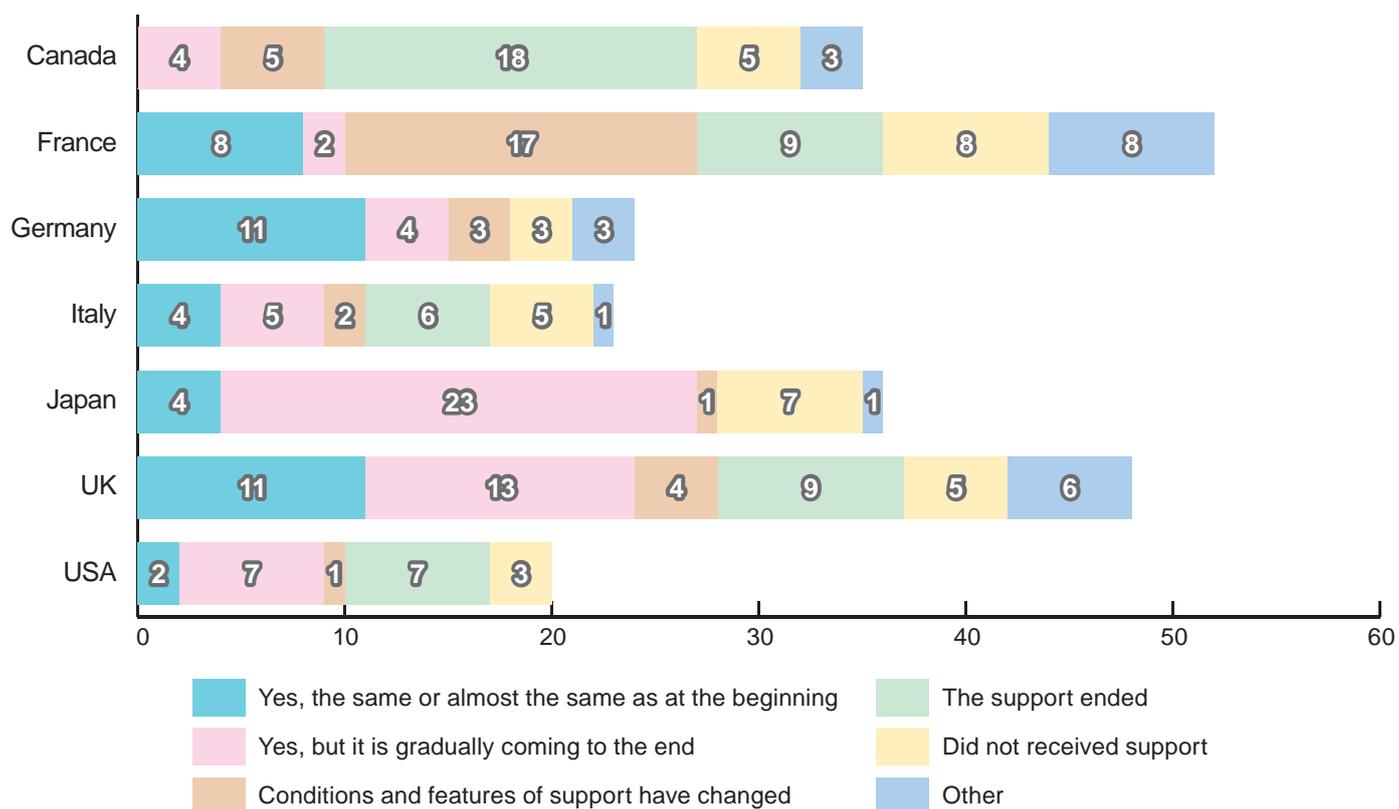
## Features of assistance in the G7 countries

Nearly half of the Ukrainians surveyed (45%, or 108 people) have received or continue to get regular financial support for living expenses, and 40% (95 people) have benefited from a one-time payment. Additionally, 30% (72 people) were or still are living in housing that is free of charge (different types of accommodation are provided depending on the country), and this rate is highest among the Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States. At the same time, 16% (or 38 people) have partial rent coverage, and it is most common in France and Canada. Another very common assistance that Ukrainians in the G7 countries have been able to use is various free opportunities to learn the local language (over 40% or 101 people), and about 22% (52 people) attended different events organised for Ukrainians. Besides, assistance with medical care, food, etc. was also mentioned. And about 7% (17 people) have not been able to receive any type of assistance so far.

### Support received (n=239)



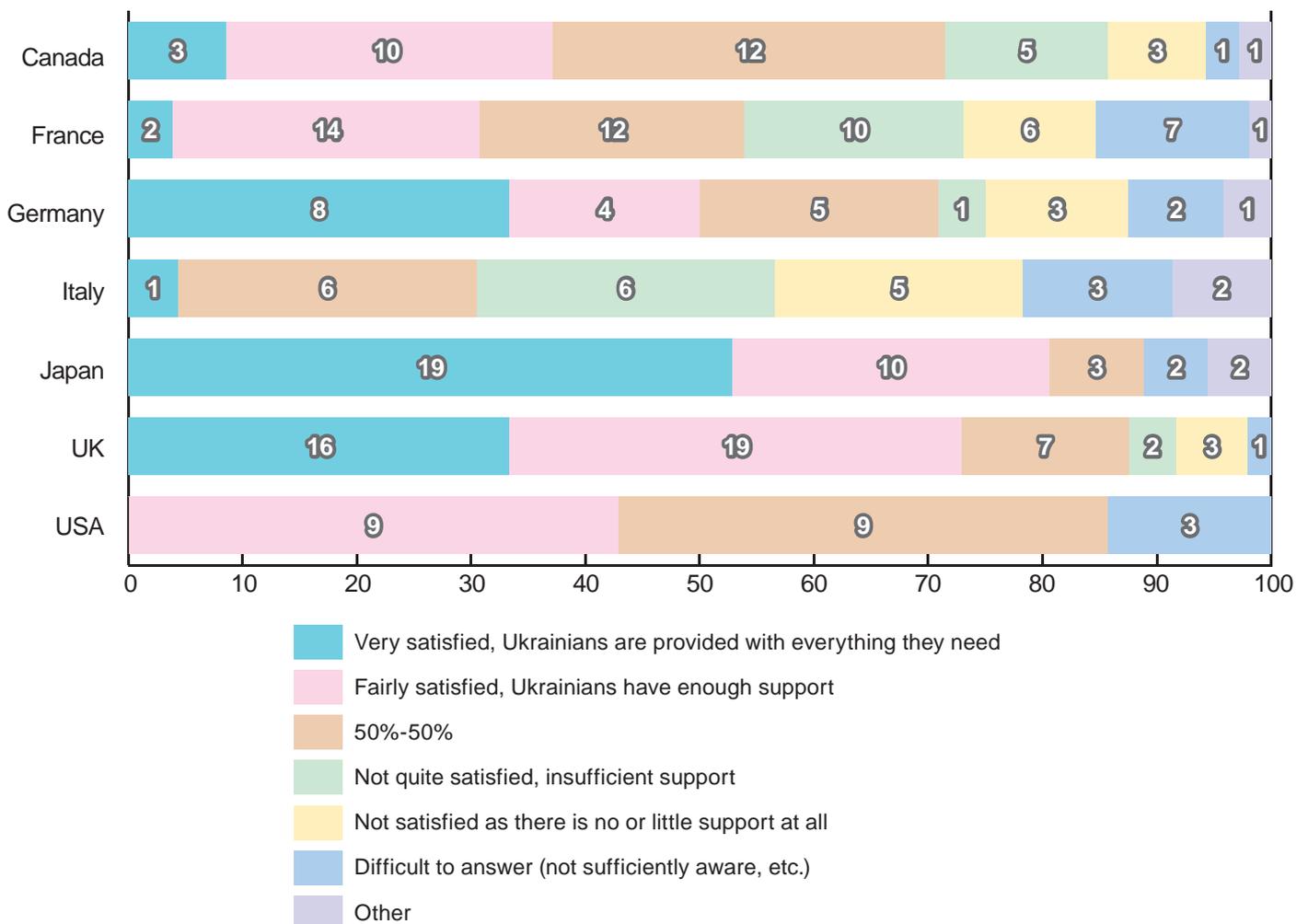
### Whether or not they have ongoing support (n=238)



Almost the same number of Ukrainians have either gradually ended their support (about 25% or 58 people), or it has already finished (nearly 25% or 56 people). Ukrainians who are no longer receiving assistance are mostly living in Canada, while gradual withdrawal of support was reported by respondents in Japan and the United Kingdom. Moreover, (17% or 40 people) continue to receive benefits in the same way as before, and almost 15% (33 people) indicated that the conditions and features of benefits have changed over time, most commonly in France.

About 20% (49 Ukrainians) expressed great satisfaction with the support provided in the country of refuge, which is highest among Ukrainians in Japan (more than 50% or 19 respondents), and partly in the UK and Germany. Still, almost 30% (66 people) said they are quite satisfied with the existing assistance in the country of residence. This is also the most common in the UK and Japan, as well as the US and partly Canada and France. Moreover, nearly a quarter of all respondents (54 people) consider the available support as average, which is most widespread in the USA, Canada and France, while about 18% (44 people) think that there is not enough or almost no help, most commonly among Ukrainians in Italy and France.

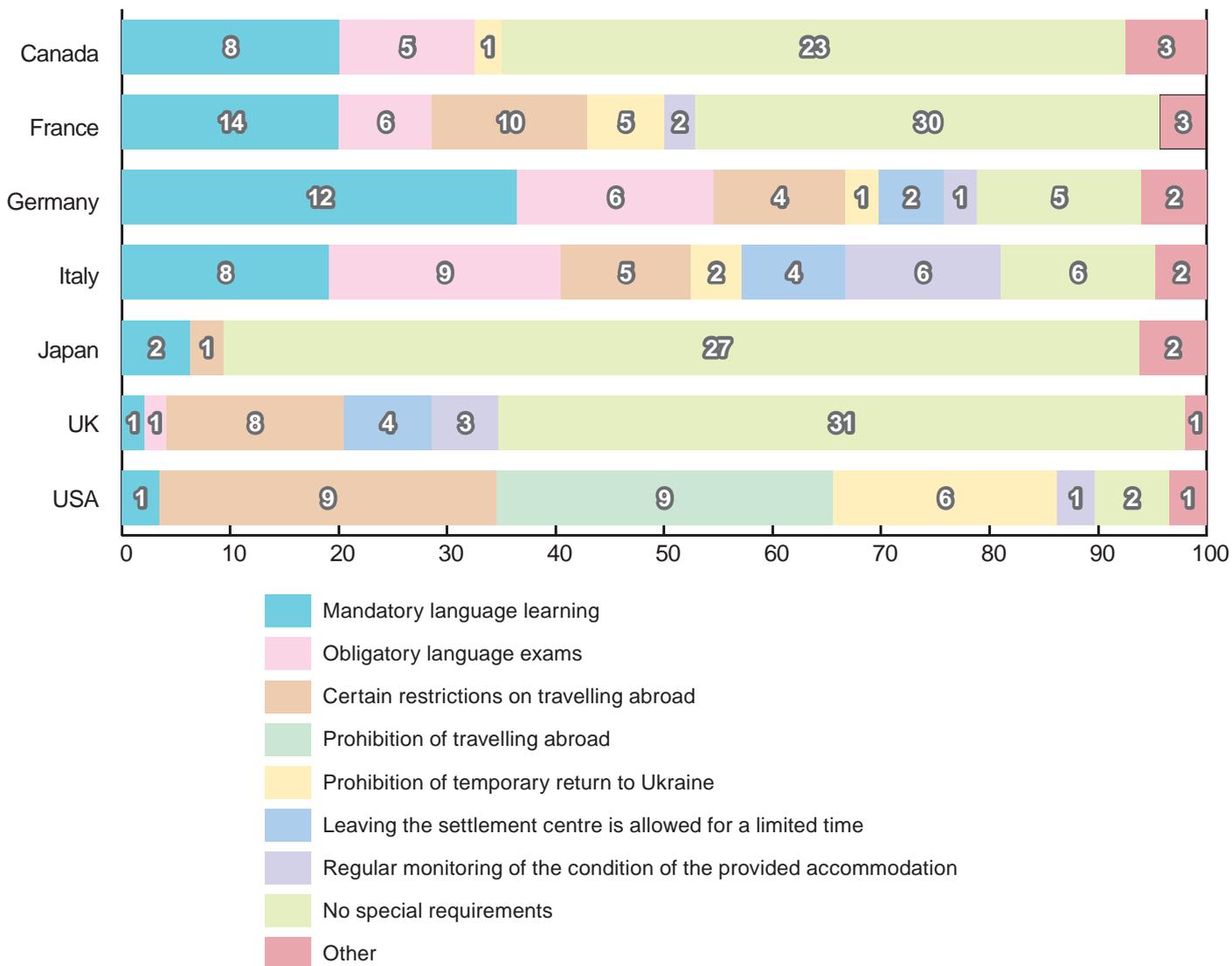
### Satisfaction with support (n=239)



To keep protection status and continue to receive support, most G7 countries do not impose any special requirements (over 55% or 124 people indicated this). However, in countries such as Germany, where it is necessary to attend integration courses to be able access benefits, as well as Italy, France and Canada, there are some cases where language learning is required. Additionally, some Ukrainians (12%

or 27 people) mentioned the requirement to pass language exams in countries such as Italy, Germany, France and Canada. Also, except for Canada and Japan, most countries have some restrictions on travelling abroad, and only the United States has a complete prohibition for Ukrainians from leaving the border. In countries such as Italy, and in some cases the United Kingdom and Germany, there are certain restrictions on how long it is allowed to leave temporary accommodation, as there might be a requirement to regularly register presence. Also, mostly in Italy, there is regular monitoring of the condition of temporary housing.

**Maintenance of Residency Requirements and Assistance (n=220)**



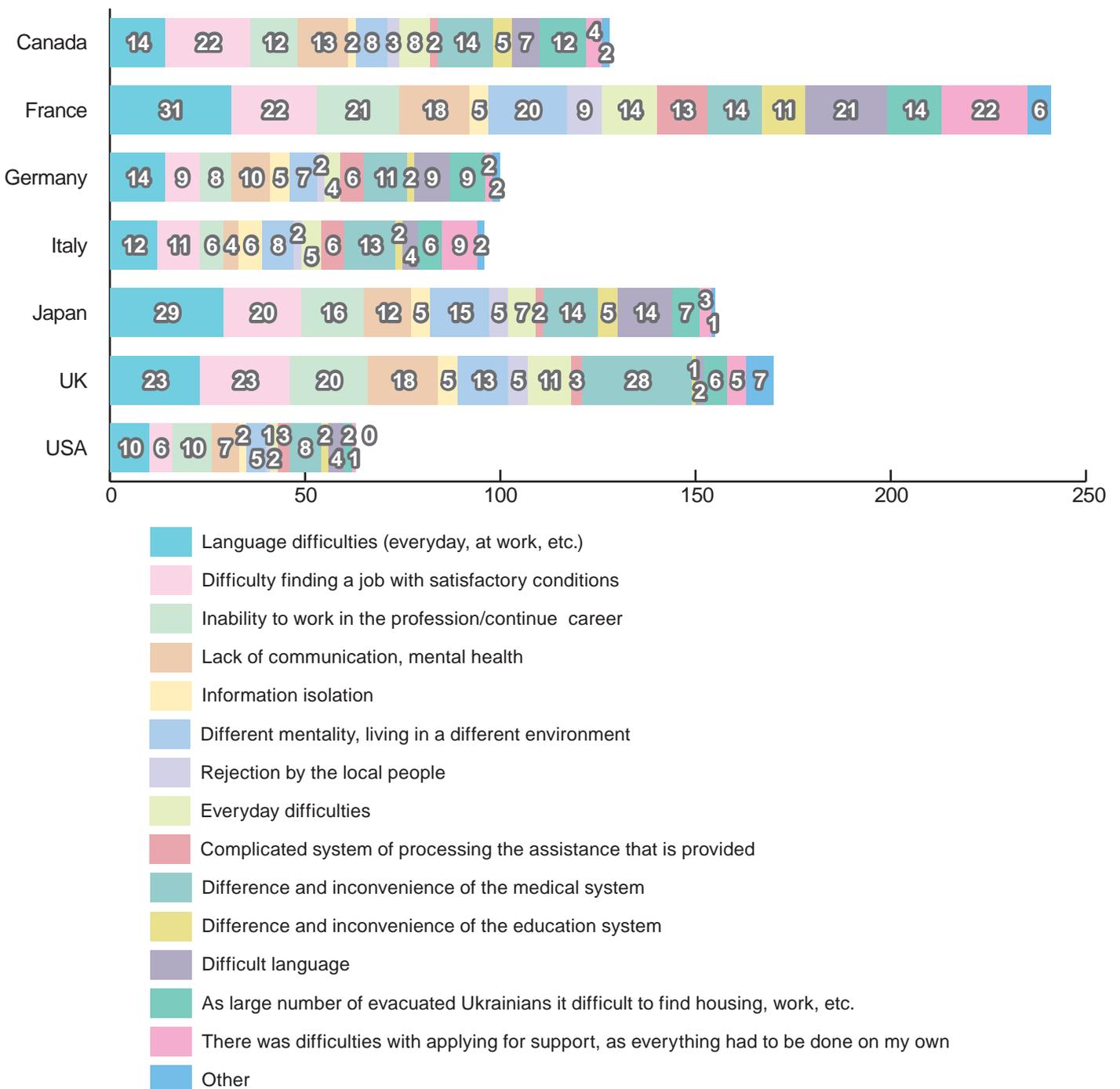
## Difficulties in living and issues of concern

While residing in the G7 countries, most Ukrainians (about 57% or 133 people) experience language difficulties, which is applicable to all countries, including English-speaking ones, however, this figure is the highest in Japan (80% or 29 Ukrainians in this country reported). Besides, about 57% (or 113 people) of all respondents mentioned challenges in finding even a ordinary job with satisfactory conditions, and 40% (93 Ukrainians) said that while living in one of the G7 countries they are unable to continue working in their profession and build a career here, a tendency that is present in all countries. Also, the survey

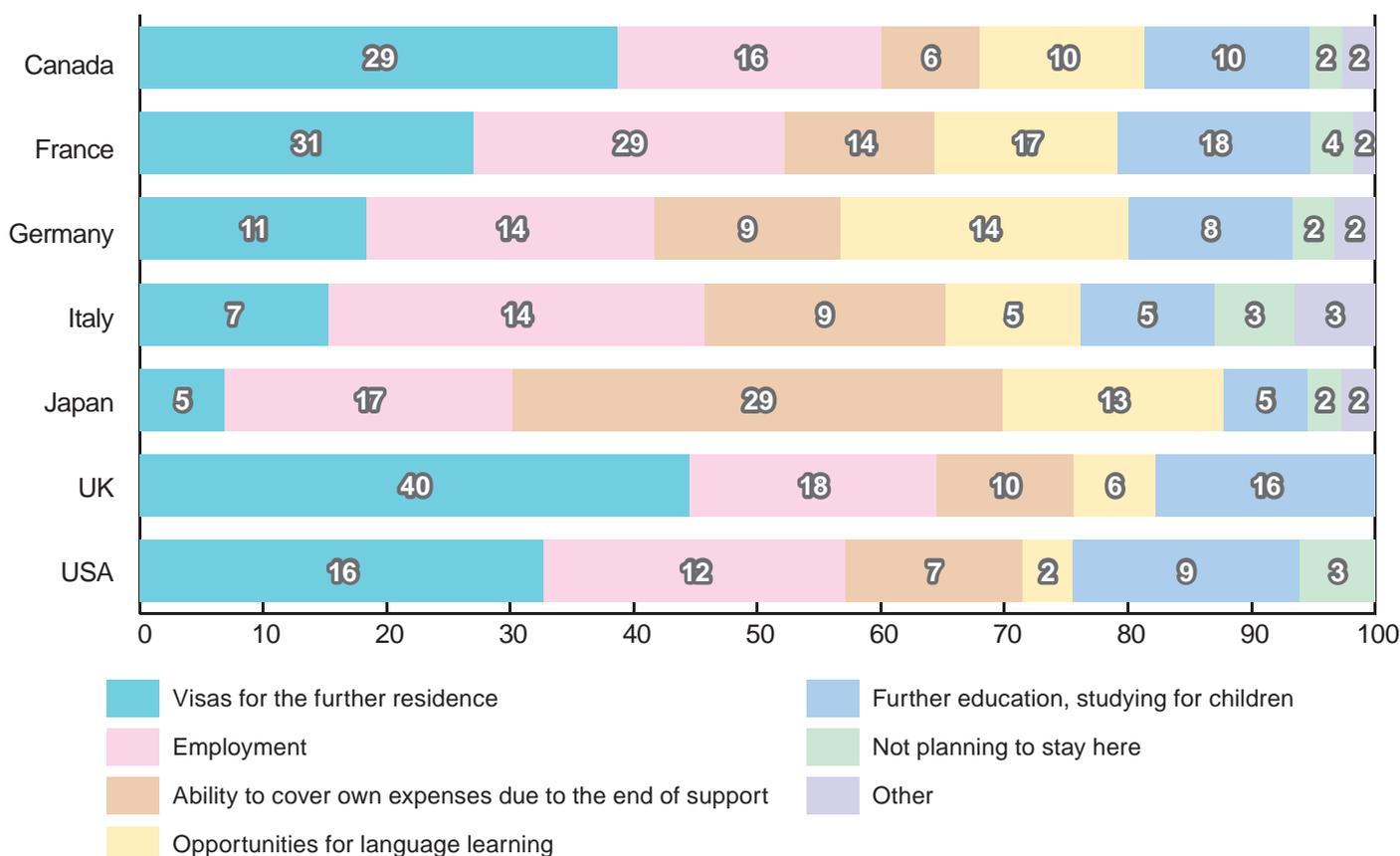
found that about 35% (or 82 Ukrainians) experience a lack of communication as well as mental anxiety, and almost 15% (30 people) feel information isolation.

There is also a rather high rate of difficulties caused by the different mentality and way of life in another environment (over 30%, or 76 Ukrainians). This is also relevant for all countries, but the highest figure among Ukrainians in Japan (40% or 15 people), as well as in France, Italy and other countries. Additionally, a significant number of Ukrainians (almost 45%, 102 people) mentioned the unusual and inconvenient healthcare system compared to the Ukrainian one, with the highest rates among respondents in Italy and Great Britain. In countries such as Germany, Italy and France, at least one in four experienced difficulties in finding housing, work, etc. due to the large number of Ukrainians in the region of residence. This has also caused overloading of the system in France for the possibility of extending temporary protection each time.

Life difficulties (n=235)



## Greatest concern regarding continued stay (n=236)

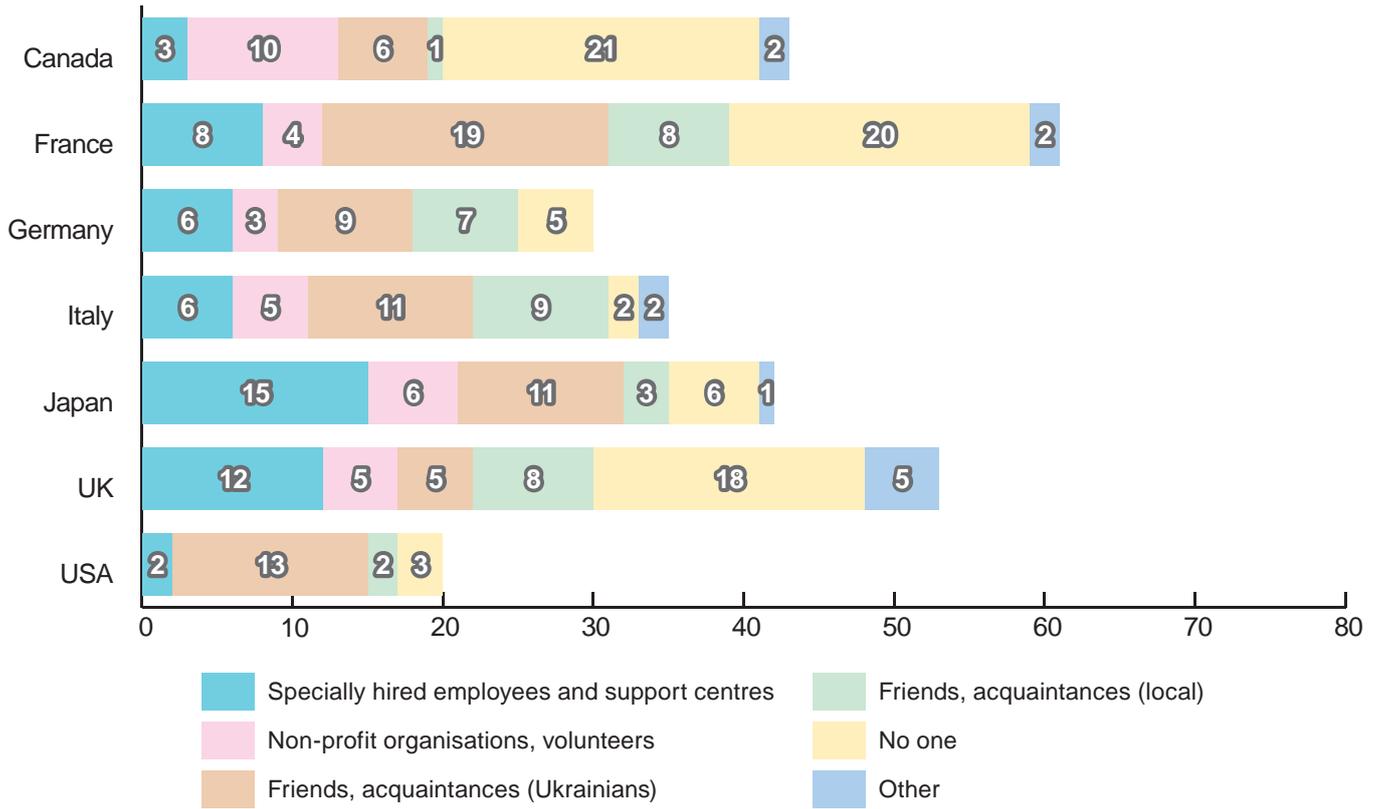


Besides daily difficulties, many Ukrainians are concerned about various issues related to the possibility of further residence in the host country. The most common worry among respondents in all G7 countries except Japan is visa issues for future legal residence (60% or 139 Ukrainians surveyed are concerned about it). This is the lowest among Ukrainians in Japan (except only 15%, 5 respondents) due to the possibility of applying for temporary protection, which provides for a 5-year visa. At the same time, the greatest concern about visa issues was reported by Ukrainians in Canada, United States and United Kingdom, with over 80% in each of these countries.

Compared with visa matters, the concern about employment is somewhat less in the context of the future (slightly more than 50% or 120 respondents), which is approximately the same for Ukrainians in each of the G7 countries. However, in the sense of being able to provide for themselves after the termination of support (about 35% or 84 people are concerned about this), Ukrainians in Japan are the most worried in this regard (80% or 28 respondents). Also, almost 30% (67 respondents) are anxious about availability of language learning opportunities, and approximately the same number of displaced Ukrainians are concerned about further studies for their children. There were also some responses about the difficulties of finding accommodation and signing a rental contract.

On arrival in the respective country, the majority of Ukrainians (almost 70%, 75 respondents) had to deal with the arrangement and registration of assistance on their own, and it the highest rate among evacuees to Canada. As for support with these issues from specially hired workers, the largest number was reported from Ukrainians in Japan, (about 45% or 15 people got such assistance). Additionally, almost 70% (74 Ukrainians) also said that Ukrainian friends and acquaintances helped them with obtaining status and support.

### Assistants for eligibility and benefit applications (n=232)

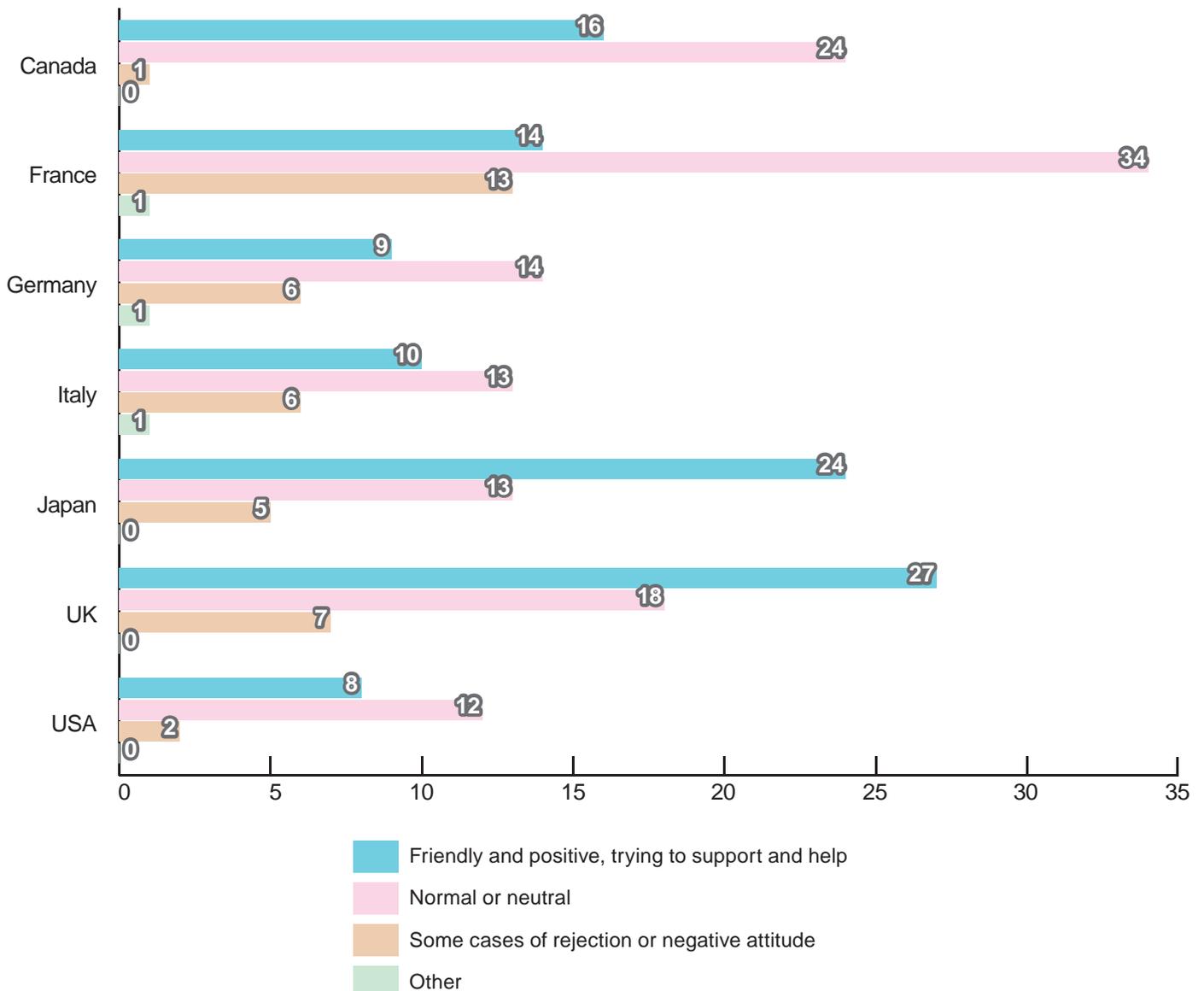


## Emotional state and living comfort

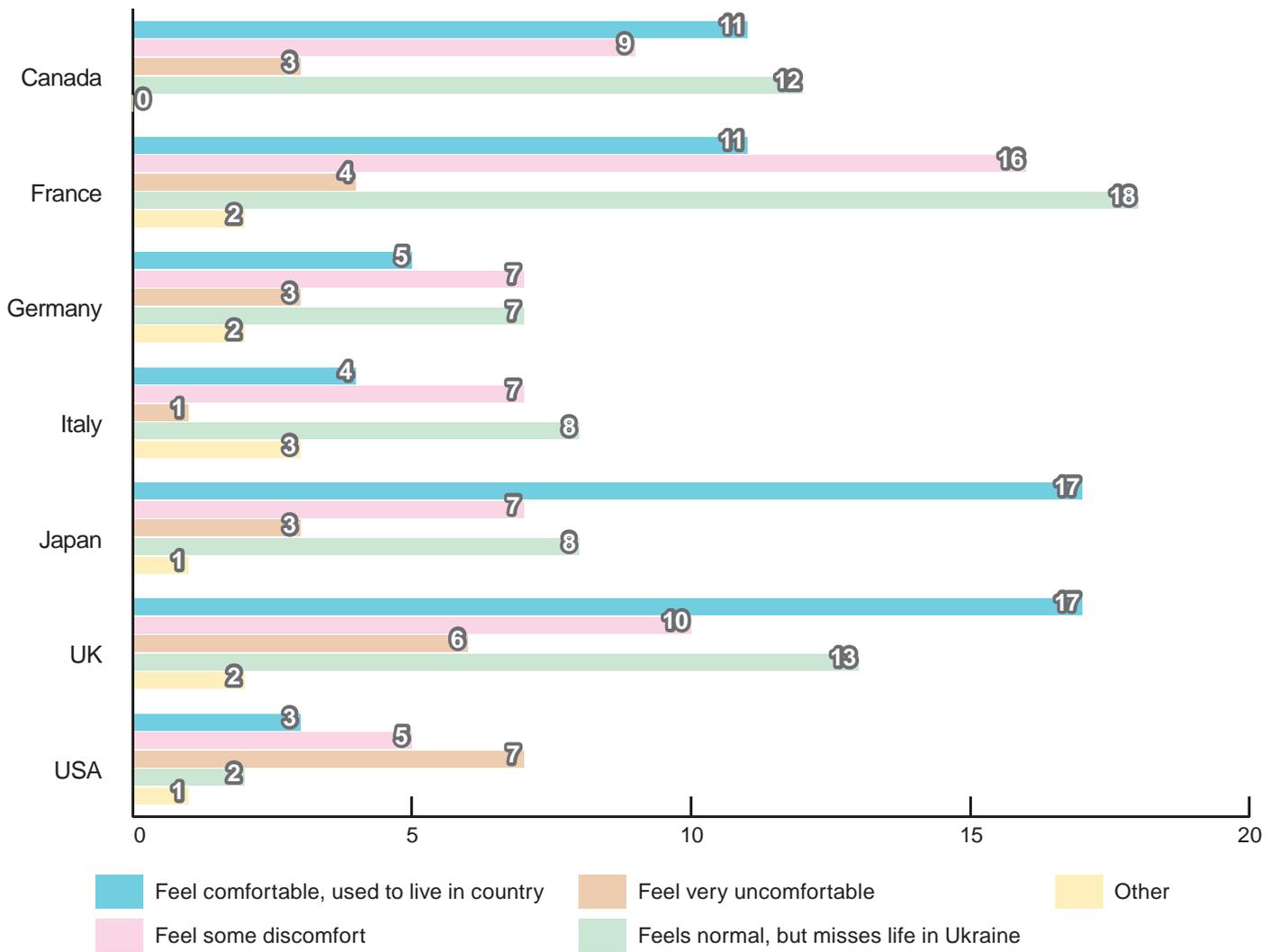
While staying in the G7 countries, most forcibly displaced Ukrainians have positive experiences with the perception by the locals. Mostly, they are treated normally or neutrally (almost 55% or 128 respondents indicated this), and such responses are most common among Ukrainians in Canada and the United States. Also, about 45% (108 people) noted that locals have a positive attitude towards them and try to support, which is the highest in Japan (over 65% or 24 Ukrainians reported this) and in the United Kingdom (about 55%, 27 people). However, at the same time, about 17% (40 respondents) mentioned that they experienced rejection and negative attitudes towards them, and this figure is the largest among Ukrainians surveyed in France, Italy and Germany (20-25% in each of these countries).

The same number of forcibly displaced Ukrainians residing in G7 countries feel comfortable and used to live here, or feel normal but in the same time they miss life in Ukraine (in total, almost 60% or 136 people). However, about one in four respondents (61 people) experience some discomfort, and it is most common among Ukrainians in Italy, Germany and France (about 30% in each country). Moreover, about 10% (27 Ukrainians) reported feeling severe uncomfortable, which is most widespread among Ukrainians in Germany and the UK.

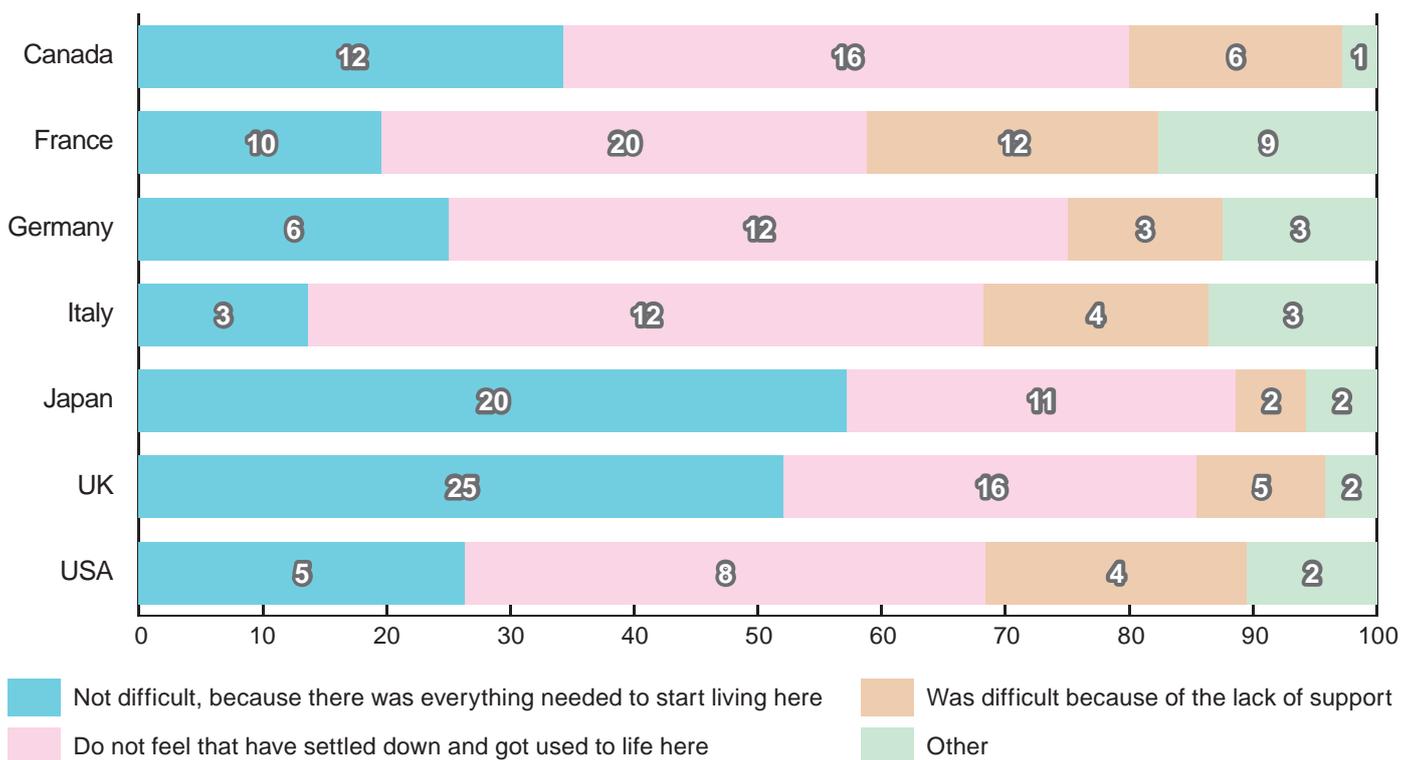
**Local Residents' Reactions (n=238)**



### Emotional State and Mental Health (n=235)



### Complexity of adaptation (n=234)

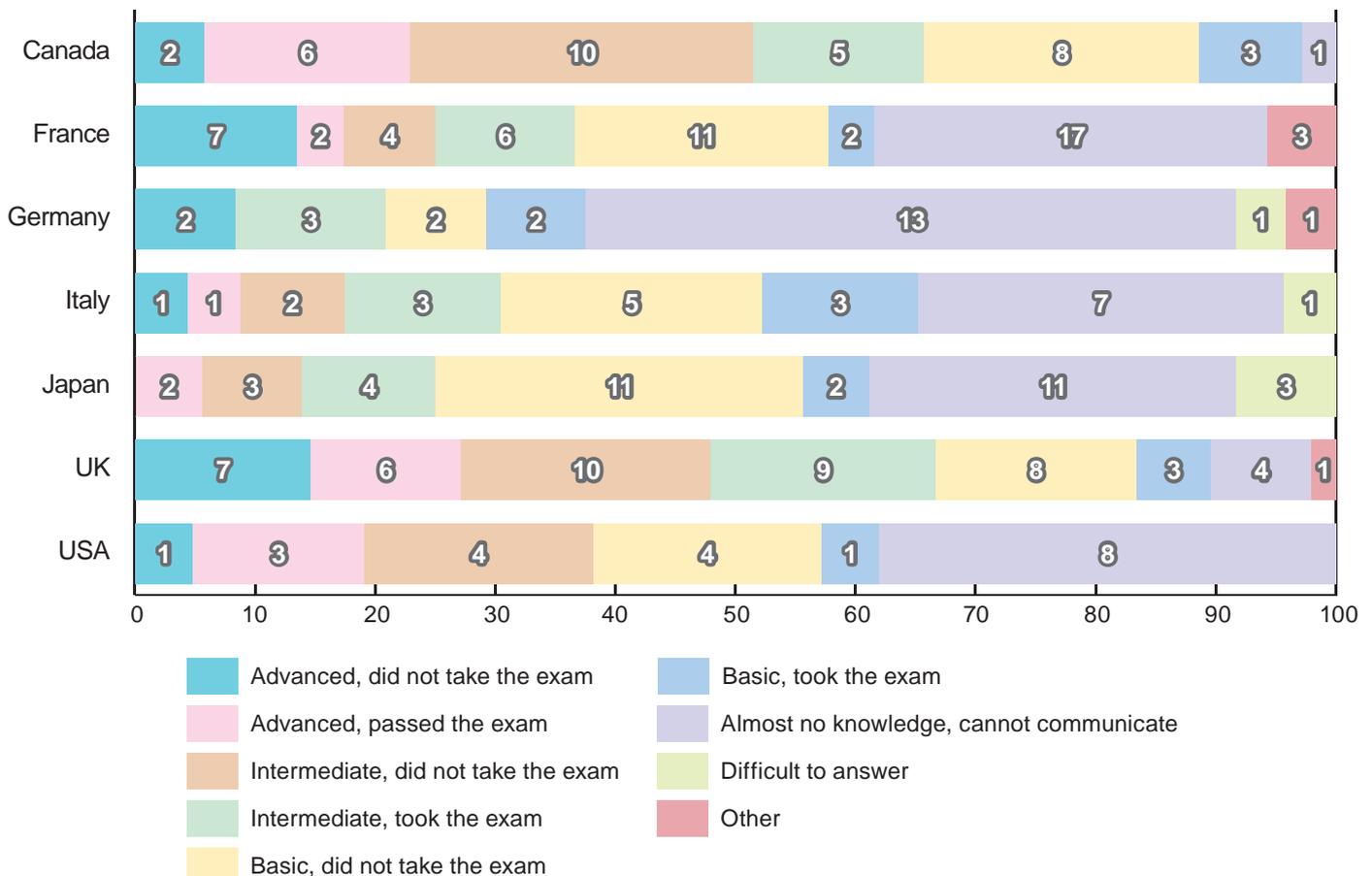


Having moved to a foreign country, about 35% (81 people) have been able to adapt and get used to living there quite easily, which is the highest among Ukrainians in Japan (57%, 20 Ukrainians) and the UK (52%, 25 respondents). However, more than 40% (95 Ukrainians) do not feel they have adapted and settled in sufficiently, and this is mostly prevalent among Ukrainians in Italy and Germany (more than half of respondents in both countries). Additionally, about 15% (36 Ukrainians) responded that it was difficult for them to adapt due to the lack of support provided in their respective countries, which is most prevalent among Ukrainians in the United States (over 20%). There were also some comments that the psychological state, as well as the difference in mentality, cultures, and the general need to start a new life, made the adaptation process very challenging, which is still ongoing.

## Language learning and children's education

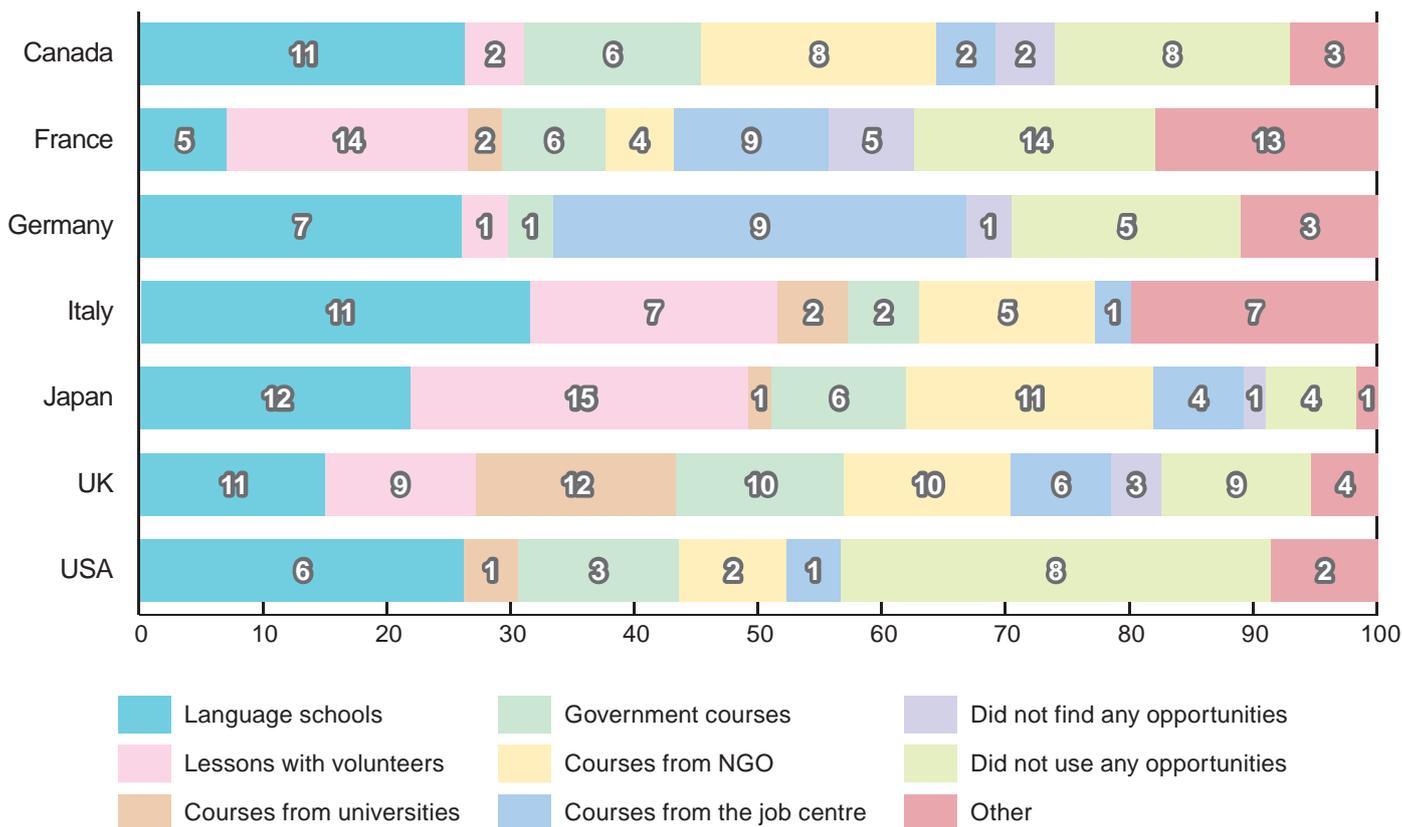
According to the survey, one in four Ukrainians (65 people) can communicate in the local language on a basic level, but also about 25% (61 people) answered that they hardly know and cannot communicate in the language used in the country of their current residence. Despite mandatory attendance of integration courses in Germany, in this country the largest number of Ukrainians experience difficulties with language skills (about 55%, 13 people), and this tendency is also present in English-speaking countries (for example, in the USA, 38%, 8 people also reported that).

Local Language Ability (n=239)



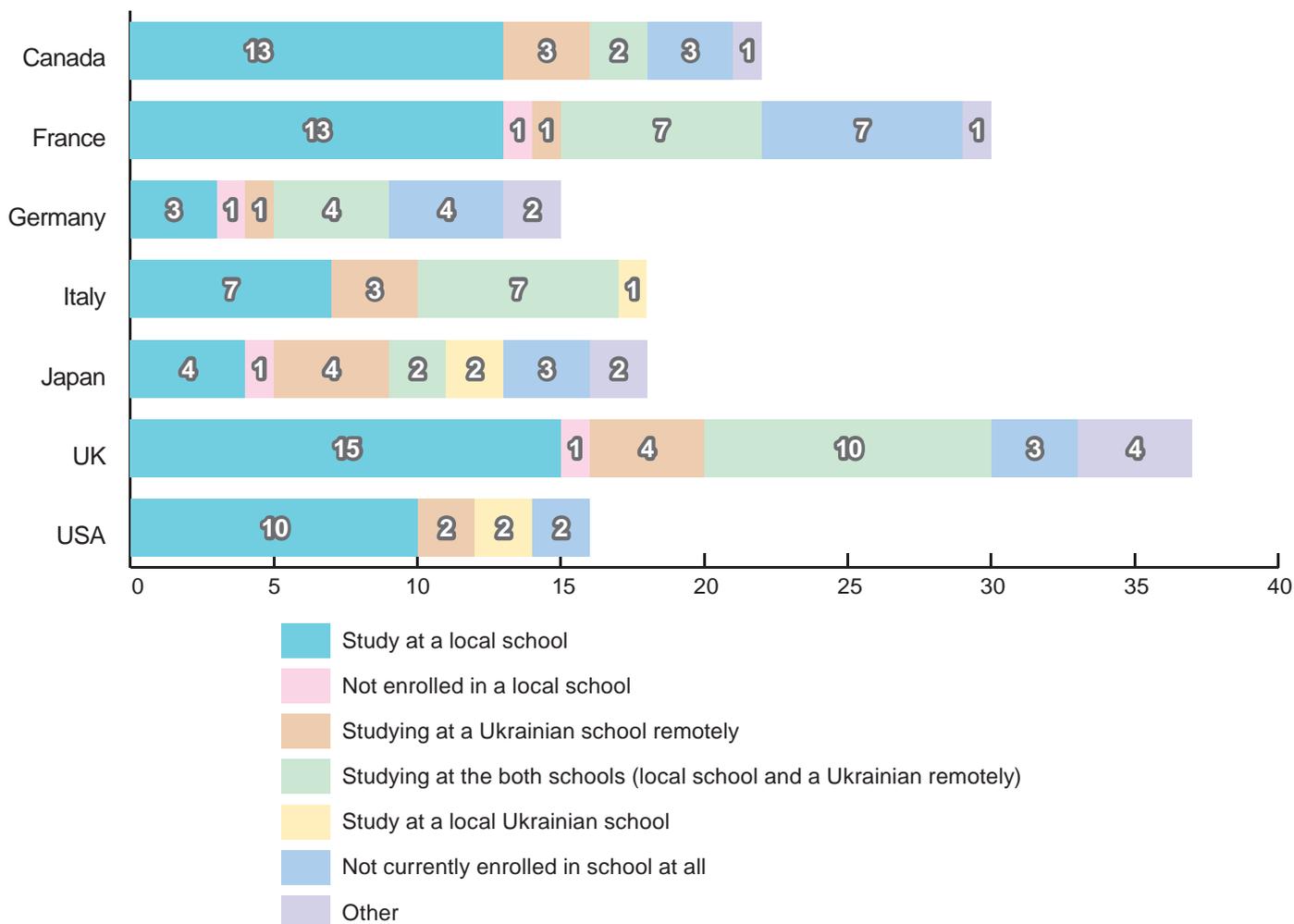
About one in four Ukrainians evacuated to the G7 (63 people) has used the opportunity to study the local language at language schools, with the highest rate in Italy (almost half of respondents or 11 people) and the lowest in France (one in ten or only 5 Ukrainians). Lessons with volunteers are also quite common (about one in five, or 42 people), and according to the survey, this is most common in Japan (more than 40% of respondents or 15 Ukrainians have used this opportunity) and France (one in four respondents). Special courses organised by NGOs are also widespread (40 Ukrainians responded), while in the UK, university and church-based English classes are most common.

**Language Learning Opportunities Used (n=234)**



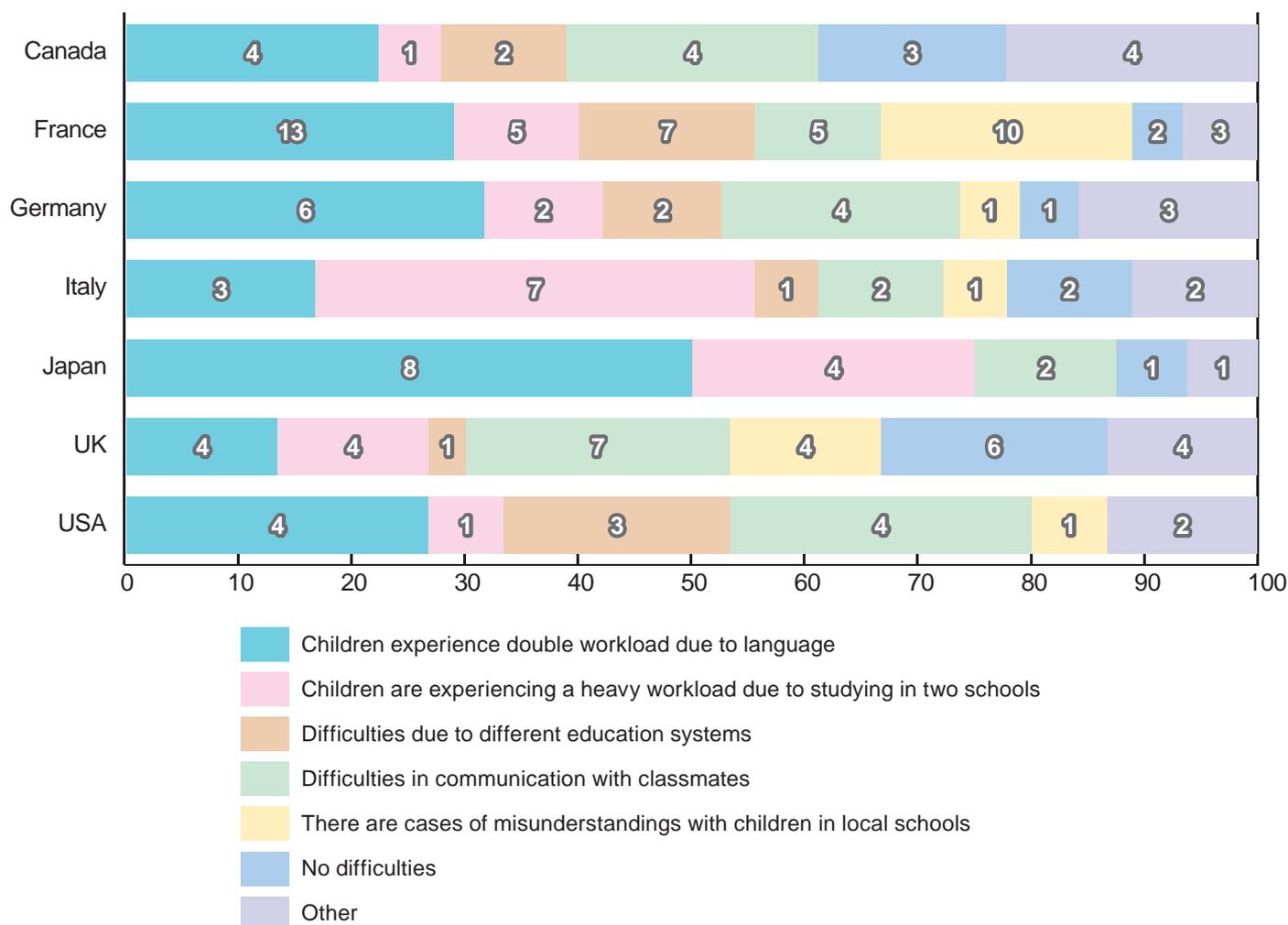
About half of evacuated Ukrainian children in the G7 countries are enrolled only in local schools (65 people), which is the highest in the United States (77%, 10 people) and Canada (over 60%, 13 people). Additionally, one in four children (32 respondents) combines studying at two schools at once - a local and Ukrainian remote format. Given this, the survey shows that only about 37% of Ukrainian children in Japan (6 parents responding) either attend only a Japanese school or combine it with a Ukrainians educational institution. Moreover, approximately 15% (18 respondents) answered that their children currently study only at a Ukrainian school remotely, and this figure is the largest in Japan (one in four children according to the survey), and currently, more than 15% (22 respondents) reported that their children are not currently attending any school for unknown reasons. Separately, there were comments from Ukrainians in the UK and Japan that because of bullying, their child had stopped attending a local school.

## Children's education (n=131)



While studying in local schools, about 40% of children (42 respondents) experience a doubled workload due to language difficulties, which is most common among Ukrainian children in Japan (over 60% or 8 respondents). Also, almost one in four children (24 respondents) feels a heavy burden because of studying in both schools, and the highest rate of this among respondents in Italy (over 45%, 7 people). Additionally, every fourth child (28 respondents) has difficulties in communicating with classmates, while about 15% (17 people) experienced misunderstandings with them. The questionnaire also included responses that children used to find it very difficult to adapt to studying in local schools, but over time it has become much easier for them.

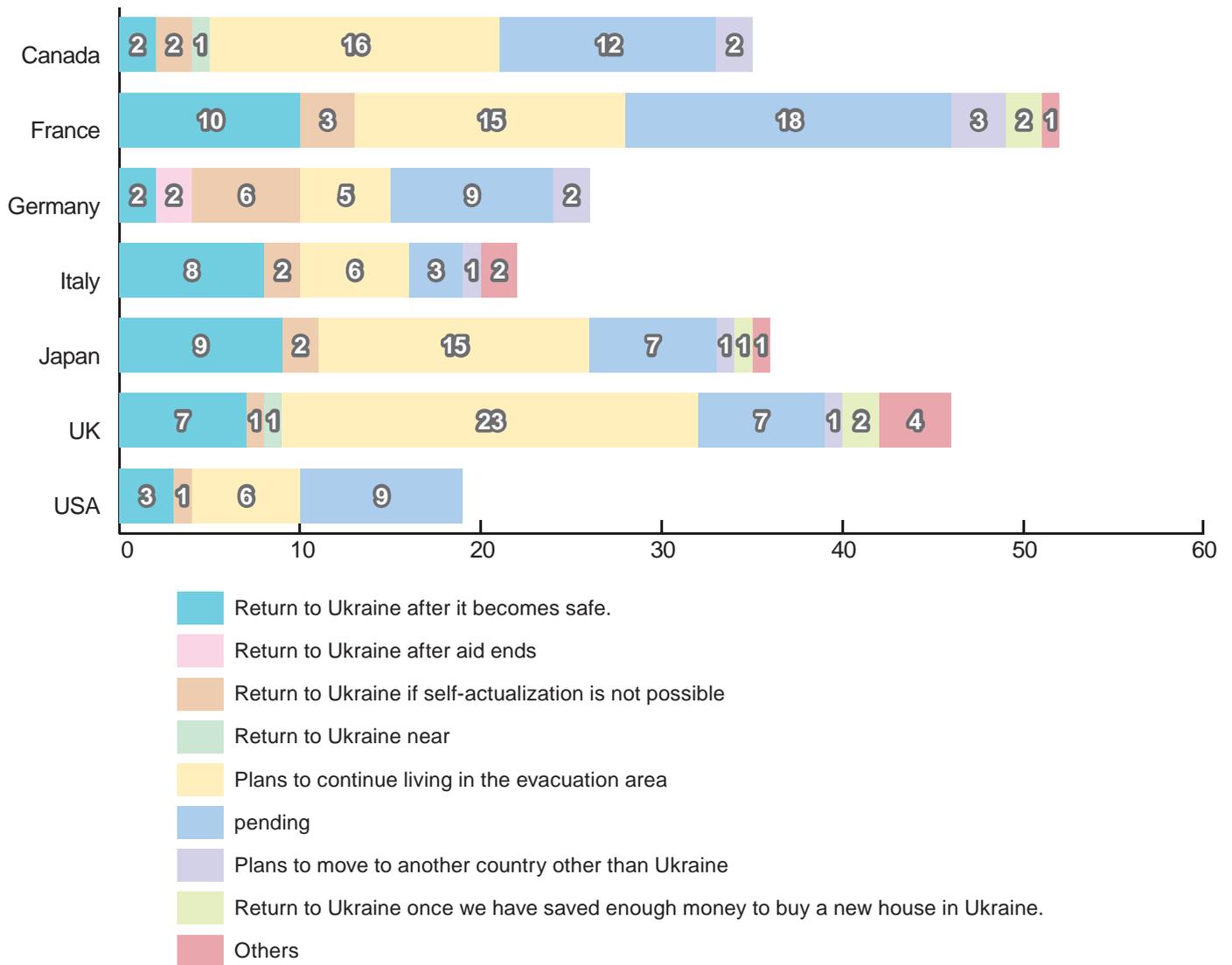
## Difficulties in educating children at school (n=105)



## Plans for the future

Currently, more than 35% of surveyed Ukrainians (86 people) have decided to remain in the respective G7 country. This figure is the highest among respondents in Great Britain (half or 23 respondents), as well as in Japan and Canada (over 40% or 15 people in each of these countries), while the lowest in Germany (only 20% or 5 respondents). Moreover, almost 30% (65 Ukrainians) are still not decided on their country of residence in the future, which is most common among Ukrainians in the USA (slightly less than half, 9 people). At the same time, only 17% (41 respondents) are planning to return to Ukraine when it becomes safe there (the largest rate among Ukrainians in Italy - 35%, 8 people), and about 7% (17 people) are considering coming back in case they are unable to fulfil themselves in the current country of residence (in Germany every fourth person). Besides, there were some responses from Ukrainians who wanted to return to Ukraine, but cannot do it not only because of the danger, but also because they do not have a place to come back to (destroyed housing, territory not controlled by Ukraine, etc.).

## Future Plan (n=235)

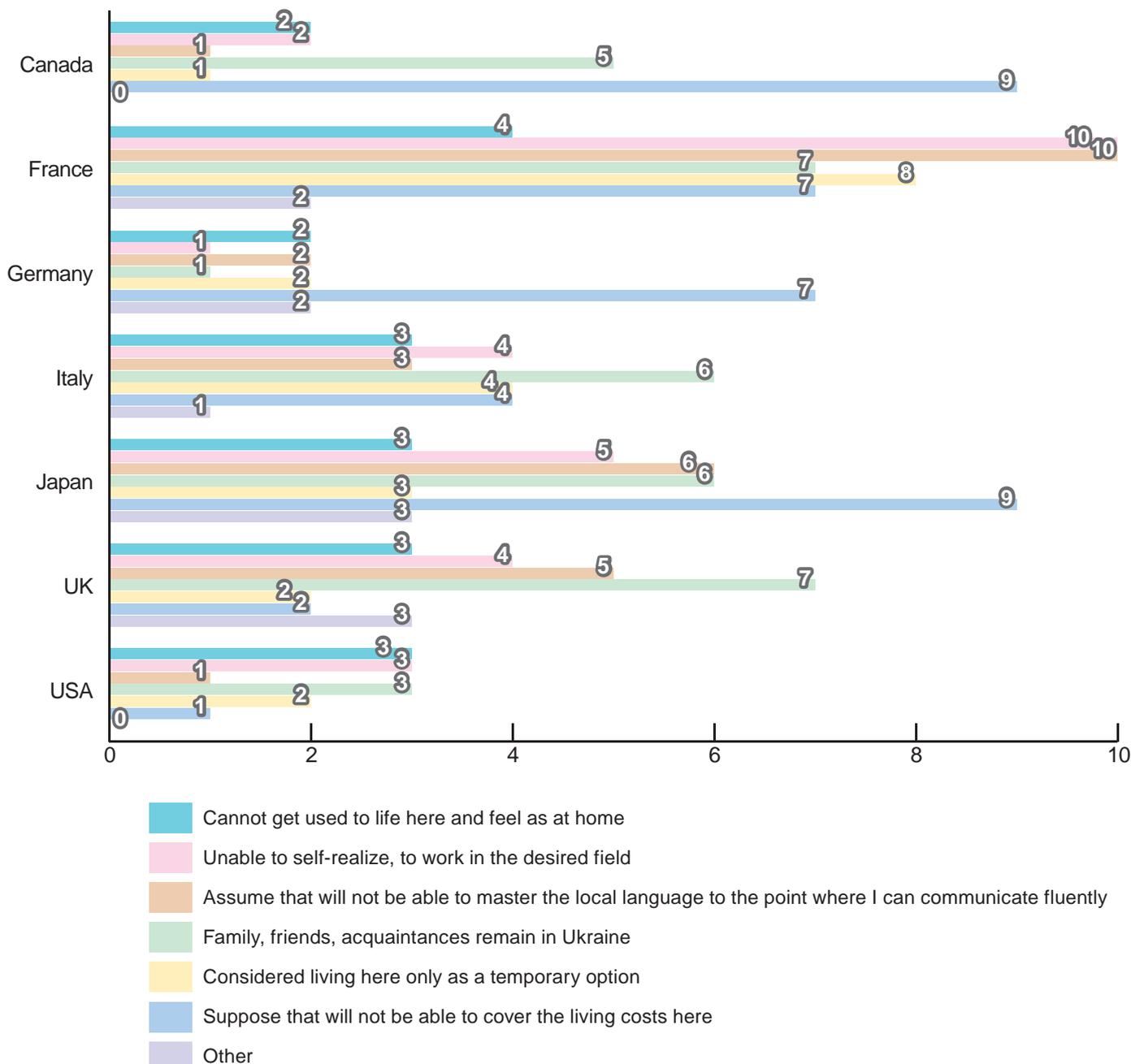


Among those who plan to return to Ukraine, the reasons for doing so are quite different and often combined. About 40% (39 respondents) assume that they will not be able to cover their own living expenses and therefore consider coming back to Ukraine. This figure is the most common among Ukrainians in Canada (about 65%, 9 people), Germany (58%, 7 people) and Japan (53%, 9 people), while it is the least represented in the UK (less than 15%). Besides, more than 35% (35 people) are planning to return because of their family, friends and acquaintances remaining in Ukraine, and about one in four people consider living in abroad only as a temporary option. At the same time, about 30% (28 people) assume that they will be unable to master the language to the extent that they can communicate fluently (the most common among Ukrainians in France - almost 45% or 10 people), and a similar number (30%, 29 people) consider returning because they cannot fulfil themselves and work here in the desired field (the highest rate among Ukrainians in the United States - half of the respondents). Additionally, about one in five Ukrainians (20 people) who want to come back made this decision because they cannot get used to the specifics of life in the country they evacuated to and do not feel like at home there (the largest number among Ukrainians in the United States - 50%).

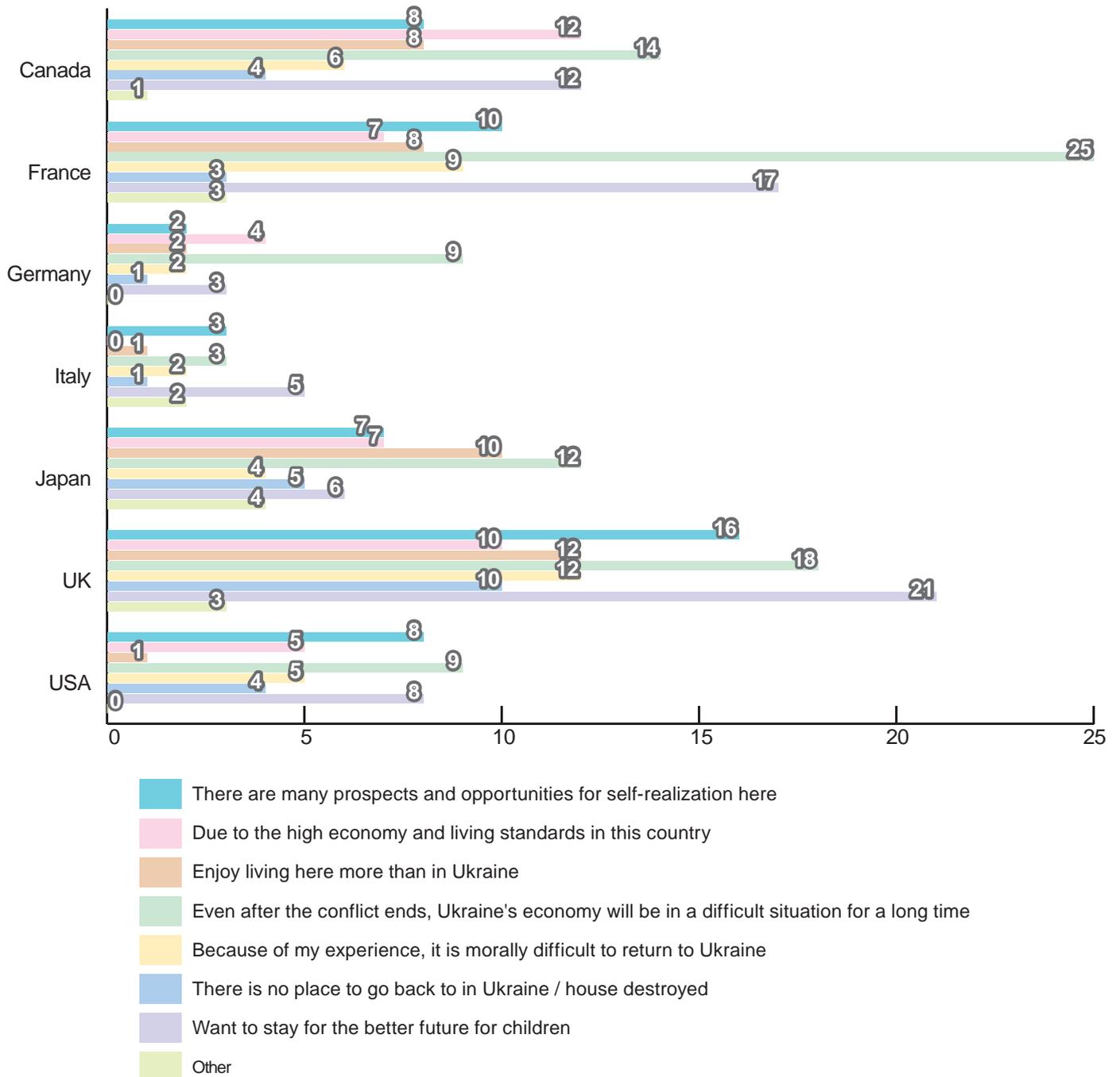
As for the Ukrainians who plan to continue living in the G7 countries, the most common reason for remaining here is the economic situation in Ukraine, believing that even after the end of the conflict, the

country will continue being in a very difficult situation (about 60% or 90 people answered). Additionally, more than 45% (72 people) have no plans to go back for the better prospects for their children, and about one in four Ukrainians likes living in their host country more than in Ukraine (the highest number of Ukrainians in Japan - more than 45%, 10 people). Besides, 35% (54 people) believe that in the country of evacuation they will have more opportunities and prospects for self-realisation (the highest figure among Ukrainians in the United States - 57%, 8 people), and 30% (45 Ukrainians) decided to keep their place because of the strong economy and better living standards in the particular country (the most common among respondents in Canada - over 45%, 12 people). Also, one in four Ukrainians (of those who want to stay) made this decision because their experience of the conflict in Ukraine makes it mentally difficult for them to return, and almost 20% (28 respondents) reported that they have no place to return to or their homes have been destroyed. There were additional comments that the understanding that life in Ukraine would never be the same again, and the difficulty of rebuilding from scratch once again upon return, became the reasons for some Ukrainians to choose to stay there.

### Reasons for considering returning to Ukraine (n=97)

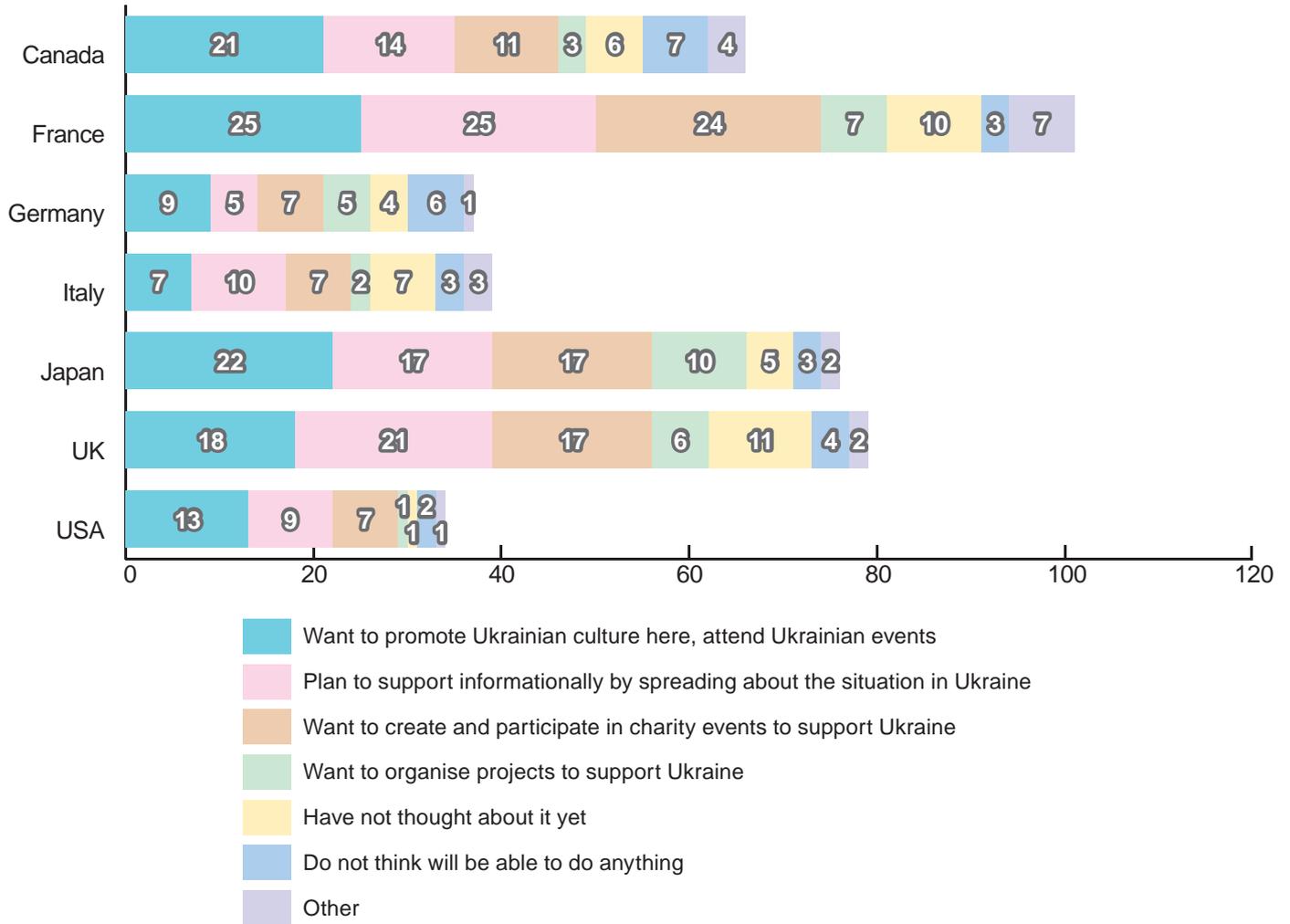


## Reasons for wanting to continue to live in the new location (n=155)



While living in the G7 countries, most Ukrainians are planning to continue supporting Ukraine in various ways. Among them, the most common ones are the desire to spread Ukrainian culture and attend various events (about half, or 115 Ukrainians), as well as to inform about the situation in Ukraine (almost 45%, 101 people). Also, 15% (34 respondents) want to organize assistance projects, and many Ukrainians abroad continue to support their home country financially, making and making donations

### Future Assistance Plans for Ukraine (n=228)



# Stories of Ukrainians who came to the G7 countries because of the conflict in Ukraine



## Yulia Chumachenko, 20+ years old

**Came from the city of Kryvyi Rih, Dnipro region**  
**Social worker in education, has experience as a logistician in a transport company**  
**Currently live in the province of Alberta, Calgary**  
**In Canada, she is employed as a hotel maid**



Yulia came to Canada with her husband under the CUAET programme because even before the conflict in Ukraine began, they considered this country easy to integrate into due to the large number of immigrants. Having gathered enough information about life in Canada, the couple did not need to seek help from volunteers when they arrived. Having received an Open Work Permit and one-time benefits under the programme, they managed to settle in quite easily, finding accommodation and temporary work.

### Difficulties of living in Canada

Residing in Canada, Yulia is concerned about two main issues: language difficulties and the possibility of obtaining a permanent residence permit. After all, the CUAET programme provides Ukrainians with only a temporary visa and work permit, and after the programme expires, a residence permit can only be obtained on the general terms and conditions that apply to all immigrants. Besides, the peculiarities of the medical system cause great inconvenience to Yulia, as due to the non-recognition of foreign diplomas in the medical field, there is a great deficit of medical workers, and therefore it is extremely complicated to get a medical examination, to get to a family doctor and especially to a narrow specialist.

### Difficulties with self-realisation and plans for the future

Because of the large number of immigrants in Canada, there is a very high competition to find a job, which makes it very difficult to self-realise in the desired field, especially without a sufficient level of language skills. Therefore, unable to work in desired field, Yulia keeps doing her job as a maid in a hotel. At the same time, she has been improving her language skills and gradually wants to master a new profession in order to develop in the desired field and feel more confident in the future.

Yulia feels very comfortable living in Canada and appreciates the opportunity provided to Ukrainians to easily start immigrating to this country. Having a residence permit, a work permit, and additional support in the form of one-time payments and health insurance, it was much easier and more convenient to start life in Canada.

Having received a 3-year extension of residence in Canada, Yulia and her husband plan to continue living here, and in the future they hope to obtain Canadian citizenship and integrate into local society.

## Anna, 20+ years old

**Resided in Kharkiv, Ukraine, currently lives in Montreal, Canada**

**Education and work experience in Ukraine in art field**

**Currently working as an Academic Program Administrator for a university**

**for a university in Canada**



Having relatives in this Canada, she came to country on the CUAET programme with her mother. Before renting her own accommodation, Anna had experience of living in different places - at relatives' house, in a hotel (support was provided for 2 weeks or more), and with Canadian hosts for six months.

### Experience of living and working in Canada

After arriving in Canada, Anna found out about free English and French language as well as culture courses for displaced persons from one of the universities where she later began working. As Montreal is a French-speaking city, there were no available spots in French-language courses, and by enrolling in English-language class, she managed to study at the highest level and later became an ambassador for increasing such opportunities for other displaced persons.

Moreover, at the same time, Anna had the opportunity to study on a part-time course with a financial support that could cover the minimum living expenses and at the same time stayed in the hosts' home. However, after the termination of these opportunities, she urgently needed to find a job to be able to provide for herself and live in Canada. Anna managed to find a job without any relevant experience in a position that involved conducting inspections in university buildings. Having gained a variety of experience in renovation work, Anna had to look for another job at the end of her short-term contract. Thanks to her previous experience as an assistant in a programme to help Ukrainian students get into foreign universities, after applying for about 70 vacancies, she landed a position as an Academic Program Administrator at the university. In this role, Anna is able to work in English and has a variety of job responsibilities, mostly involving scheduling, organising visits from guests, etc.

### Difficulties of living in Canada

In case of working in this kind of position for two years and successfully passing the French language exam to the level of at least B2, Anna will be able to obtain permanent residence in Canada. Therefore, she is concerned about extending her employment contract and attempting to pass the language exam at the appropriate level, as she has not been able to study French regularly.

Living in Canada, Anna has also noticed how different the mentality, style, lifestyle and conditions are from what she was used to in Ukraine. First of all, these are the slowness and unhurriedness of all processes, bureaucracy and inconvenience of the medical system, which she has encountered many times.

While staying in Canada, Anna enjoys the diversity of cultures brought by immigrants from different countries, as everyone brings something special from their own background, with their identity and freedom of expression being the most important. However, at the same time, living in the French-speaking city of Montreal, she has experienced cases of rudeness and negative perceptions

towards her when she spoke English. Such situations caused her some dissonance and misunderstanding.

## Future plans

Apart from her full-time job, Anna also actively participates in various events and concerts to support Ukraine as a singer. Through these activities, she has been able to build a wide network of contacts, making it difficult for her to imagine starting over if she decides to move away from Canada. However, taking into account various factors and her overall impression of living in Canada, Anna does not see herself staying here in the relatively distant future, and at the same time she hasn't yet decided on a country she would like to live in. Therefore, she continues to do everything possible for now to make her life here and support Ukraine.

### Olena, 30+ years old

**Came from Mariupol, Donetsk region**

**Early childhood care teacher by profession**

**Currently lives in Montreal, Canada**



Olena came to Canada on the CUAET programme with her two daughters and husband in June 2023. Before that, she and her children used to live in France, where they evacuated as soon as they were able to leave Mariupol in March 2022.

Back then, they chose France because they believed that this country provided all the necessary conditions and assistance for a comfortable stay (such as living benefits, housing assistance and other social support, etc.) However, due to language difficulties and thus employment search, when Olena's husband was offered a job in Canada in English, the family decided to move to that country.

## Experience of living in Canada

Having arrived in Canada under the CUAET programme, the family took benefit of only a one-time benefit, which is provided to all Ukrainians upon arrival. The family could cover their own expenses from salary, as well as the availability of various social support programmes that exist due to the large number of migrants in this country. For example, assistance that almost completely covers the costs of children's education, tax refund systems, etc.

Additionally, because Montreal is a French-speaking city, the local authorities encourage migrants to learn French by creating opportunities for scholarship courses. Olena was able to enrol in one of these classes, and gradually improving her language skills, and despite the difference in accents compared to France, she no longer has difficulties with the French in everyday matters at a conversational level. However, she wants to continue learning the language in order to be able work in her professional field in the future.

## Challenges and concerns with living in Canada

Residing in Canada, Olena and her family feel comfortable and safe. Due to the large number of

migrants, there is no integration process as such, and therefore they found it easier to integrate into local society. However, having been evacuated under the same CUAET programme and holding the same visa status, the assistance system and difficulties faced by Ukrainians also greatly depend on the region of residence.

This applies both to existing social support programmes and integration measures, as well as to the different requirements for obtaining a permanent residence permit. In Montreal, where Olena and her family live, it is more difficult to obtain a residence permit compared to more distant provinces with a harsher climate. Having a visa for 3 years, in order to apply for permanent residence, a migrant has to work full-time for 2 years of which and pass an intermediate-level language test. In Olena's opinion, these are quite difficult conditions, because considering that this is a French-speaking region and most people need time to learn the language, the psychological aspect of post-migration depression, which takes time to get over, also adds to the challenges. Therefore, many Ukrainians choose regions where it is easier to obtain a residence permit, after which they will be able to return to their preferred province.

### **Children's education and plans**

Having two children, one of preschool and one of primary school age, Olena is very satisfied with the Canadian education system, considering it more comfortable and conducive to learning. Because of the large number of migrants, children of all nationalities are treated equally, and they can feel free to express themselves. Having no experience of attending a Ukrainian school, Olena's eldest daughter quickly adapted to the local school and no longer has any language difficulties with French as well as communicates easily with her peers.

Considering Canada a comfortable place to live for the whole family, Olena assumes that they will continue to live here. Therefore, she wants to build a career in her profession in a kindergarten and open her own preschool in here. However, she has faced several difficulties on the way to her desired job, the first of which relates to the peculiarities of her visa status. Her existing visa imposes restrictions on certain activities, including working in a kindergarten, which is why Olena has applied for and is hoping to receive approval for the removal of these restrictions. Additional requirements include first aid courses and introductory lectures on the specifics and system of preschools, as well as passing a French language test. Olena and her family believe that they are facing the usual difficulties that all migrants in Canada have and do not see these as major obstacles to settling in.

## France

### Daria, 19 years old

From the city of Mariupol, Ukraine

Came to France with her family in March 2022

Currently living in the Occitanie region of France

Studies remotely at a Ukrainian university



Being underage at the time of evacuation to France, Daria's decision to move was made exclusively by her family. After obtaining temporary protection status, Daria and her family were able to apply for various types of social assistance, such as health insurance, assistance with living expenses, and free language courses.

There were no difficulties with French learning opportunities, as besides qualified lessons, the French themselves organized classes for evacuated Ukrainians. In this way, Daria managed to learn French gradually over two years to a basic level.

### Challenges and prospects for the future

Being unable to return to her hometown of Mariupol, Daria plans to stay in France, and the biggest challenge for her on this path is the French language. Because of her remote study at a Ukrainian university, she has almost no opportunity for real-life communication and practice of French, making her worried about the prospect of further residence in this country. In addition, the complex bureaucratic system adds to her difficulties and requires a deeper knowledge of the language.

While living in France, Daria finds the differences and peculiarities of the welfare system, medical care, etc, discovering either through own experience or by searching information in the internet. However, in case of seeking help from the French, despite language difficulties and limited communication, they always try to understand and help. Such a favourable attitude from local residents and the almost total absence of differences in mentality on the Daria's feeling, it create favourable and comfortable living conditions while living in France.

### Inna Gochoshvili, 50+ years old

From Kramatorsk, Donetsk region, Ukraine

Came to France in March 2022

Currently live in Nice, France

History teacher, continues to work remotely in a Ukrainian school



With the hope of returning in a couple of weeks, Inna and her husband left almost everything in their city where active hostilities are taking place and came to France under the temporary protection programme.

They chose this country because of their son's long-time residence and work here, but despite this, they still face many of the difficulties of forced migration.

## Living experience and existing benefits in France

Having just moved to France, Inna and her husband had to live in different cities and move around several refugee centres with the hope and expectation of obtaining social housing. However, once they got such accommodation, they found that there was a certain amount of money to pay for it, which led them to consider renting as a more profitable option. Now Inna with her husband live in the city of Nice, where their son resides, and by paying the rent they can receive assistance in the form of a subsidy.

Apart from this support, thanks to their temporary protection status, the couple receive insurance, a small financial allowance that they can use only to buy food, and the opportunity to purchase a monthly travel pass at a reduced price. Living mostly on Ukrainian salaries and pensions, this income is extremely low compared to the standard of living in France, but in case of even partial employment, they are worried that they will lose the possibility of receiving even this assistance.

## Language learning and employment

Living in France, Inna and her husband took special French language courses for Ukrainians and received a scholarship, which helped them greatly in covering the rent. However, such programmes provided an opportunity to learn the language only up to the beginner level of proficiency and were also very time-consuming, so after completing them, the couple had to think about what to do next.

Currently, Inna continues to work remotely as a history teacher in a Ukrainian school, as she feels this job is a bridge with Ukraine and a hope to return in the future, but as gap with salaries, she is faced with an urgent need to look for an additional job in France. But even though full-time work at a Ukrainian school takes up most of a woman's time, it is not the main obstacle to employment in France. First, due to the lack of sufficient language practice, Inna has challenges in communicating in French, which is the main difficulty in finding a job.

The hotel and restaurant business are very well developed in the city of Inna's residence, but she found that a job that is not physically demanding requires the ability to communicate in French. Therefore, Inna and her husband were trying at least to take a free internship in a supermarket or restaurant to find a part-time job afterwards, but this did not give any prospects either. Inna would like to have the opportunity to teach Ukrainian children in France, as she considers working in a regular French educational institution impossible even in the future due to language difficulties and the fact that her qualification is not recognised.

## Concerns of those living in France and plans for the future

For Inna, the system of renewing her temporary protection permit in France every six months is a great inconvenience. To do this, it is necessary to reserve a certain amount of time, which is a real challenge each time due to the mismatch between the number of people and the available places for registration. In the case of an expired temporary protection permit, Ukrainians lose the right to legal residence and work in France, as well as all types of social support. It can be quite difficult to renew the lost the status, which is why some Ukrainians even organise rallies to draw attention to this problem. Moreover, due to the bureaucratic system, various administrative cases take a long time, which is often incomprehensible and difficult for Inna.

Due to the stress and prolonged depression caused by the situation in Ukraine, after moving to France, Inna was unable to enjoy life here for a long time and only recently became capable of looking at things differently and see the beautiful things around her. She and her husband appreciate the opportunity to live in France, as they can spend more time with their son. However, the couple still hope to return to Ukraine in the future, as they cannot fully feel here as at home.

## Germany

### Anna Kachalova, 20+ years old

From Mariupol, Donetsk region

Came to Germany under the temporary protection program in February 2023

Currently live in Bischofsmeis, Bavaria

Used to work in the field of WEB-design



Having left her hometown of Mariupol, Anna continued to support it and talk about the things that had been lost through her own drawings. Having evacuated to Germany, she wants to continue her career in graphic design and be able to start a new life.

### Experience of living and opportunities for self-realization in Germany

Anna chose Germany for evacuation primarily because it is quite close to Ukraine as well as here the large community of Ukrainians with whom she could consult in case of any questions. Besides, the girl considered Germany as a country where, because of its high standard of living, she could fulfil herself quite well in her desired field.

Having arrived in Germany under the temporary protection program, Anna receives support for accommodation and rent, as well as the possibility to continue learning the language to B2 level, considering it necessary for her further professional self-realization. Having experience, but without a degree in WEB-design, she first needs to retrain, which can be done by working and studying simultaneously for several years. For Anna, learning a German is not easy, especially speaking and listening, which is even more difficult due to the different dialects. However, with a goal in mind, she is confident that it is possible to develop her language skills to an intermediate level, which will allow her to live and develop comfortably in Germany.

### Current challenges and thoughts on the future

Living in Germany, Anna feels quite comfortable, only experiencing some discomfort in everyday life. This relates to the logistical difficulties in a small town due to the lack of a driver's license, and because of her language, she also has some trouble visiting a doctor or other institution, as there have been many cases of refusal to provide services in case of using an automatic translator. However, having gradually got used to the rules and peculiarities of life in Germany, the most worrying issue for Anna now is the possibility of further residence in this country if her temporary protection is terminated after March 2026.

Through her experience of the aftermath of the conflict in Ukraine and the destruction of her hometown,

Anna realized that material things no longer matter to her, but rather her life and safety. It has become difficult to make long-term plans, but being here and now, she wants to do everything possible to fulfil herself and support Ukraine, and she would like to advise everyone not to give up, no matter how difficult it is.

## Taisiia Stakhovska, 30+ years old

From the city of Kyiv, Kyiv region

Came to Germany under the temporary protection program in February 2022

Currently living in Norten-Hardenberg, Lower Saxony

Practical psychologist, volunteers in Germany to support Ukraine



With a six-month-old child under her care, immediately after the outbreak of the full-scale conflict, Taisiia decided to leave the country for safety and later evacuated to Germany because of the availability of high-quality social support in this country, which she needed as a mother with a child. With her past entrepreneurial experience in providing psychological support, as well as her good communication skills, she began to actively engage in volunteer work and arrange for aid to be delivered to Ukraine.

### Help from Germany and difficulties in living in the country

Having arrived in Germany with a small child, Taisiya was unable to spend enough time learning the language and attending integration courses, which are a requirement for receiving support. However, in her case, the Job Centre staff were sympathetic to her situation and organized individual online classes for her. However, despite this opportunity, Taisiia feels strongly that her self-realization in Germany is limited, because it requires a great deal of work, which is currently extremely difficult for her because of the need to care for her child.

Due to the workload of the medical system and kindergartens, Taisiia has to face two main difficulties while living in Germany. The first is the lack of availability of a place for her child in a pre-school in the area where she lives, which is very restrictive of her opportunities. However, thanks to an additional childcare program for small children for a few hours a week, she has managed to partially overcome this difficulty. As for medical care, the inconvenience is that when she goes to the doctor, it takes up to six months to get an appointment, forcing her to self-medicate.

### Volunteering in support of Ukraine

Even though she is currently unable to work, Taisiya has joined volunteer activities and managed to arrange large-scale aid that is regularly sent to Ukraine. In the town of her residence, at the beginning of the full-scale conflict, the graph family provided space for the creation of a humanitarian warehouse for evacuated Ukrainians. Visiting this center, Taisiya gradually began to pack and send some of the requested aid to Ukraine, and a while later she joined the United help for Ukraine association, which regularly organizes humanitarian support for Ukraine. Through constant



communication, Taisiya has improved her language skills and has been able to set up a massive process of collecting aid packages for children, the wounded and the military in Ukraine, contacting and cooperating with various Ukrainian organizations and initiatives.

## Values and thoughts about the future

Thinking about the safety of herself and the child, Taisiya decided to stay in Germany for the time being, and spending all her free time doing volunteer work, which she often has to do at night due to time constraints, she hopes that in the future it could become her job. The thought that such help can change or even save someone's life in many ways motivates Taisiya to continue doing her best for this cause.

Living in Germany, apart from helping Ukraine, she also wants to be able to integrate Ukrainian culture, create a center and opportunities for Ukrainians to communicate and interact. Being able to use her skills and do important work are top priorities for Taisiya, because even a minimal income is enough to cover her basic living expenses.

### Liliya, 30+ years old

From Mariupol, Donetsk region

Came to Germany under the temporary protection program Paragraph 24 in March 2022

Currently lives in Saxony-Anhalt

History and law teacher, worked as a history teacher at a German school



Having left Mariupol, Liliya made the decision for evacuation to Germany very urgently on the recommendation and invitation of her friends. Arriving in this country with her daughter and mother, she used to work as a teacher in a German school, but due to changes in language requirements for education workers, she had to temporarily leave this position.

## Experience of evacuation and living in Germany

Arriving in Germany at the beginning of the full-scale conflict, Liliya was impressed by the cooperation in aiding Ukrainian displaced persons, as she received support for her accommodation on the first day after filling out the documents. Apart from governmental assistance, volunteers and families who offered temporary accommodation in their homes while she was looking for a place to live made a great contribution.

However, due to the large number of newly arrived Ukrainians, Liliya also noticed that many systems were not prepared for such a large amount of people and were overloaded, including having to stand in long queues to receive assistance, finding a kindergarten for her child in the nearest settlements, etc. After moving into an apartment in April, Liliya received support for accommodation and rent, but in August, when she started working as a history teacher for a Ukrainian class in a German school, she became self-sufficient.

## Conditions of employment and benefits in Germany

After arriving in Germany, Liliya immediately began working, first as a part-time employee in a burger

shop and later as a schoolteacher for two years. As soon as she became fully employed, due to her ability to be fully self-sufficient, her housing and living allowance was stopped at once, but she was still granted temporary protection status. However, due to a new rule in Germany requiring education workers to have a C1 language certificate, she had to stop working at the school until she obtained it. But having worked for two years at this time, Liliya had a choice and considered unemployment benefits more favorable than social payments, and switching to them, she continues to study German in order to reach the C1 level.

## Specifics of work and language learning

Working as a schoolteacher, Liliya spent her first year teaching various subjects in a class for Ukrainian children of middle and high school age. These adaptation classes were only for one year at the beginning, after which she was offered to teach history in a global context to German children in the first year of secondary school. In this position, apart from the language, Liliya faced almost no difficulties. Thanks to her base German language skills before coming to this country, as well as her efforts to communicate at every opportunity, both in and out of school, Liliya's language skills improved significantly, and she had almost no difficulties.

## Child's education and thoughts on the future

Liliya's daughter started to attend kindergarten when she first moved to Germany, also making her first experience of school in this country. The fact that there were other Ukrainian children in her class made it easier to adapt, so Liliya decided that the local German school is enough and there is no need to overload her child with Ukrainian school. However, at the beginning of school, the child still experienced quite a lot of stress and was afraid to speak German. The fact that the requirements for German and Ukrainian children are the same, even though they have a double workload due to language, added to the difficulties.

Despite experiencing some difficulties due to bureaucracy and the need to follow the rules that are universally applicable, Liliya and her daughter feel quite comfortable living in Germany. However, Liliya's mother still cannot get used to life here, and is in a prolonged state of depression wants to return to Ukraine. But because she cannot return to her hometown of Mariupol, which is currently not controlled by Ukraine, Liliya is considering staying in Germany, but she is very worried that someday she will be told to leave this country, but she has no home to return to.



## Olena Ukraintseva, 40+ years old

From Mariupol, Donetsk region

Came to Germany under the temporary protection program in April 2022

Currently lives in Siegen, North Rhine-Westphalia

An artist by education, teacher of economics and management.

Volunteers in Germany to support Ukraine



After managing to leave Mariupol, Olena and her younger son came to Germany under the temporary protection program. She chose this country because she got an invitation from a friend to come here thanks to her connections from participating in cultural projects. Living in Germany and receiving support, Olena is very pleased to be able to help her family in some way and considers her stay here as a backup option for their evacuation in case the situation in Ukraine deteriorates. Besides, Olena is engaged in volunteering and continues her work as an artist, conveying through her paintings what has happened in her city and continues to occur in Ukraine still.

### Experience of living and difficulties with employment in Germany

Having the opportunity to reside in Germany until March 2026 under temporary protection, Olena is worried that after this period, due to the absence of a work contract, her residence permit may not be extended, and to have grounds to stay in Germany in the future, she is looking for an office job in the economic or management sector. However, to be able to obtain the position she wants, the woman needs to go through the procedure for the recognition of her diplomas and learn how to use special programs.

By looking for job opportunities and sending out CVs separately from the employment center, Olena already has experience of interviewing and even working in Germany. However, the biggest difficulty for her was the difference in mentality, when the friendliness of the Germans made it difficult for her to orientate and understand the real opinions and reasons for refusals.

In general, she gradually managed to get used to and adapt to the specifics and rules of life in Germany quite easily, but she still finds it difficult to understand the German mentality in certain moments. Due to the ubiquitous politeness and at the same time the restraint and certain closeness of Germans, it is extremely challenging for Olena to understand their true thoughts and what they mean.

### Volunteering in Germany

In the beginning, following her evacuation to Germany, Olena quickly joined charitable organizations to support Ukraine while she stayed here. By organizing various events to draw attention to the situation in Ukraine and contributing to the organization of various humanitarian aid, Olena finds herself inspired by the fact that she can help. Moreover, with her background as an artist and experience working on various cultural projects, she managed to organize several exhibitions not just of personal paintings, but also helped to spread other Ukrainians art. As soon as she managed to leave her hometown of Mariupol, in Germany she created a series of paintings of what was happening in the city and the things she witnessed. With this art and her ability to communicate in English, which helped her a lot in the beginning, she was able to spread the message to many people in Germany and beyond. Olena believes that Ukrainians now have a very powerful force, which if harnessed, can bring great change.

## Studying and plans for the future

While living in Germany under temporary protection and attending integration courses on weekdays, Olena managed to pass the B1 language test on the second attempt and was granted the opportunity to continue studying to B2 level to be able of working in her field of qualification. However, she noticed that even when going for an interview or job, they do not ask for a certificate, but the most important thing is the ability to speak and understand German, which Olena already manages to do. As for her son's education, he graduated from a Ukrainian secondary school remotely while already in Germany and decided to continue his studies only at a German educational institution. The difficulties of the language did not prevent him from communicating with his peers and studying, and in an effort to support his son in learning the language, Olena periodically arranges for him to study with her.

In general, Olena feels very comfortable living in Germany and considers the support program for Ukrainians to be extremely well-structured and loyal. However, she is still undecided about future, as it is difficult to plan for the longer term. However, unable to return to her hometown, she wants to achieve financial independence here to be able to support her family in Ukraine.



### Olga, 40+ years old

From the city of Kyiv, Kyiv region

Came to Germany under the temporary protection program in March 2022

Currently live in Gottingen Lower, Saxony

Used to work as a Spanish teacher, currently works as a primary school teacher in Germany



Olga came to Germany with her son and mother following an offer from her friends to evacuate to this country. She also chose Germany because of the free and high-quality healthcare available here, as well as her son's desire to study at a German university, for which he had been preparing for a long time. Thanks to the qualitative information provided by the university department where Olga worked, there were no problems with obtaining status and support. However, due to remote work, she was not entitled to financial support, but assistance with housing was available until her employment in Germany.

## Language learning and employment

As soon as she finished her remote work at a Ukrainian university, Olga immediately began working as a primary school teacher with multinational children, which involves accompanying them after the main lessons, helping with homework and conducting additional classes (sports, English, art, etc.). She found this opportunity by looking at various information in Ukrainian groups on social media, and at the time of employment, Olga was not required to have a diploma or language certificate, but this is important for career development and salary increases. Thanks to her good communication skills in German, she had

almost no difficulties with her colleagues or children.

However, working full-time, Olga was unable to combine her work with language studies at integration courses. Because German is actually not the first foreign language for her, it was not difficult to learn, and knowing the methodology, Olga managed to reach a fairly high level of proficiency on her own. At the same time, her son's studies at a German university were difficult only because of the complexity of the terms. However, having studied German even before the evacuation to Germany, Olga's son experienced some communication difficulties due to a lack of practice.

## Emotional state and thoughts about the future

Working in a German environment, Olga still feels that she has only German acquaintances, and her friendships are mostly with Ukrainians. In some aspects, she finds it difficult to get used to and understand the German mentality and culture, for example, having separate friends with similar interests and meeting only once or twice a year. Therefore, due to the difficulty of finding German friends, even when she speaks the language, Olga feels limited in communication.

In general, while living in Germany, Olga noticed how respectful German society is towards personal boundaries and how people intuitively know what to talk about and ask, which creates a certain feeling of comfort and security. With no plans to return to Ukraine due to a lot of social problems as well as difficulties with family reunification, Olga wants to improve her German skills to be able to communicate freely on all topics and to travel to every region of Germany. At the same time, she misses the life, friends and colleagues she had in Ukraine. However, given that it is not possible to bring everything back as it was, she hopes that in the future she will have the opportunity to return to her profession and continue teaching Spanish.

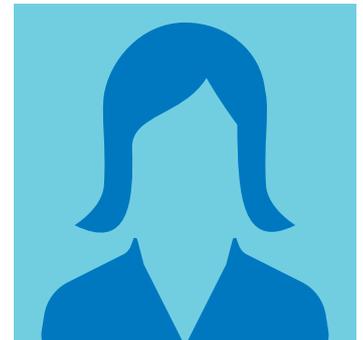
### Vitalina, 40+ years old

From the city of Kyiv, Kyiv region

Came to Germany under the temporary protection program  
in August 2023

Currently lives in Gottingen Lower, Saxony

Works as a primary class teacher in Germany



Vitalina did not plan to leave Ukraine and go abroad but made this decision because of the very dangerous period in her city of residence due to the increased shelling. Thanks to her long experience of teaching German, she immediately started working at a school, refusing to apply for possible assistance under the temporary protection status.

## Experience of living and working in Germany

Vitalina came to Germany directly for a job interview, and thanks to the temporary protection status, the employment process was very easy. After living for a couple of months in the accommodation provided by the Germans, she became fully self-sufficient.

Working as a primary school teacher, Vitalina assumed that she would not have any difficulties with the language because of her experience, but she faced misunderstanding of slang words from children,

which she managed to correct quickly with the support of her colleagues. And being under temporary protection while employed, Vitalina feels freer to make travel arrangements without having to report. Living in Germany, she feels very well socially protected and do not face any difficulties, except for the specifics of the medical system and bureaucratic issues, as it takes much longer to resolve various issues than she is used to.

## Thoughts on the future

While residing in Germany, Vitaliia felt the measuredness of life, which was difficult for her to get used to at first, as she was always was in a hurry. Having never wanted to live abroad, she does not set herself the goal of staying or returning, but instead wants to enjoy every moment of life. She feels that the longer she lives in a particular place, the more connected she becomes to it, and this makes it harder to return, as she will have to start building her life from the beginning again.

## Italy

### Anna, 20+ years old

**Came from Brovary, Kyiv region**

**Currently live in Roma, Italy**

**Arrived in Italy in the first half of 2022**

**Student at the Rome Conservatory**



After the outbreak of the full-scale conflict, observing the deterioration of the situation in Ukraine, Anna with her mother and brother decided to move abroad. Having initially stayed in Poland, they had an unpleasant experience living in a Polish family and decided to change their place of residence. Being a student at the Kyiv Conservatoire at the time, Anna decided to try to contact the Roman Conservatoire about the possibility of studying there and received confirmation. Since opera was born in Italy, which the girl studies and is passionate about, it became an incentive to master this skill in this country, where she had to go by herself.

## Experiences and challenges of living in Italy

Having just arrived in Italy, in the beginning Anna lived with her aunt and for some time in the housing provided by the conservatory. After that, she applied for a temporary protection program from the government, and since then she has been living in a hotel in Rome, which was temporarily turned into a refugee center.

Living in this center, Ukrainians have three meals a day and receive pocket money. At the same time, each Ukrainian resident has to check in with a signature every two days, and in order to leave the hotel for a longer period or travel to Ukraine, they must obtain the permission in advance. In Anna's case, because she was also studying in Ukraine, her confirmation was received quite quickly, but in the case of other Ukrainians, the waiting time is usually quite long, making it inconvenient in case of advance ticket purchases.

Moreover, due to the lack of sufficient housing for Ukrainian displaced persons, Ukrainians who arrived without families must share a rather small room for several people. Considering the duration of their stay and the number of belongings they have accumulated over this time, the almost complete lack of personal space is inconvenient for Anna, especially when she is preparing for exams. Therefore, soon she plans to look for other housing options, however, in the case of a full-fledged lease, Anna cannot cover these expenses, as she currently impossible to work full-time due to her studies at the conservatory.

## Studying and plans for the future

At the beginning of the residence, Italian was the most troubling issue for Anna, but thanks to being in a language environment during her studies, as well as to the courses she attended and self-education, she was able to develop Italian skills to an intermediate level and plans to continue improving them. Although Anna no longer has any difficulties in everyday communication, her studies require a deeper knowledge of Italian in the professional sphere. However, the fact that many terms in opera are borrowed from Italian made it easier for her, as Anna already knew many of them. But to pass the exams, there is still a highly specialized vocabulary that she needs to master.

Anna also has a mentor from the Welcome Refugees program, who teaches and sings jazz, with whom she attends concerts and exchanges musical techniques. Now she is actively participating in concerts as an opera singer herself and hopes that this experience will also help her to become even better in this field in the future, to be able to tour different countries without being tied to one place.

### Alina, 30+ years old

From Poltava, Poltava region

Came to Italy in the spring 2022, Currently live in Roma, Italy

A technologist in garment design with a degree in sewing, worked in the field of self-discovery through creativity and art

Founder and President of the Sensi Holistic Creative Agency Association in Italy



Having lived in China for a long time and developing her own methods of self-discovery through art and creativity, Alina planned to return to Ukraine on the dates when the full-scale conflict began. Unable to stay in Ukraine due to the constant stress and depression caused by the threat, she decided to try to start a new life in Italy.

## Moving to Italy and the path to social integration

In the beginning of her migration to Italy, hoping to return to Ukraine soon, Alina used her savings to live on and applied for the temporary protection program only when her financial resources ran out. Having recently moved to this country, she experienced a strong social barrier and mental discomfort, which made it difficult to communicate. She felt that society perceived her as a refugee from Ukraine who had nothing, and because of this invisible label, she began to feel psychologically the same way.

While living in a refugee center and fearing sudden resettlement, one day she met representatives of Refugees Welcome, which dramatically changed her life for the better. Alina took part in two projects

implemented by the organization, one of which was aimed to place in an Italian family, and the other involved matching her with an Italian mentor based on her needs and mutual interests.

Since Alina is passionate about art, the project managers matched her with a film director, with whom they were able to build a great collaboration and create joint products in the future. Since then, Alina felt the difference in perception towards her, not as a displaced person from Ukraine, but as a human with skills, ideas and a desire to make positive changes. From then she was able to get away from the invisible label of refugee, which had previously prevented her from developing and integrating into society in Italy.



## Social activities and community building

Being actively involved in non-formal education and contributing to the creation and implementation of various projects aimed at understanding and experiencing the painful experience of migration through art and turning it into a super-power, Alina gradually came to the realization that she wanted to actively and tirelessly implement these ideas in society and help immigrants in Italy start a new life.

With her experience and a desire to empower and inspire refugees as well as people with difficult backgrounds (such as victims of violence) to continue developing and fulfilling themselves, Alina created the Sensi Holistic Creative Agency. Implementing a multi-stage project on the art of healing, which brought together both Ukrainian displaced persons and refugees from different countries, Alina used various methods to work through post-traumatic syndromes, to help restore their own identity, and to turn past experiences into even greater growth.

In understanding that the difficult past needs to be experienced and that life cannot be the same again, while traumatic past experiences need to be transformed into a feature and personal superpower, was greatly helped by the Japanese philosophical technique of Kintsugi art, which Alina also used to implement during workshops with refugees. This and many other techniques and activities helped to create a special community of mutual support, which helped even Alina to feel here as at home and to be even more inspired by this activity.



## Message and plans

Throughout the activities Alina always draws attention to the negative impact of the social label of refugees on the self-perception and opportunities for migrants themselves, as she has experienced this on her own. Trying to change the perception of the refugee figure in society, she believes that in the presence of a traumatic situation, it is necessary to help this person redirect this energy into purposeful development, which is primarily possible if you do not attach social labels to these people.

### Svitlana, 30+ years old

**From the city of Zhytomyr, Zhytomyr region**

**Came to Italy in spring 2022, Currently live in Roma, Italy**

**An architect by education, currently works remotely as a designer-constructor in a Ukrainian furniture company and in the cleaning industry in Italy**



Svitlana came to Italy with her young daughter to live with relatives she knew, but after an unpleasant experience with them, she had to obtain temporary protection and change in future the support project she was living in Italy under.

## Experience of living in Italy and features of the support program

Having been forced to move away from her relatives' family, Svitalana and her daughter had experience of living in different places. Seeking support in online groups of Ukrainians in Italy, one of the volunteers helped her to obtain temporary protection under a government program and to stay in a hotel with other evacuees. Constantly worried that all Ukrainians were going to be evicted, Svitalana also experienced inconveniences with meals, especially for her child, and restrictions on her movement due to the hotel's schedule as well as the need to regularly mark her presence.

However, once representatives from Refugees Welcome came to the hotel and offered several families, including Svitalana with her daughter, to switch to the Hospitality program they had created, which involved settling Ukrainians in Italian accommodation and providing some living allowance. Due to her unpleasant past experience of living with a family, Svitalana was hesitant to the last minute, fearing that the same thing would happen when she had to clean the all accommodation, but she decided to try it and was very happy with it. Despite the language barrier at the beginning, they became very close to the host family, and even after a year of moving to an apartment with five other Ukrainians by the same project, they continue to maintain friendly relations with them.

## Difficulties in living and working in Italy

Having lived under the project for almost two years, for Svitalana and her daughter the project is coming to an end and they urgently needed to find another accommodation. Over this time, Svitalana had already faced the problem of renting, as each time the project was extended for only six months, and she never knew whether she would receive further support. Because of this, she has repeatedly tried to find housing in Italy, but even if it is difficult for Italians, she has to face many additional obstacles. Because of the legal protection afforded to tenants, landlords do not want to risk renting their property to people who are classified as socially vulnerable. As Svitalana is a displaced person with a young daughter who

does not have a full-time job, it is extremely difficult for her to find a rental apartment.

Another aspect of the difficulties of continuing to live in Italy is the financial issue of employment and becoming fully self-sufficient. Svitlana faced problems finding a job even in the cleaning industry, because in Italy this also requires a long way to get a good reputation, and only then it might be possible to be recommended for a job. She started working in the cleaning industry as soon as she arrived in Italy and continues to provide household assistance to Italian families to date. Apart from this part-time job, Svitlana continues to work remotely designing furniture for a Ukrainian company, but there is a huge gap between the salaries in Ukraine and the standard of living in Italy. Working in this field she finds it very exciting and convenient because she can work remotely and take care of her child. That is why in the future she would like to be able to work in a similar position in an Italian company, but in addition to improving her language skills, she needs to master special professional vocabulary and find such an opportunity, which seems impossible for Svitlana.

## Learning and plans for the future

Living in Italy, Svitlana finds it very difficult to combine work, childcare and language learning. She has been unable to attend Italian courses for a long time, but thanks to communication, she makes sufficient progress in learning the language. However, in the case of her daughter, because she had arrived in Italy at preschool age and started studying here, she faced no difficulties with language learning and integration. The girl learned Italian so well that it became easier for her to communicate in this language than in her mother language, which is why Svitlana enrolled her in a Ukrainian Saturday school.

Svitlana and her daughter really enjoy living in Italy, as the country suits them in many ways. Worrying about the possibility of further residence and self-sufficiency in Italy, the woman considers long-term residence in this country only if she can fulfil herself in the desired field and provide for her and her daughter. Because of the conflict, she has reassessed her values, so now she wants to live, enjoy every moment of life and not make specific plans for the future.

### Svitlana, 50+ years old

**From Kharkiv, Ukraine**

**Came to Italy in the spring 2022**

**Currently live in Roma**

**Practical psychologist, works remotely as a psychologist in a Ukrainian school**



Svitlana evacuated to Italy with her daughter because her friend lives in Italy. Thanks to government support, they are staying in a hotel in Rome, which has been turned into a refugee center and has hosted about 100 Ukrainians. While living in Italy, Svitlana continues to work as a practical psychologist at the Ukrainian school remotely, while her daughter studies only remotely at a Ukrainian school and therefore they experience a very strong lack of communication.

## Difficulties of living in Italy

Having lived in a hotel center for displaced persons for more than two years, Svitlana and her daughter

have experienced several inconveniences. The most acute issue for them is the matter of meals because of the peculiarities of Italian food they are served in the center. Unable to cook or buy other food, meals cause them the most discomfort. Besides, the prolonged stress caused by the feeling of uncertainty, lack of stable income opportunities and the inability to leave the hotel for more than two days, etc., negatively affect the mental state of the Ukrainians living in the center, which causes regular misunderstandings among them and makes Svitlana personally uncomfortable. Additional difficulties while living in the center for displaced persons are caused by the climate, as the inability to use air conditioning on hot days makes it very challenging for them.

## Employment

Svitlana and her daughter consider living in Italy only as a temporary option and are keen to return to Ukraine as soon as it there will be safe. Therefore, in order not to lose her current job, Svitlana continues to work remotely as a practical psychologist at a Ukrainian school. Since this is a full-time position, she has very limited opportunities to work in Italy. However, the main reason why Svitlana cannot currently be employed in this country is the difficulty of finding a job that is not too physically demanding.

To be able to work in the professional sphere here, Svitlana needs a very high level of Italian, and even this does not guarantee the possibility of employment in her profession, as she has observed that it is very difficult to find a job in Italy. Although she is gradually becoming more comfortable with spoken Italian thanks to taking Italian courses for Ukrainians, since she can only speak very limited, she considers only working as an ironer as her best future prospect. Having already worked part-time in cleaning and ironing, working as an ironer was physically much easier for her.

## Communication and mental state

While living in Italy, Svitlana and her daughter, Yulia, feel a great lack of communication. This is not only due to the language barrier, but also to the mental state of stress and discomfort caused by the desire to return home as soon as possible and the inability to do so because of the protracted conflict in Ukraine.

At the beginning after arriving in Italy while finishing secondary level, Yulia studied at both Italian and Ukrainian schools remotely. However, due to the extremely heavy workload and language difficulties, they were granted permission do not attend the local school, although it is usually a requirement for all children living in Italy. As a result of the lack of face-to-face communication, Yulia suffers from a severe lack of interaction, which affects her general well-being and causes her mother to worry.

The uncertainty of the future, the lack of socialization and the inability to meet husband worsen the mental state of Svitlana and her daughter. However, thanks to the opportunity to communicate with an Italian mentor from Refugees Welcome, she is getting some distraction from this state and learning more about Italian culture. This communication improves Svitlana's well-being and fully meets her needs, which she expected from the mentor in this project.

## Yulia Shevchenko, 50+ years old

From Kharkiv, Kharkiv region

Came to Italy in August 2022

Currently lives in Ruvo di Puglia, Puglia region, Italy

Entrepreneur in publishing in Ukraine,  
currently continues to work remotely



Because of the extreme danger in her hometown Kharkiv, at the beginning of the full-scale conflict, Yulia and her family, including two school-age daughters, had to immediately leave and settle in a safer city in Ukraine. For almost six months, she was unable to pick up her work computers to continue her business remotely, and as soon as it became possible, they were able to leave for Italy, as there were people waiting for them.

### Experience of living in Italy

Having just arrived in Italy and registered as displaced persons, Yulia and her family lived and paid rent on their own until they received first assistance. In March 2023, they managed to get into a special support program designed for evacuees from different countries, which fully covers the cost of rent and provides pocket money for at least six months. Yulia managed to extend this assistance three times, which is the maximum period of eligibility for this project.

While on the program, Yulia and her family are sometimes inconvenienced by the intrusive recommendation of psychological services, as well as regular checks by project operators and interference with their personal space. Having the keys to the apartment, the project staff visits at least three times a week, and often without giving any warning. Yulia tries to look at this situation with humor, but due to the need to work remotely and having to deal with everyday life, such visits create quite a lot of discomfort for the family.

### Study and work

Under the current support program, Yulia and her family are required to attend offline Italian courses for several hours per day, which combined with her remote self-employment, leaves her no time for work in Italy. However, the woman still has episodic experience of part-time work, which turned out to be physically very difficult for her and negatively affected her health. Having the opportunity to study the language at courses and take free exams, Yulia noticed positive changes in her language skills. She began to understand better and gradually speak Italian in everyday life. However, in terms of children's language learning, the situation is different.

When they first arrived in Italy, both daughters were enrolled in middle and high schools due to the requirement for children under 16 to attend local classes. But because of their plans of returning to Ukraine, the girls also continued their studies remotely in Ukrainian educational institutions, which became a real challenge for them. Moreover, due to the difference in the duration of the school day and lack of understanding the language, the younger daughter could not concentrate on the lessons and felt drowsy at first, but later she was able to pass the exams and graduate from high school in Italy. While the older daughter decided to stop studying at the Italian school and returned to Ukraine to a safer city to live with grandmother to save time and successfully complete her studies in Ukraine.

## Current challenges and plans for the future

Yulia and her family have never planned to live abroad and definitely want to return to Ukraine in the future, but due to the very dangerous situation in their hometown, they cannot currently do it. Therefore, living in Italy, the woman is most concerned about the possibility of continuing the support program, because in the absence of it, they will either have to return to Ukraine or spend their own savings on rent, which they save to restore their bombed apartment.

Living in Italy, thanks to the warmth of the Italian welcome and the sincere compassion of the Italians, Yulia feels quite comfortable here and does not experience any isolation. She always has someone to turn for help, however, she has faced misunderstanding from Italians about her family's desire to visit Ukraine periodically and return as soon as it is safe. Therefore, she tries to explain how much she likes Italy, which has become a second home for them, but still, her real home is only in Ukraine.

## Japan

### Margarita, 20+ years old

From Mariupol, Donetsk region

Came to Japan under the government support programme in June 2022

Currently live in Tokyo

Historian by profession, used to work as a barista

In Japan, she has a part-time job as a sales assistant at Nitori



Having escaped from Mariupol with nothing and nobody to help in this situation, Margarita with her friend considered moving to Japan or France. Having learnt that Japan accepts Ukrainians and even cover the cost of flights, if necessary, they decided to try to build a new life in this country.

### Moving and living in Japan

When Margarita decided to evacuate to Japan, she was unaware of what to expect, and as soon arriving here she was very impressed by the support for Ukrainians organized by the government. After all she had been through, Margarita felt that she was well taken care of and did not have to worry about any domestic issues as everything was thought out in the smallest detail.

After arriving in Japan, Margarita stayed in a hotel for quite some time until she moved to municipal housing in Tokyo, which the municipality provides free of charge to evacuated Ukrainians for up to three years. While living in the hotel, like other Ukrainians, she was able to receive an allowance and free meals, which was very necessary at that time. Moreover, specially hired employees helped her to take care of all the necessary documents, arrange a visit to the doctor if needed, and in case of any issues, she could contact an interpreter at any time.

### Additional support for Ukrainians in Japan

Apart from the basic support, Margarita fondly remembers the various additional assistance and the sincere desire of the Japanese to support Ukrainians by performing their work to the best possible extent. During staying at the hotel, the staff who cared for the Ukrainians paid a lot of attention to their

mental state, organizing various events, competitions, festivals, introducing them to the culture and even giving birthday gifts. Moreover, Margarita greatly appreciated the Japanese language courses specially organized for Ukrainians, as the bright and fun classes helped her to get a base for further living in Japan within two months.

Margarita also mentions a lot of valuable support from various companies and organizations. This includes the provision of free clothes by UNIQLO and MUJI, as well as additional one-time support from charitable organizations (such as cash, travel tickets, etc.), and opportunities to attend different events, humanitarian warehouses, etc. The overall support from Japan was very impressive and surprising to Margarita, but since moving out of the hotel into separate accommodation, she began to face the real challenges of living in Japan.

## Concerns about future living in Japan

Since Margarita came to Japan under a support program in which the state acts as a guarantor, her living support payments ended in the summer, at the time of her residence here for two years. Having only a part-time job at NITORI, Margarita has been able to cover her living expenses on a basic level as long as she does not need to pay for housing. She is very concerned that the municipality's housing assistance will probably stop in April, and she will need to urgently look for a job that allows her to pay the rent or find additional work. Besides, the girl is very scared of the process of searching for and renting housing in Japan, as she assumes that it may be even more difficult for foreigners without full-time employment to find an adequate housing option with a reasonable price.

The issue of finding a full-time job is currently the biggest concern for Margarita, as she has only seen very limited part-time vacancies, which also require a lot of physical endurance, when she contacted Hello Work. Unable to work more hours at her current job, she hopes to find a position that is not physically demanding and does not require a high level of Japanese language skills.

## Impressions of living in Japan and thoughts on the future

While living in Japan, Margarita has some language difficulties, but she has been able to understand the Japanese on an intimate level. A little more difficult for her because of the difference in cultures and mentality, as in many ways she feels that there are different concepts, values, etc., and experiences that the Japanese are often afraid to contact her. However, the fact that Japan is very different from Ukraine gives her the moral courage to leave her life in Ukraine and start a new one here. Although she has no Japanese friends, thanks to her Ukrainian ones, Margarita does not feel a lack of communication and enjoying life in Japan and does not see herself in any other country.

Unable to return to the hometown of Mariupol, which not only suffered enormous destruction but is currently not under the control of Ukraine, Margarita has clearly decided that she will remain living in Japan even after all the support is over. In case she is unable to find a full-time job, she is considering working several part-time jobs to cover her living expenses and rent, as this is necessary regardless of the country of residence. In the future, Margarita and her friend dream of doing business in Japan, but given that the process of starting is lengthy, she is looking for a job that will allow her to be self-sufficient in the near future.

## Yulia, 40+ years old

From the city of Sumy, Sumy region

Came to Japan under the Nippon Foundation support program in July 2022, Currently living in Tokyo

Has a law degree, continues to work remotely at a Ukrainian law firm



First, Yulia decided to evacuate to Japan on her own under the Nippon Foundation's support program, as she had long wanted to visit this country. As a friend helped her with the process of finding a guarantor and paperwork, the whole relocation went easy for her. However, after a while, when Yulia was organizing the evacuation of her high school son to Japan, she was only able to apply for NITORI's support for living expenses, which is shorter-term and ends in March.

### Difficulties in finding employment and concerns about the future in Japan

Being unable to work in Japan in the legal field not only because of the requirements of the high level of language proficiency, Yulia keeps working remotely for a Ukrainian law firm but faces a series of challenges. First, because of the large time difference, she has to work at night and having to get up in the morning for online Japanese classes, she finds it difficult to absorb the material and experiences significant deterioration in her overall health. Moreover, the wage gap between Ukraine and Japan is very large, which means that after the end of the support for housing and rent, she will not be able to cover these costs from Ukrainian salary.

As her housing and living allowance are coming to an end soon, Yulia is very concerned about how she and her son will continue to live, especially in terms of rent. First, when considering the possibility of employment in Japan, even regardless of her professional field, she feels the language barrier is a big one. Being able to work in English, she hopes to find a job with the possibility to perform any office work in this language. But in case she is unable to find a full-time job or part-time work to provide for themselves, Yulia is considering either doing it herself or suggesting to her son to take part in RHQ's settlement support program if they open a new intake for the autumn.

### Challenges of living in Japan

Living in Japan, the biggest challenge for Yulia is the language, as lack of proficiency in it causes many different difficulties. Apart from the limitations of finding a job, the language barrier is very noticeable, for example, when she undergoes an annual medical examination, tries to apply for a bank card or in any household matters that require filling out various paperwork. During the medical examination, Yulia is forced to use an automatic translator, which often makes mistakes and does not allow her to understand the real problems, which is why she considered using professional translators, but due to the high cost of services, she was unable to use them. Moreover, the difficulty of obtaining a bank card for everyday use was a problem for the woman. In addition to the fact that getting a card from most banks is quite difficult for foreigners, Yulia also faced service refusals due to her lack of language skills.

However, Yulia's son has even more difficulties with the language than she does. After graduating from a Ukrainian school remotely, he decided not to continue studying in Ukrainian institutions due to the specifics of distance education, and at the same time, because of language difficulties, he is unable to

study in Japanese educational institutions. Without a community, he is experiencing a severe lack of communication and difficulties in adapting to Japan, which is why Yulia is very concerned about her son's socialization and future.

## Thoughts and plans for the future

Living in Japan, Yulia constantly worries about the situation in her hometown and Ukraine in general. As the city of Sumy, where she used to live, is regularly shelled and being unable to help, she is very concerned for the lives of her husband and relatives, which strongly affects her life and adaptation in Japan. Having difficulties learning the language and seeing no prospects for self-realization in Japan, Yulia assumes that she will return to Ukraine when it is safer there. However, living in Japan here and now, besides her basic needs, she finds it equally valuable to participate in various cultural meetings and events with Ukrainians and Japanese, as she feels that it has a very positive impact on her mental health.

### Iryna Svydran, 60+ years old

**From Dnipro, Ukraine**

**Came to Japan on a support program from the Nippon Foundation in April 2022**

**Currently living in Kawaguchi, Saitama prefecture**

**In Ukraine she was engaged in entrepreneurship, in Japan has a part-time job in a Ukrainian cafe**



Iryna evacuated to Japan under the Nippon Foundation's support program as her daughter, who has been living in Japan for a long time act's role as guarantor. Having arrived in Japan at her invitation, Iryna experienced severe stress and mental deterioration for quite some time because of the hard experience of evacuation and the separation between family members in different countries. She was able to gradually recover from this state thanks to the existing support of Japan and her daughter's regular attempts to distract her by showing the beauties of the country.

## Work experience and language difficulties

Thanks to her daughter's support with various issues while living in Japan, Iryna almost never had to face everyday difficulties, but she still feels the language barrier strongly. Trying to learn Japanese for a few hours a week, she is beginning to understand and maintain a conversation at a basic level, but she considers that this is not enough to continue living in Japan. However, the biggest motivation for Iryna to learn Japanese is the opportunity to communicate with her grandson, who does not understand Ukrainian.

Despite the language difficulties, Iryna managed to work full-time in the kitchen at a Ukrainian restaurant in Tokyo until it closed, where she gained experience for her future job as a chef. Having a part-time employment in a Ukrainian cafe, Iryna has no difficulties with the language at all during the work process, as all her colleagues speak Ukrainian. However, at the same time, she feels that she lacks practice in Japanese.

## Thoughts on the future

Since Iryna came to Japan under the Nippon Foundation's support program, she can receive living allowance payments until spring. However, even if the financial assistance ends, she assumes that thanks

to the part-time job she will be able to cover basic living expenses, but if the assistance with housing and utility costs ends, Iryna is sure that she will not be able to pay the rent as well.

To avoid inconvenience, the woman does not consider living with her daughter's family, so from April she plans to try to use RHQ's settlement support program, which aims to partially cover her rent and provide living allowance. However, Iryna is worried that due to the requirement to attend Japanese classes under this program, she may have difficulty combining studying and working at the Ukrainian cafe. Moreover, at the end of the program, she assumes that she will have to return to Ukraine because of the difficulty of covering all living expenses in Japan on her own. Iryna feels very grateful to Japan and the Japanese for all the great help and warm welcome and believes that Ukrainians have been provided with everything they need to start their lives in this country.

## **Tamara (nickname), 60+ years old**

**From the Chernihiv region**

**Came to Japan in April 2022, currently under a government support programme**

**Currently living in Chiba**

**Biologist by profession, worked in a chemical laboratory**

**In Japan, has part-time jobs at NITORI and Haneda Airport**



Having initially evacuated to Japan under the Nippon Foundation's support program, due to psychological and financial abuse by the guarantor's family, the woman was forced to break free from this dependence and move to the government support program.

### **Story of living with the guarantor and switching to the government support program**

At the beginning of the full-scale conflict, Tamara was unable to leave her city of residence for a long time due to the constant danger, and as soon as it became possible, a friend whose daughter lives in Japan helped Tamara evacuate under a support program from the Nippon Foundation, in which friend's daughter's husband acted as a guarantor. However, having been placed with this family, remaining unaware of the terms and details of the support program, Tamara faced constant monitoring, psychological pressure, restrictions on movement, information isolation and financial dependence, caused mainly by the guarantor's wife.

Having taken the woman's documents, they tried to fully control her actions, provided false information, taking her financial support and used psychological pressure to control her even on social media and monitor her movements on the navigator, etc. Tamara's daughter, who lives as an evacuee in Germany, helped her to break free from this dependence remotely. After contacting the security authorities, the migration service was informed about the situation and despite many complications, Tamara was taken to a safe place under security. The woman was told that her case was not the first, and even after being taken to a safe place, she was unable to recover her psychological state for a long time, as she suffered from visions which was haunt her.

### **Experience of living in Japan under a government support program**

After experiencing the violence, moving to a government support program and moving to a hotel in Chiba

where other Ukrainians lived, Tamara turned a new life in Japan. Having previously been in unaware about the existing support for Ukrainians in Japan, she was extremely impressed by the scale of assistance and began to gradually recover from her experience. Being able to move around freely and attend various events, she has only since started to enjoy life in Japan.

After staying in a hotel for about a year, Tamara moved to an apartment in Chiba, which the municipality provided for temporary use and helped her with the necessary equipment. She recalls with great warmth all the events organized for Ukrainians at the hotel and the caring attitude of the staff and appreciates the opportunities to travel and receive various types of humanitarian and financial support that she was provided with.

## **Worries about living in Japan**

Currently, Tamara's housing support under the government program has ended, but thanks to a combination of two part-time jobs, she is able to provide for herself while she receives housing assistance. Working in NITORI in the sales area, Tamara is very impressed by the excellent and respectful way she is treated, and apart from feeling a of physical load, she no longer has any difficulties with performing her work, as she can easily help customers find the goods they need or ask for help from colleagues if necessary. She also finds her part-time job as an airplane cleaner convenient, as even without language skills she can easily do the work, and the non-monotonous nature of the job has a positive impact on her health.

However, once the housing rental assistance is over, Tamara is concerned about the possibility of continuing to live in Japan, as she has no stable income and has health problems, making it impossible to cover the rent and all other expenses. In addition, the woman is very afraid of the process of searching for and moving to a new place to live, as she is not familiar with the rental system in Japan.

## **Feeling and thoughts about the future**

While living in Japan, Tamara is very nervous about her health, because in case of illness, apart from the difference in treatment systems and language difficulties, she is concerned that she might not be able to work and provide for herself. Besides, Tamara feels that even though she lives so far away, emotionally she remains in Ukraine, and even having everything necessary for life in Japan, she cannot feel as comfortable as at home and is unable to fully integrate into the local society due to the difference in mentality and cultures. Fearing that she would be left in Japan without support, Tamara is considering returning to Ukraine to solve certain issues and moving to her daughter in Germany, who also lives there as an evacuee.

Overall, while living in Japan, Tamara has noticed a lot of positive things that she appreciates about the Japanese people. First, the respect that is present everywhere creates comfort and enjoyment of living. Besides, she is very grateful for all the huge help from Japan in various fields, as well as the psychological support that helped her to survive the difficult emotional state caused by the situation with the guarantor.

## The United Kingdom

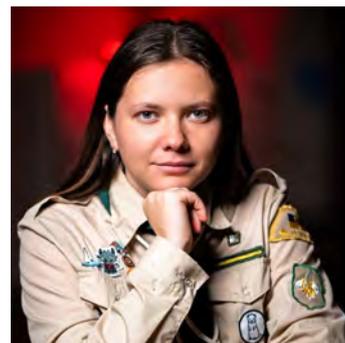
### Maryna Balaka, 20+ years old

She has a pedagogical education and experienced to work in Ukraine for the volunteer NGO BUR (Building Ukraine Together).

Evacuated from the city of Lebedyn, Sumy region, in July 2022

Currently live in Newcastle-under-Lyme in Staffordshire, England.

Work experience in England: assistant physical education teacher, bakery seller.



Marina came to England under a program of Homes for Ukraine together with her husband. The choice of this country was based on the residence of her husband's friend, who became their sponsor. Because in the couple's opinion, it is always easier to start a new life in another country when you have someone you know who can help.

In addition, the UK seemed to them as a country where it would be easier to adapt and have a lower language barrier.

### The evacuation and resettlement process

After filling in the visa applications, Maryna and her husband received a very quick and positive response, and immediately after arriving in London, they were able to apply for a British Resident Permit for 3 years, which gives them the right to work, free health insurance and additional rights to benefits and social support. Having the opportunity to receive social unemployment benefits from the Job Centre, the family decided to refuse this opportunity and go to work right away, believing that there are many Ukrainians who need this help more.

### Difficulties in getting a job

Having just arrived in England, Marina had a basic knowledge of English, which is why she was only able to get a job cleaning in a hotel, while her husband found work in construction. The hotel job was physically demanding, but after a while, thanks to the help of a Ukrainian friend, she found a position as a teacher's assistant in a London school. At the time of recruitment, Marina was told that despite her insufficient level of English, they could understand her and therefore hired her.

For the first three weeks, she had to work as a substitute in different schools in London, and after that, one school for children with autism hired Maryna, and she worked there for almost two years. In addition to the opportunity to improve her language skills during her work, she enjoyed interacting with the children and seeing the results of her labor. She was also impressed by the differences in the British education system compared to the Ukrainian one, believing that it focuses more on the soft skills that children will need in their lives.

### The support they received

Because of the high rents and traffic in London, the couple were forced to move to the small town of Newcastle-under-Lyme. But here, Marina and her husband faced difficulties finding employment due to the lack of jobs in the city. After finding only part-time work in a bakery, the pair had to take up the social program Universal Credit to be able to receive support for their living expenses and rent.

While Marina wanted to continue working at school as a teaching assistant, she was faced with the requirement to provide a high level of English language proficiency certificate when looking for a similar job in a small town, which happened due to the small flow of workers compared to London. Therefore, due to limited prospects, she is currently ready to consider different job options and try herself in a new field.

## Difficulties while living in the UK

Currently, Marina feels that she has adapted and feels quite comfortable in the UK, however, she notes that she sometimes finds it difficult due to the difference in mentality. The ubiquitous politeness of the British makes it difficult for Maryna to understand their real thoughts, but she has also noted the openness to any expression and respect for human boundaries. Another thing that sometimes causes inconvenience is the difference in medical systems compared to Ukraine. Waiting times and treatment methods are quite different, and as a result, the girl even had to visit Ukraine for treatment.

The couple are also worried about the possibility of further residence in the UK, as their current visa status does not provide for the possibility of staying in the UK after its expiry and they may need to find a job with visa support to continue their legal stay. However, the work visa process has become more complicated with the influx of Ukrainians, and Marina is considering applying for a student visa in the future.

## Plans for the future

The conflict in Ukraine has dramatically changed Marina's life values and her outlook on life. Waiting a long time for the possibility of returning to Ukraine, which has not yet materialized, led to a real realization that they need to build a life outside of Ukraine and appreciate every moment of life. If there is no possibility of staying in the UK in the future, the couple is considering moving to Canada, as in addition to the easier procedure for obtaining permanent residence as well as the large Ukrainian diaspora, they also consider this country to have a mentality closer to Ukraine.

### Iryna, 20+ years old

Worked as a project manager in IT in Ukraine

Evacuated from Kyiv in April 2022

Currently lives in London, UK

In UK experienced to work as an IT project administrator in the media sector



Iryna moved to the UK on her own under the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship program, since then she has been living in sponsor homes and had already changed 4 sponsors. First of all, she has chosen this country to have the opportunity to improve her English language skills, instead of having to learn a new language from the beginning. Moreover, the high living standards and welfare package also influenced the girl's choice.

## Work experience and difficulties in getting a job

In Ukraine, Iryna used to work as a project manager in the IT sector, and after coming to the UK, she began looking for a similar position here. Thanks to the visa status granted to Ukrainians who came to the UK after 24 February 2022, evacuees have the same rights as citizens and are therefore also eligible

for free educational courses.

Having taken part in one of the IT-related courses, the girl was able to get a job as an IT project administrator in the media sector, which is slightly different from her specialization. However, due to shifting market influences and intense competition, Iryna was only able to work for this company just for 7 months, and after that she was unable to find a job.

Besides these possible reasons for the termination of her contract, Iryna also noticed a tendency that the IT industry in the UK has a narrow focus on each of the sectors separately (such as healthcare, grocery, etc.), while in Ukraine they are all combined. Having a little experience in all areas, employers also referred to Iryna's lack of knowledge in a particular area, which was also a reason for refusing to hire her.

## Challenges facing during the living in the UK

Employment is currently the issue that worries Iryna the most, as she is very concerned about the possibility of extending the visa, assuming that applications will be considered on an individual basis, considering various factors. Having to visit the Job Centre every two weeks to receive unemployment support, Iryna was able to learn about possible training courses and vacancies.

Qualified jobs require a high level of language skills, but she found that the existing language courses were designed for a basic level, which made it impossible for Iryna to take part in them. Moreover, the selection of available jobs is very limited, as they offer physically demanding jobs with low salaries, but even in such positions is difficult to find full-time employment and subsequently obtain visa support. That is why Iryna considered working remotely in Ukraine in the IT sector, but due to the gap in wages and the need to pay double taxes in both countries, she found it financially more beneficial to remain on the UK welfare system while it was still possible.

## Plans for the future

Iryna plans to continue to look for work and take courses in a professional field, while improving her English language skills. She believes that even if she returns to Ukraine after the conflict ends, the experience she gained while living in the UK will certainly be useful to her in the future.

### **Nadiia Maibohina, 40+ years old**

**PhD in Economics, teacher of Economics and Business.**

**Came from Kyiv in May 2022.**

**Currently lives in Poole, England**

**Work experience in England: military interpreter, in an IT consulting company, teacher of economics at school**



Nadiia came to the UK under the Homes for Ukraine program with her husband, two children and relatives. The British who hosted them were able to provide the family with separate accommodation and all the necessary living conditions. However, to avoid inconvenience to the people who provided them with housing, Nadiia and her family decided to rent separate accommodation and moved out immediately after six months of living in the hosts' home, although the period of residence could be extended by mutual agreement. The sponsor helped the family with the rental by becoming their guarantor in the

contract. Nadiia considers themselves very lucky, as for many Ukrainians the issue of renting is a real challenge and is one of the main reasons for staying in the hosts' home for a long time.

## Difficulties in living and working in the UK

Most of the difficulties, such as the language issue, the difference in education and healthcare systems, etc., Nadiia experienced mainly at the beginning of living in the UK. Having arrived here, the most worrying issue for her was employment, as she wanted to continue working in her professional field.

Since living in this country, Nadiia has had experience in three positions. The first of them was a temporary job as an interpreter at a military base in the UK, and the next one was for an Indian IT consulting company. But because of the difference in cultures and mentality, as well as the lack of projects that would be a match for Nadiia, this job expired at the end of the contract. After that, unable to find a job right away, she decides to apply to volunteer as a teaching assistant in a school, as she already had experience as a schoolteacher and enjoyed it. However, the school administration immediately invited Nadiia to work as a finance teacher in a high school, and she continues to work there. But to advance in her career and increase salary, she needs to go through the procedure of obtaining a teacher status.

## Possibilities for confirmation of diplomas and requirements for obtaining teacher status

To obtain teacher status in the UK, there are three types of documents to be prepared, the first of which is a confirmation of a diploma in pedagogical education. Nadiia had no problem with this issue, because due to the status of Ukrainians in the UK, there is a quite simple procedure for recognizing diplomas without additional training or retraining, so Nadiia managed to confirm not only the diplomas but also her PhD in Economics. Other requirements include a document proving at least two years of school experience and a local exam on language in the specialist area. Just only specialized exam separating Nadiia from obtaining teacher status, so she is actively studying for the exam to be able to build a career in the UK in her desired field.

## Children's education

Through her children's experiences, Nadiia has noticed how challenging it is for Ukrainian children to attend local schools. Besides the fact that it is a requirement for children to attend British schools, the education systems are very different, and this is often confusing for parents of Ukrainian children. Because of this reason, Nadiia conducts comparative studies of the education systems in the UK and Ukraine and organizes special seminars for parents to explain these differences and how to help their children with education. The woman noticed the children are experience constant stress from the fact that they must work harder every time they go to school to at least be on a par with British children.

## Impressions of support in the UK and plans for the future

Nadiia is very impressed with the support for Ukrainians in the UK and the overall system of assistance to people who need it. In case of inability to cover own expenses for living, rent, education, etc., it is possible to apply for support. Although the medical system is still not entirely convenient for Nadiia, she appreciates the opportunity to receive most of her treatment for free. However, despite the existing advantages and the comfort of living in this country, Nadiia and her family are still not ready to decide on whether they will stay in the UK.

## Olena Popova, 60+ years old

Used to work as an English teacher at a university  
Came from Mariupol, Donetsk region in June 2022.  
Currently live in Winchester, England.



Working as an English teacher at Mariupol State University, Olena has also been actively involved in social activities and taught an English course. There she met a British citizen who, after the outbreak of the full-scale conflict in Ukraine, offered her to come to the UK and found a sponsor for her under the Homes for Ukraine program.

### Experience of living and working in the UK

Having reached retirement age, Olena is entitled to receive UK pension benefits and cover a major part of her rent, which is calculated depending on income. Although she is not required to seek work due to her retirement age, Olena has little experience of working in England. Being an English teacher in Ukraine, Olena found it very difficult to obtain even temporary part-time employment in a field close to her profession. But after completing a local course in teaching English as a foreign language, she managed to work as a teaching assistant at a college on teaching courses for Ukrainians during 3 months for a few hours a week. Short-term contracts are very common in the UK, creating precarious conditions for many workers, and in Olena's case, because of classroom restructuring and funding changes during this time, her contract was not extended. Besides this work experience, Olena also had two other part-time jobs in England, one of which was short-termed and the other did not meet expectations to realistic requirements.

### Support from the British and Olena's social engagement

Since coming to the UK, Olena has been continuously involved in social activities and promoting Ukrainian culture in the United Kingdom, as well as drawing more attention to the situation in Ukraine. On this basis, together with an initiative group of Ukrainians, Olena managed to establish the Winchester Ukrainian Cultural Association and make a great contribution to the cultural development of the city.

All initiatives in Winchester have always been supported by churches, providing space and opportunities for events, integration meetings and language courses. A large number of British volunteers are always involved in organizing this, as well as in supporting Ukrainians in general, because charity and volunteering is an integral part of the British culture and mentality, which is very impressive and inspiring to Olena.



### Cultural differences and thoughts for the future

While living in the UK, Olena feels the cultural differences quite strongly. They manifest themselves in the

way of thinking, deeply rooted politeness and the general attitude of the British towards each other. Quite often, due to respect and concern for the other people's feelings, the British do not express themselves in a direct way, which is unusual for Olena. Because of this, she cannot understand their real thoughts and it makes her feel uncomfortable and rude compared to the British.

Having a long experience of teaching English, Olena faced some difficulties with understanding the language in the UK due to the accent and colloquial expressions, therefore she continues to self-educate. However, she finds it difficult to talk about her plans, primarily because of the uncertainty and unknown future situation. Unable to return to her hometown Mariupol, she is worried about what the future holds for her, because short-term extensions to her residence in the UK do not guarantee the possibility of staying permanently in this country.



### **Inna, 40+ years old**

**From the city of Kyiv, Kyiv region**

**Came to the USA on the U4U support program in August 2023**

**Currently live in Colorado, Enver**

**Employed at a clothing store**



After the outbreak of the full-scale conflict in Ukraine, Inna, together with her husband and two sons fled to Japan, but after living here for a bit over a year and experiencing language as well as cultural challenges, the family decided to move to the USA through the U4U program.

### **Specifics of the evacuation to Japan compared to USA**

Evaluating from personal experience the peculiarities of support for evacuated Ukrainians under the government program in Japan and the U4U program in the United States, Inna sees the assistance in Japan as comprehensive and thoughtful to the smallest detail, which in her opinion is the best available. Compared to the United States, where upon arrival everything has to be taken care of on your own, which is very difficult to do without someone's help, in Japan, all of this is taken care of by specially hired staff and there is no need to worry about it. However, despite the huge support in Japan, the family felt the language difficulties and the difference in mentality very strongly, as well as the fact that most systems are complicated for foreigners, which is very different from the United States. Because of the large number of migrants in the USA, various systems (such as renting, getting a bank card, etc.) are more adapted for foreigners on the Inna's, and she with her family feel more comfortable living in this country, as it is easier for them to integrate into the local society without feeling like foreigners. However, the main reason for the relocation was the issue of educational opportunities and the future for the children, as they need a proficient level of Japanese to enter higher education institutions, while in USA they can only gradually improve their English skills to achieve self-realization.

### **Residence and employment in the United States**

Having arrived in the United States under the U4U, Inna's family managed to get into an additional

support program that covers the cost of renting a house and provides living expenses for up to 3 months until financial independence, but in the case of her family, due to difficulties with work permits, this assistance was extended to 8 months. The opportunity to benefit from this program was temporary and a very limited number of people were able to receive such assistance. In addition, they are also provided with support with language learning, health insurance and food coupons, which is also a significant help for the family.

Thanks to the help of friends in the beginning of their life in the United States, Inna's family did not face almost any difficulties, but without support this support, Inna assumes that it might be very difficult. In addition to the fact that in the USA one needs to deal with all the paperwork, finding housing and work, etc. on one's own, this process also takes a long time, and without the financial savings and a supportive person, it is extremely difficult to survive this period.

## Adaptation and thoughts about the future

Gradually, Inna and her family managed to settle in the United States and find a job. Working in a clothing store, she plans to improve her language skills to have more opportunities and a higher salary. Similarly, not only husband, but also children have found part-time jobs, and combining them with schooling, which they are happy with and making great progress with language learning.

Having entered the United States with a special one-time evacuation password, Inna and her family have already been able to extend their stay for two more years. However, before this time is up, they hope to find a way to gain a foothold in the country so that they can continue to reside here and be able to travel abroad and return.

### **Mariana (nickname), 40+ years old**

**From Kyiv, Kyiv region**

**Came to the USA with her husband and son on a U4U support program in May 2024, Currently live in Colorado, USA**

**Worked as a research chemist at an institute, currently works as a chef in a restaurant in the USA**



After the outbreak of the full-scale conflict in Ukraine, Mariana and her husband, with the support of the hockey association where their child was involved, evacuated to the Czech Republic, where they lived for over two years. However, due to the difficulties of living and integrating in that country, they decided to move to the United States with the support of the U4U program.

## Evacuation to the Czech Republic and the decision to move to the United States

After moving to the Czech Republic, Mariana and her family lived in a dormitory, which was free for Ukrainians for more than a year, while working at a factory. Once the free period of living in the dormitory was over, most Ukrainians continued to live there, because even though the price of renting a separate apartment was almost the same as dormitory costs, many Ukrainians could not afford to rent a house on their own due to the large deposit required. However, Mariana and her husband managed to cope with

this, and to cover their basic expenses without knowing the language, they had to work physically demanding in the low-paid position with overtime hours to be able to cover provide themselves.

Moreover, the fact that they had to deal with negative and disrespectful attitudes both at work and in everyday life was a major reason for their decision to move. Mariana assumes that such incidents could be due to the large number of Ukrainians in the country and the different experiences of Ukrainians with the local population, which made some Czech residents tired of this situation. When considering different options for relocation, the family wanted to move as far away as possible to feel safer. They chose the United States because they had friends who had already lived there and could help them with their move.

## **Features of support and challenges of living in the USA**

After arriving in the United States, Mariana and her family almost did not have to face any difficulties with paperwork, finding housing and jobs, because they were helped by their friends at the beginning. Mariana and her family were unable to get into a program that provides support with housing because it was temporarily suspended when they entered the United States, and when it started again, they were not eligible for it because they had been here for more than three months. The situation with applying for assistance under another program was also not entirely convenient, as they had to wait about three months for it. After that, the family had some support for food and other needs, and most importantly, health insurance.

When Mariana first arrived in the United States, she was shocked by the gap in living standards and housing prices, but as she gradually started working, the worries about providing for themselves in this country disappeared. Having more or less settled down, she and her family are now facing the issue of further residence in the United States, as they currently have a legal stay permit for only two years.

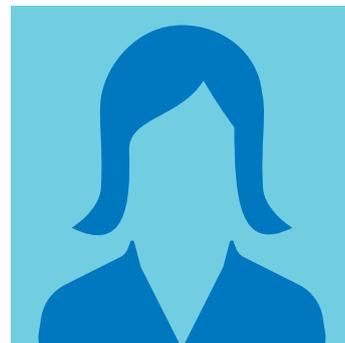
## **Comfort of living and thoughts about the future**

While living in the United States, Mariana and her husband are trying to learn the language at school to have more opportunities in this country, and in the meantime, their son helps them a lot with everyday issues. Thanks to the climate, the favorable attitude of the people, etc., the family feels comfortable here and plans to stay in the United States. However, in addition to finding a way to extend their residence permit, they are also concerned about financial stability and full-time employment, as Mariana has only managed to find part-time job as a chef in a restaurant, and her husband has to combine several part-time jobs, as many types of employment require a license.

Considering their previous experience of living in the Czech Republic, they could hardly see and perceive the positive aspects of life in this country because of forced migration. Therefore, after arriving in the United States, Mariana and her family try to look for more advantages for living here, because they understand that in any country, they will not be able to fully feel like at home.

## Yaroslava Pogorelova, 20 years old

From the city of Kupiansk, Kharkiv region,  
came to the United States in 2022  
Currently living in San Francisco, California  
Student at an American university



Since the outbreak of the full-scale conflict in Ukraine, Yaroslava decided to move to the United States, but without using the U4U program, she applied for a student visa to study at a university.

### Living experience and changing values

Before arriving in the United States in 2022, Yaroslava already had experience of living here during high school as a participant in the FLEX exchange program, which is why she did not experience any language difficulties. In general, she found it quite easy to get used to life here, and having made many acquaintances as well as getting to know the systems and how everything works here, Yaroslava feels very comfortable. However, at the same time, while living in the USA, she is concerned about the high crime rate in the city where she lives, which causes her some anxiety.

Currently residing in the United States, Yaroslava tries to support Ukraine in all possible ways, sharing as much as possible about what is happening in her home country and even supporting it financially. The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has changed her values and goals in life a lot, as she now tries to appreciate what she has much more and ignore the small difficulties that she used to worry about and now ignores.

# Conclusions

Through surveys and interviews with displaced to G7 countries Ukrainians, we found that the challenges they face while living in these states have changed over time and are quite similar in many aspects, However, at the same time there are some specifics depending on the living conditions, as well as the support and opportunities available.

## In Canada and USA

In Canada, Ukrainians have some support at the beginning of their settlement, but there are also various types of social assistance and language learning opportunities available to anyone who needs them. However, having a regular visa status, which does not provide for special opportunities and conditions for extending or obtaining a permanent residence, the issue regarding the possibility of further residence in this country is currently a great concern for forcibly displaced Ukrainians. A similar problem exists for Ukrainians in the United States, where, having only a humanitarian passport to enter the country, most Ukrainians have to take care of their own self-sufficiency and find opportunities for further residence after the passport expires.

## In EU countries

The situation is somewhat different among EU countries, where Ukrainians have temporary protection. In France, Ukrainians are very concerned about the huge challenges of renewing this status every six months in order not to lose benefits and the opportunity to work, as well as the difficulties of finding and obtaining social housing, etc. In Italy, there are also similar challenges, as well as the issue of long-term residence in centers for forced migrants and difficulties in renting housing. In Germany, the support system is quite different, and the requirements to attend integration courses and pass exams, as well as the need for regular reporting on job searches, cause some concern among Ukrainians.

## In Great Britain and Japan

In the UK, the issue of Ukrainians staying in host homes for longer periods of time is very acute, due to the difficulties in finding and renting accommodation, which can be partially resolved with the support of local residents. In Japan, with the gradual termination of support with living expenses and housing, many Ukrainians are concerned about the ability to cover the own costs and the process of finding and renting accommodation, considering it could be an additional challenge in their situation.

## The most common and critical difficulties. Options for improving the situation

Differences in cultures, mindsets and systems (such as healthcare, education, etc.) are also common challenges, but the most significant and most critical issue for all forcibly displaced Ukrainians in the G7 is the difficulty of finding employment to enable self-sufficiency and self-realization. As the conflict in Ukraine continues, and it is likely that the longer time passes, more and more Ukrainians make the decision to stay in the country of shelter, that is why very crucial to find ways to improve the situation with integration and financial independence of Ukrainians, which is mutually beneficial. To achieve this, measures can be implemented such as:

In terms of employment, creating effective programs to enable the mastery of new professional skills with the prospect of further employment, simplifying re-qualification and obtaining licenses system,

motivating and encouraging private enterprises to employ displaced persons.

In terms of renting housing, orientation programs and simplification of the system of rental accommodation for displaced migrants, and if necessary, guaranteeing their ability to pay by the state or other institutions or organizations.

In addition, mentoring support is very important not only for employment, but also for various domestic issues, including the process of renting housing, etc. General orientation, cultural awareness and just communication will improve language skills and facilitate better integration as well as help forcibly displaced persons to become financially independent members of society and contribute positively to the economic situation of their host countries.

## About the Author of this Report

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Anna holds a Bachelor's degree in History from the Mariupol State University and an Master's degree in Secondary Education, History and Journalism from the same university.

She has also taught history at the Mariupolis Secondary School and developed curriculum for English language and developmental education for toddlers and writing articles as a journalist for the Mariupolis News website.

On May 28, 2022, she evacuated from Mariupol, Ukraine to Japan. She joined Plan in December of the same year. Currently, she is a member of the Advocacy conducting research and giving lectures on Ukrainian refugees, and organizing workshops based on her career as a teacher in Ukraine.

Read the author's blog at: <https://www.plan-international.jp/author/anna/>

Read the author's report at: [https://www.plan-international.jp/about/libraries/data/region\\_ukraine.html](https://www.plan-international.jp/about/libraries/data/region_ukraine.html)

## About Plan International

Plan International is an independent development and humanitarian organisation/charity/non-profit [select as appropriate] that advances children's rights and equality for girls. We believe in the power and potential of every child but know this is often suppressed by poverty, violence, exclusion and discrimination. And it is girls who are most affected.

Working together with children, young people, supporters and partners, we strive for a just world, tackling the root causes of the challenges girls and vulnerable children face. We support children's rights from birth until they reach adulthood and we enable children to prepare for and respond to crises and adversity. We drive changes in practice and policy at local, national and global levels using our reach, experience and knowledge.

For over 85 years, we have rallied other determined optimists to transform the lives of all children in more than 80 countries.

We won't stop until we are all equal.



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