

**Andrei ZAVIALOV**  
Андрій ЗАВ'ЯЛОВ

**RECENT UKRAINIAN NEWCOMERS TO THE GREATER TORONTO AREA:  
STAY OR LEAVE?  
A Sociological Report**

**НОВОПРИБУЛІ З УКРАЇНИ В АГЛОМЕРАЦІЇ ВЕЛИКОГО ТОРОНТО:  
ЗАЛИШИТИСЯ ЧИ ПОЇХАТИ?  
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## ➤ **List of abbreviations**

CUAET	– Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel
CAEL	– Canadian Academic English Language
CELP	– Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program
CLIC	– Cours de langue pour immigrants au Canada
EU	– European Union
Fig.	– figure
GTA	– Greater Toronto Area
IELTS	– International English Language Testing System
IRCC	– Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
LINC	– Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada
N	– number of persons
OHIP	– Ontario Health Insurance Plan
PR	– Permanent Residence
PTE	– Pearson Test of English
SIN	– Social Insurance Number
TCF	– Test de connaissance du français
TEF	– Test d'évaluation de français
TOEFL	– Test of English as a Foreign Language
TOT	– Temporarily occupied territory
TTC	– Toronto Transit Commission
USA	– United States of America

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## INTRODUCTION

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In light of the unprovoked Russian aggression against Ukraine and the ensuing hostilities, Canada and several European countries are witnessing a significant influx of forced emigration from Ukraine. Due to the strategic initiatives implemented by Canada, particularly through the CUAET program, including the issuance of three-year work/study permits, federal financial assistance amounting to \$3,000, and temporary accommodation services in government-financed hotels for a duration of up to two weeks (was available until March 31, 2024), along with ongoing support from settlement agencies (until March 31, 2025), citizens of Ukraine and their accompanying family members got the chance to explore employment, education, and permanent residency options in Canada. Immigrating to Canada has historically been a challenging process, and the recent opportunity provided to Ukrainians as a safety measure paves the way for potential permanent immigration. Ukrainians are the first nation to receive assistance of such magnitude from Canada. While labeled as temporary, these measures have created numerous legal avenues for Ukrainians to prolong their stay in the country and potentially transition to permanent residency in the future.

Since the beginning of the war, around 300,000 Ukrainians and their family members have entered Canada under the CUAET program (as of June 2024). IRCC processed nearly 1.2 million CUAET applications, approving 963,000 of them.<sup>1</sup>

As of April 2024,<sup>2</sup> 90,000 CUAET program participants have reached Ontario, with the majority choosing to settle in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)<sup>3</sup>, a well-known destination for many immigrants. As a powerhouse of the Canadian economy, the Greater Toronto Area offers vast opportunities for employment and personal growth. Living in the GTA comes with distinct challenges, setting it apart from other regions in Ontario and Canada. For instance, there are notable issues such as housing shortages and a particularly acute scarcity of medical staff.

It is important to highlight that newcomers from Ukraine under the CUAET program are frequently referred to as refugees, and many of them may perceive themselves as such, even though, legally speaking, this is not the case. There are specific refugee programs in Canada, and Ukrainians arriving under CUAET are not eligible for any of them. These newcomers gain the right to work and study, categorizing them as Temporary Foreign Workers with a work permit, Foreign Students with a study permit, or Temporary Visitor Permit Holders with a visitor record.

The beginning of the large-scale invasion and the ensuing emigration from Ukraine has brought attention to the exploration of the social adaptation of Ukrainians in the host countries. Researchers and public advocates are actively investigating these matters. For instance, in

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<sup>1</sup> [Canada-Ukraine authorization for emergency travel: Key figures](#) / Government of Canada – Gouvernement du Canada (2024).

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Ukrainian Action Table Record of Discussion (2024, May 1<sup>st</sup>) / OCASI – Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants.

<sup>3</sup> The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) includes Toronto, Mississauga, Brampton, Oakville, Milton, Burlington, Vaughan, Markham, Richmond Hill, Aurora, Newmarket, Pickering, Ajax, Whitby, Oshawa, and other municipalities. The overall population of the agglomeration is approximately 7 million people. See the map on p. 24 for details.

October 2023, *Operation Ukrainian Safe Haven* collaborated with *Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada* and *Ukrainian Canadian Congress* to survey 500,000 CUAET visa holders. This survey, conducted irrespective of their arrival status in Canada, aimed to gather insights into challenges, expectations, and aspirations of CUAET participants<sup>4</sup>; in August 2023, *Centre for Economic Strategy* in Ukraine conducted a study and released a report titled “Refugees from Ukraine: how many are there, their intentions & return prospects”<sup>5</sup>; in December 2023, the conference titled “Integration, Affirmation, Disinformation, Assimilation?” took place in Novi Sad, Serbia, as part of the virtual *European Forum of the Ukrainian Diaspora*<sup>6</sup>. Local journalists and activists release materials about life and immigration attitudes of Ukrainian newcomers in the GTA<sup>7</sup>.

**Methodology.** The current research relies on both quantitative and qualitative methods for collecting and analyzing information obtained at the field study.

1. The principal survey<sup>8</sup> utilized a Google Form questionnaire comprising 68 questions (43 closed-ended, 21 allowing for participant input, and 4 open-ended). These questions were organized into 14 blocks, a deliberate structuring to prevent the questionnaire from appearing overly lengthy. 1,011 participants from the Greater Toronto Area under the CUAET were surveyed, surpassing the initially intended 1,000, from July 4 to October 23, 2023. A total of 1,081 individuals participated in the survey; however, 70 of them did not meet the established criteria—either residing outside the Greater Toronto Area or entering outside the CUAET program.

The survey questionnaire was shared through various channels, including:

- social networks such as Facebook and Telegram, with announcements about the survey periodically posted in various Ukrainian community groups within the Greater Toronto Area,
- the “snowball” method, wherein research participants were encouraged to share the questionnaire with their acquaintances,
- distribution of printed QR codes at prominent Ukrainian events, accompanied by an invitation to participate in the survey (e.g., during the celebration of Ukraine’s Independence Day in Centennial Park in Toronto, or at the Bloor West Village Toronto Ukrainian Festival),
- collaboration with colleagues from different settlement agencies (listed in the list of acknowledgments on p. 93).

2. Two focus group sessions were conducted, each consisting of 8 participants (16 in total): one group comprised individuals intending to remain in Canada permanently, while the other

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<sup>4</sup> Operation Ukrainian Safe Haven – Opération havre de paix pour les Ukrainiens (OUSH-OHPU), ["Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel \(CUAET\) Survey"](#) (November 2023).

<sup>5</sup> [Refugees from Ukraine: how many are there, their intentions & return prospects](#) / Centre for Economic Strategy (2023).

<sup>6</sup> Конференція «Інтеграція, афірмація, дезінформація, асиміляція?» ([video](#), [program](#)) / YouTube, YUkrainians Media; Укрінформ (2023).

<sup>7</sup> See: [Returning home amid the war: Why some Ukrainians are choosing to leave Toronto](#) / CBC News (24/08/2023); [More Ukrainians ditching Canada due to high cost of living](#) / True North (24/08/2023); [Canada Is So Expensive That Some Ukrainian Immigrants Are Leaving](#) / BNN Bloomberg (16/11/2023); ['Life is hard': Why Ukrainian refugees leave Canada](#) / RBC-Ukraine (17/11/23); [Up to 90,000 Ukrainian refugees are expected in Canada over the next couple months](#) / RebelNews (22/01/24).

<sup>8</sup> Зав’ялов, А. [Опитування «Новоприбулі з України в GTA: залишитись у Канаді чи повернутися в Україну?»](#) / Google Forms (2023).

consisted of those planning to leave. These sessions, lasting two hours each, were conducted on August 30 and 31, 2023, at the Ukrainian Canadian Social Services Toronto office. The main survey featured a question regarding participants' willingness to join a focus group. Those expressing interest were then prompted to provide their email addresses for contact. The selection of 16 focus group participants was made from the pool of 272 respondents who shared their email addresses.

3. An extra mini-survey<sup>9</sup> comprising 5 questions was conducted among the respondents who had provided their email addresses, exploring how their immigration perspectives had evolved four months after the main survey. This mini-survey was initiated during the preparation of this sociological report and took place from January 3 to 16, 2024. A total of 168 out of the 272 individuals who had shared their email addresses responded to this mini-survey.

The survey and focus group encouraged participants to voice their opinions and recount their experiences of residing in the GTA. Participants' responses were correlated with their immigration perspectives to discern the influence of various factors or characteristics on their attitudes toward immigration. The queries were divided into two categories:

1. Demographic data, adaptation in the Greater Toronto Area:

- general information: landing date, GTA residence location, gender, age, home language, etc.
- reasons for choosing Canada as a relocation destination,
- previous living conditions in Ukraine (region of residence, exposure to Russian occupation),
- paperwork completion in Canada (challenges), experiences with federal and provincial authorities,
- mental and physical health,
- employment status,
- housing situation,
- sources used to collect information about life in Canada,
- engagement with diverse settlement agencies,
- involvement with Ukrainian diaspora organizations,
- proficiency in official languages and methods for enhancement,
- approaches for establishing the social network.

2. Factors influencing the decision to remain in or depart from Canada:

- reasons motivating respondents to choose permanent residence in Canada or to depart (and the urgency of departure),
- reasons that might compel respondents to leave Canada despite their desire to stay,
- familiarity with Canada's immigration policy and requirements,
- self-assessment of achieving immigration criteria,

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<sup>9</sup> Зав'ялов, А. [Опитування «Follow-up дослідження "Новоприбулі з України в GTA: залишитись у Канаді чи повернутися в Україну?"»](#) / Google Forms (2024).



- identity transformation (feeling more aligned with Ukrainian or Canadian identity, factors influencing this sentiment, the occurrence of identity fluctuation/shift),
- overall impressions of Canada.

The survey findings were examined utilizing the IBM SPSS Statistics 29.0.1.0. software. This statistical report is primarily descriptive.

**The survey is limited to:**

- geographical boundaries of the Greater Toronto Area,
- CUAET program participants who arrived in Canada between February 2022 and August 2023.

Particular queries were instrumental in identifying and excluding 70 respondents who either resided beyond the Greater Toronto Area during the survey or were not part of the CUAET program. The survey involved a total of 1,081 participants, with 1,011 meeting the specified criteria.

**Brief Historical Reference.**<sup>10</sup>

Looking back at history, the evolution of the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada is categorized into four distinct waves.

The first Ukrainians to settle in Canada, Ivan Pylypiv and Vasyl Yelynyak, hailing from Nebyliv village in the today Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast<sup>11</sup>, arrived on September 6, 1891. The catalyst for the significant Ukrainian migration to Canada is attributed to Yosyp Oleskiv, a prominent advocate for emigration from Halychyna and Bukovyna regions in Ukraine. His visit to Canada in 1895, where he recognized the agricultural potential of the country, sparked a surge in emigration. Oleskiv’s public lectures and booklets garnered widespread success in Ukrainian ethnic lands of Austria-Hungary, marking the commencement of mass emigration. The first wave, extending until 1914, witnessed the movement of more than 170,000 people, signifying the establishment of the Ukrainian ethnic community in Canada.

During that period, the Canadian government provided favourable land conditions in the western regions, and Ukrainians established communities in the untapped areas of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. While forming monoethnic settlements, they created a homogeneous and close-knit social environment for moral and material support, fostering mutual assistance. These settlements developed comprehensive infrastructure, including churches, schools, and self-governance, as the initial living conditions for Canadian peasants were challenging in terms of climate, politics, and economics.<sup>12</sup>

Yet, challenges emerged. In 1914, Canada entered into war with Austria-Hungary, and the fervor of World War I reached a point where the Canadian government labeled Ukrainians

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<sup>10</sup> Зав’ялов, А. В. (2020). [Соціальна адаптація українських іммігрантів : монографія](#). Київ: Саміт-книга. С. 24–43.

<sup>11</sup> According to the Constitution, Ukraine is a unitary state with 24 oblasts (similar to provinces), 1 autonomous republic – Crimea (similar to a state), 2 cities with special status (Kyiv and Sevastopol).

<sup>12</sup> See: Kukushkin, V. (2007). *From Peasants to Labourers: Ukrainian and Belarusian Immigration from the Russian Empire to Canada*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press. 283 p.; Petryshyn, J., Dzubak, L. (1985). *Peasants in the Promised Land: Canada and the Ukrainians, 1891–1914*. Toronto: Lorimer. 265 p.

holding Austro-Hungarian citizenship as “allies of the enemy”. Consequently, around 5,000 ethnic Ukrainians were interned in special camps and subjected to forced labor for a year. In 2005, Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin acknowledged this internment as “a regrettable chapter in Canadian history”.<sup>13</sup>

The second immigration wave, occurring between 1920 and 1941, comprised approximately 68,000 Ukrainians, predominantly from Halychyna (Galicia) and Volhynia regions. This era is characterized as the “consolidation of the Ukrainian ethnic group” in the history of the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada, marked by the establishment of robust non-profit organizations and worker-peasant movements capable of advocating for their interests in society.

The third immigration wave, spanning from 1945 to the 1980s, predominantly comprised displaced persons. The majority of individuals in this wave migrated immediately after the World War II, seeking refuge from the widespread destruction in Europe. The substantial influx of Ukrainians to Canada prompted Ukrainian organizations to consider joint initiatives for the improvement of the Ukrainian community in Canada. Their objectives included enhancing the diaspora’s prestige and providing assistance to third-wave immigrants. By the mid-1960s, the Ukrainian Canadian Committee successfully united major Ukrainian organizations, initiating productive cultural and political initiatives for the diaspora’s benefit.

In the third wave, a transformative shift occurred in the lives of Ukrainians in Canada. While earlier waves saw Ukrainians primarily settling in rural areas of Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan (first and second waves) and Ontario (third wave), with relatively fewer in major Canadian cities like Toronto and Montreal (third wave), the scenario has now completely reversed. By the late 20th century, Ontario emerged as a primary hub for the Ukrainian population in Canada, with Toronto evolving into a key centre of Ukrainian life in the country.<sup>14</sup>

The onset of the fourth wave of immigration in 1989 coincided with the legal ability to leave the Soviet Union for other countries. This wave of emigrants brought about significant transformations in the Canadian Ukrainian community, altering the very perception of Ukrainian immigration, particularly following Ukraine’s regained independence in 1991.

Presently, the starting point of the fifth wave of Ukrainian immigration is a matter of debate. It remains unclear whether to initiate the countdown from 2014, when Russia initiated its first attack on Ukraine, occupying the Crimean Peninsula and certain areas of the Donetsk

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<sup>13</sup> [Internment of Persons of Ukrainian Origin Recognition Act](#) S.C. 2005, c. 52; [Internment Legacy Fund](#).

<sup>14</sup> See: Czuboka, M. (1983). *Ukrainian Canadian, Eh? The Ukrainians of Canada and Elsewhere as Perceived by Themselves and Others*. Winnipeg: CommuniGraphics Printers Aid Group. 255 p.; Luciuk, L., Kordan, B., Matthews, G. J. (1989). *Creating a Landscape: A Geography of Ukrainians in Canada*. Toronto—Buffalo—London. 26 p.; Rozumnyj, J. (1983). *New Soil – Old Roots: The Ukrainian Experience in Canada*. Winnipeg: Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in Canada by Printing Services of the University of Manitoba. 334 p.; Zyzyk, P., Darcovich, W. (1980). *A Statistical Compendium of the Ukrainians in Canada, 1891–1976*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press. 834 p.; Pawliczko, A. L. (1994). *Ukraine and Ukrainians through the World: A Demographic and Sociological Guide to the Homeland and Its Diaspora*. Toronto—Buffalo—London: Published for the Shevchenko Scientific Society, Inc., by University of Toronto Press. 510 p.; Luciuk, L., Hryniuk, S. (1991). *Canada’s Ukrainians: Negotiating an Identity*. Toronto: Published in association with the Ukrainian Canadian Centennial Committee by University of Toronto Press. 510 p.; Krawchuk, P., Skrypyk, M., Boyd, J. (1996). *Our History: The Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Movement in Canada 1907–1991*. Toronto: Lugus Publications. 487 p.

and Luhansk oblasts, or from 2022 during the full-scale invasion. What is evident is that the fifth wave is underway.

### **Brief Statistical Highlights.**<sup>15</sup>

Based on the 2021 census, Canada’s population was 36,992,000 individuals, with 1,258,000 identifying as Canadians with Ukrainian heritage. This represents 3.4% of the total population, comprising 273,210 who solely indicated Ukrainian origin, and 985,425<sup>16</sup> who listed Ukrainian origin as one of its components. Therefore, in 2021, Canada emerged as the leading country globally in terms of the Ukrainian diaspora’s size (Russia held this position until 2020 and currently ranks third after Canada and the USA<sup>17</sup>).

In 2021, Alberta (with 343,640 Ukrainians, constituting 8.1% of the province’s total population) and Ontario (with 342,260 Ukrainians, making up 2.4%) led in the number of Ukrainians. These two provinces have consistently alternated in holding the top position over time. Following are British Columbia (210,100; 4.2%), Manitoba (165,305; 12.3%), Saskatchewan (138,705; 12.2%), Quebec (38,685; 0.5%), and Nova Scotia (9,630; 1.0%). In the remaining provinces and territories of Canada, the Ukrainian population does not exceed 4,000 individuals.

*Table 0.1. The number and share of Ukrainians in Canada and in Ontario in 1901–2021*

Census year	Number in Canada	Share in Canada, %	Number in Ontario	Share in Ontario, %
1901	5,682	0.11	31	0.001
1911	75,432	1.05	3,078	0.12
1921	106,721	1.21	8,307	0.28
1931	225,113	2.17	24,426	0.71
1941	305,929	2.66	48,158	1.27
1951	395,043	2.82	93,595	2.04
1961	473,337	2.60	127,911	2.05
1971	580,660	2.69	159,880	2.08
1981	529,615	2.20	133,995	1.55
1991	1,054,300	3.77	275,435	2.73
2001	1,071,055	3.61	290,925	2.55
2006	1,209,085	3.88	336,355	2.77
2011	1,251,170	3.54	342,005	2.70
2016	1,359,655	3.95	376,440	2.84
2021	1,258,635	3.40	342,260	2.41

<sup>15</sup> [Census of Population](#) / Government of Canada – Gouvernement du Canada (2023).

<sup>16</sup> In the population census, individuals can report multiple ethnic origins. For instance, if a person’s mother is German and father is Ukrainian, both ethnic origins can be specified.

<sup>17</sup> Zavalov, A. (2024). [Ukrainian Catastrophe: Ukrainians and the Ukrainian Language in Russia in the Mirror of 1989–2021 Russian Censuses](#).

Around 27.2% of Ukrainians in Canada reside in Ontario. According to the 2021 census, the Toronto metropolitan area, covering almost the entire Greater Toronto Area (GTA), is home to 122,925 Ukrainians, constituting 1.98% of the agglomeration's total population and 9.7% of all Ukrainians in Canada.

Regarding the language landscape within the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada, it is noteworthy that, as per the 2021 census, only 131,655 individuals specified Ukrainian as their spoken language. Among them, 84,705 indicated Ukrainian as their mother tongue, and merely 27,825 people reported speaking Ukrainian at home. In Ontario, 58,355 individuals specified Ukrainian as their spoken language. Among them, 36,340 people indicated Ukrainian as their mother tongue, and only 15,235 reported speaking Ukrainian at home. In the Toronto metropolitan area, which broadly encompasses the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), 39,185 individuals noted Ukrainian as their spoken language. Among them, 23,950 people identified Ukrainian as their mother tongue, and only 11,920 reported speaking Ukrainian at home. The use of Ukrainian as a means of communication among Ukrainians in Canada is gradually diminishing. However, the 2026 census might indicate contrasting outcomes, given the substantial influx of newcomers under the CUAET program, as some of them are expected to establish permanent residence in Canada.

## Section I

### ANALYSIS OF IMMIGRATION ATTITUDES – A GENERAL OVERVIEW

The immigration attitudes of Ukrainian newcomers through CUAET in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) have sparked extensive discussions within the Ukrainian diaspora. Some advocate for retaining as many Ukrainians as possible in Canada to contribute to diaspora growth and enhance its reputation. Conversely, others believe that post-war, all Ukrainians under the CUAET program should return to Ukraine, where their assistance and talents are crucial for the nation's development.

Nevertheless, Ukrainians will naturally determine their course of action themselves. Our objective is to explore prevailing sentiments among newcomers: their desire to remain in Canada, their self-assessment of opportunities, and factors that might influence their decision to return.

#### ➤ Intentions for permanent residency in Canada

Fig. I.1 illustrates the intentions of Ukrainians under the CUAET program regarding permanent residence in Canada. The data show that 78.2% of respondents (over three-quarters) express a firm commitment to stay in Canada, with more than a third expressing a strong willingness to take any necessary steps to establish permanent residency.

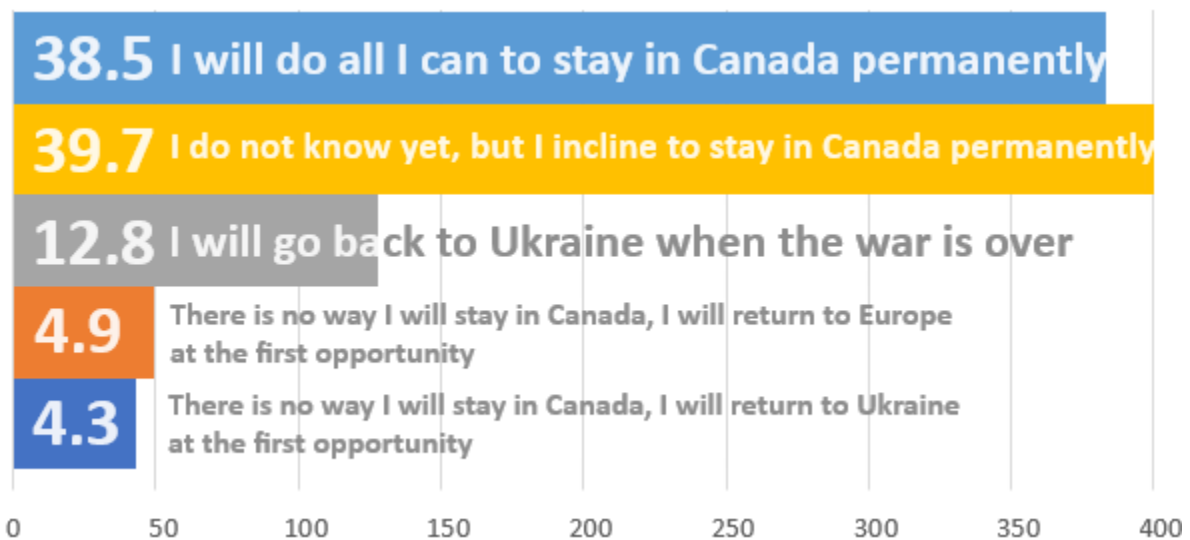


Fig. I.1. Immigration attitudes of Ukrainian newcomers under CUAET (%)

Merely 21.8% (one-fifth) intend to depart from Canada, with nearly 5% opting to return to Europe. If the extreme responses (either doing everything to stay vs. not staying at all) are comprehensible in terms of predicting respondents' future actions, it remains unclear how the nearly 40% who are undecided but lean towards staying in Canada will behave.

Therefore, we observe that 38.5% of respondents are willing to do all they can to stay in Canada permanently, 21.8% intend to return, and 39.7% are undecided but lean towards staying in Canada.

### ➤ Prospects for permanent residency in Canada

Aspiration is one aspect, yet assessing Ukrainians' self-perceived chances of permanent residency in Canada can provide a deeper understanding of the "desire vs. reality" dichotomy.

Respondents were queried with the following: "While desire is one aspect, how would you assess your actual prospects for permanent residency in Canada? Please provide a rating on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 signifies minimal prospects, and 5 denotes exceptional prospects." Those not intending to stay in Canada (21.8% or 221 respondents) omitted this question.

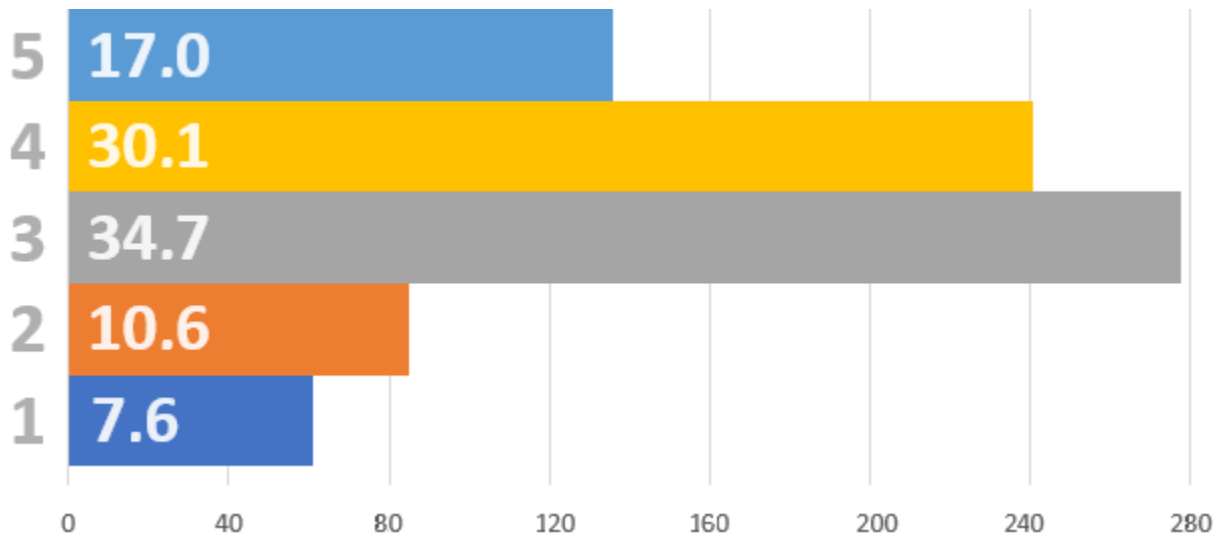


Fig. I.2. Assessment of the actual chances of staying in Canada among those intending to settle permanently (%)

Fig. I.2 shows that nearly half of the respondents (47.1% who rated 5 or 4) assess their prospects optimistically, while slightly over a third (34.7% who rated 3) hold a moderate view. Conversely, almost one-fifth (18.2% who rated 2 or 1) assess their prospects negatively. The assessment of real prospects for staying in Canada can be influential in shaping decisions, particularly for those who are uncertain but inclined to stay permanently.

➤ **Meeting the criteria for Canadian immigration**

Assessing how well one aligns with immigration criteria, taking into account their comprehension of these criteria and Canada’s immigration policy, can provide deeper insights into the dichotomy of “desire vs. reality”.

Information presented in Fig. I.3 on the right indicates respondents’ views on their current compliance with immigration criteria.

68.5% of participants perceive their compliance with Canadian criteria positively, while 31.5% view it negatively. A lack of awareness about immigration criteria does not impede Ukrainian newcomers from evaluating their compliance. Their notions of the criteria, gathered from various sources, enable them to assess their compliance. The prevalence of responses starting with “I don’t know, but I think...” (68,7%) suggests that perceptions and visibility of the criteria may influence the experiences of Ukrainian newcomers in the intricate realm of Canadian immigration where every detail in a document can potentially sway the government’s decision on allowing an immigrant to stay.

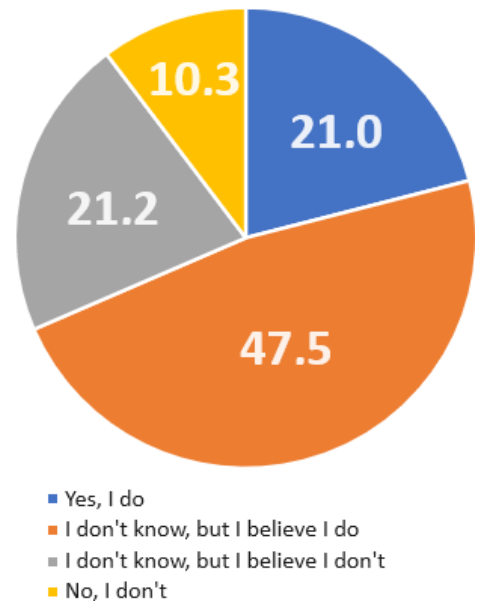


Fig. I.3. Respondents' assessment of their compliance with Canada's immigration criteria (%)

Surprisingly, the evaluation of compliance with Canada’s immigration criteria is largely independent of immigration attitudes. In other words, among those intending to return, a significant number believe they meet Canada’s immigration requirements but consciously choose not to stay (further details on the reasons are provided below). Table I.1. provides the following data.

*Table I.1. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their evaluation of compliance with Canada’s immigration criteria (% per their assessment of compliance with these criteria)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently?	Do you think you meet the immigration criteria of Canada?			
	Yes, I do	I don't know, but I believe I do	I don't know, but I believe I don't	No, I don't
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	47.1	40.0	<b>29.8</b>	<b>31.7</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	28.8	43.3	41.4	41.4
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	11.8	10.2	<b>19.5</b>	<b>12.5</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	7.1	3.3	4.7	7.7
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	5.2	3.2	4.6	6.7

Individuals perceiving non-compliance with Canada’s immigration criteria are less likely to pursue permanent residency. Consequently, a higher proportion within this group is firmly planning to leave Canada, though this difference is not significant. Notably, there is no specific contrast between those resolute about leaving Canada at the earliest, though, believe they fulfill Canada’s immigration criteria, and those who hold the opposite belief.



➤ **Familiarity with Canada’s immigration policy**

A follow-up question related to the previous one was “Evaluate your level of familiarity with Canada’s immigration policy (programs, regulations, required documents, procedures, etc.) on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates no familiarity at all (no knowledge about immigration policy and rules), and 5 indicates a very high level of familiarity”. This question helps gauge the accuracy of respondents’ responses regarding their perception of compliance with immigration criteria.

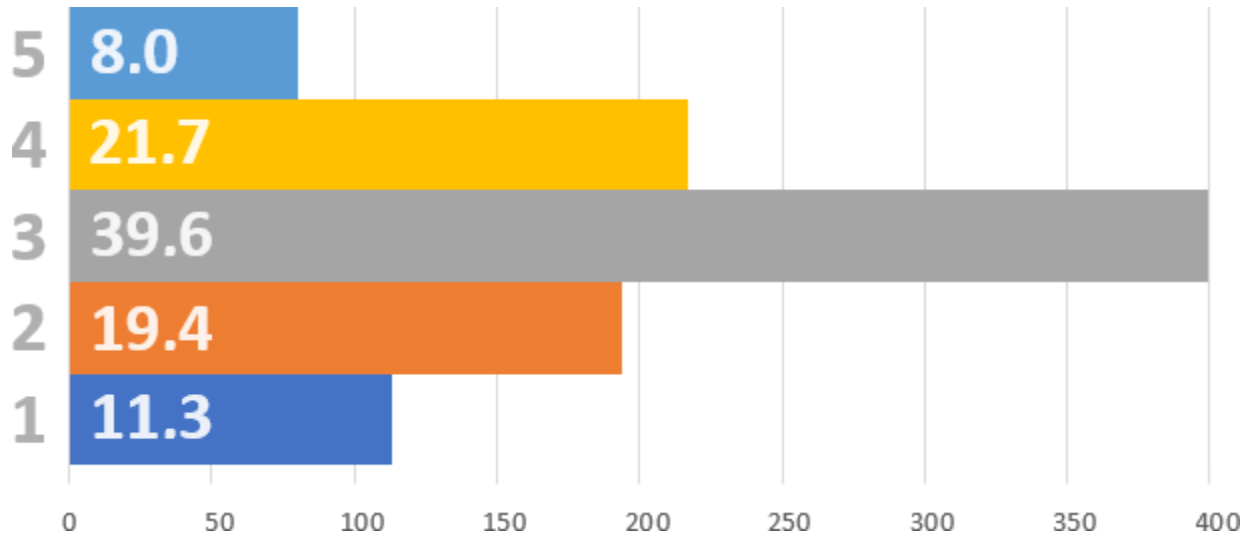


Fig. I.4. Respondents' evaluation of their familiarity with Canada's immigration policy (%)

The information in Fig. I.4 indicates that only 29.7% considered their familiarity with Canada’s immigration policy to be excellent or good (rated 5 or 4). Around 40% rated it as satisfactory (rated 3). Approximately 30.7% rated their knowledge as poor (rated 2 or 1). Overall, fewer than one-third of respondents deemed their understanding of immigration policy to be good. While this assessment is subjective, it reflects how well the respondents have acquainted themselves with the relevant programs, rules, required documents, and procedures.

Table I.2. Distribution of respondents by their assessment of familiarity with Canada’s immigration policy and their evaluation of compliance with immigration criteria (% per the level of familiarity)

Familiarity Evaluation \ Compliance Evaluation	5	4	3	2	1
Yes, I do	<b>45.7</b>	33.3	18.3	<b>9.7</b>	<b>8.7</b>
I don’t know, but I believe I do	32.1	40.6	52.5	53.1	44.4
I don’t know, but I believe I don't	<b>6.2</b>	15.1	20.8	27.0	<b>35.7</b>
No, I don’t	<b>16.0</b>	11.0	8.4	10.2	11.2

An interesting finding reveals that 36.1% of participants, constituting over a third of respondents, perceive their understanding of Canada’s immigration policy as not good (rated 3, 2, 1), while simultaneously believing they meet Canada’s immigration criteria.

The reliability of responses regarding the assessment of compliance with Canada’s immigration criteria is moderate. This is mainly attributed to the dependence on incomplete information and the absence of a systematic approach to comprehension, thereby impacting their familiarity assessment. A higher level of familiarity correlates with a more confident response.



➤ **Sources for acquiring information on Canadian immigration policies and procedures**

Evaluating the sources of information used by respondents is crucial to assess their authority, reliability, and accuracy. Participants could choose multiple options in response to the question “Which sources do you consult for information about Canadian immigration policies and procedures?”.

*Table 1.3. Sources for acquiring information on Canadian immigration policies and procedures (% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
I keep up with the official IRCC website	65.9
I sought advice from a certified immigration consultant to evaluate my prospects for immigration	20.6
I attend seminars organized by immigration consultants	16.4
I follow bloggers on YouTube and other social media platforms	52.9
I review posts on different social media platforms	56.5
I get information from friends/acquaintances	52.1
I do not utilize any sources as I am not interested in this subject	6.8

All information sources can be categorized into two groups: formal (the initial three) and informal (the subsequent three). The official IRCC website stands out as the primary formal government source of information, with nearly two-thirds of respondents utilizing it alongside other sources. However, two other formal information sources—consultations and seminars with immigration consultants—are used by a considerably smaller percentage of respondents. Considering that respondents could select multiple options, it can be observed that only a quarter of them sought assistance from specialists. This can be attributed to both a reluctance to incur immigration consultation expenses and often inconvenient timing of seminars, typically held during working hours.

Nevertheless, over half of the respondents opt for informal information sources. The question of how credible and reliable these sources are remains unanswered and is beyond the scope of our evaluation. However, the significant preference for informal sources over formal ones, especially among those expressing a strong desire to permanently stay in Canada, is both symptomatic and intriguing.

➤ **Reasons for remaining in Canada**

Ukrainians who arrived in Canada under the CUAET program and expressed a desire to remain have specific reasons for their choice. In response to the question “*What are the top three reasons for your desire to stay in Canada permanently?*” the participants provided the following answers (selecting up to three options or adding their own). Respondents not intending to stay in Canada chose the last option. The results are presented in Table I.4 below.

*Table I.4. Reasons influencing the desire of Ukrainian newcomers to stay in Canada permanently (% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
<b>Canada is known for its safety and security</b>	<b>48.9</b>
<b>Canada boasts economic and political stability</b>	<b>47.7</b>
<i>I have family members residing here</i>	8.1
Because English is the language of communication here	27.0
Because French is the language of communication here	0.4
<i>Due to the presence of a substantial Ukrainian diaspora</i>	10.7
<b>In Canada, I have the opportunity to fulfill my potential</b>	<b>28.0</b>
<i>Quality of education</i>	12.5
<b>There is an opportunity to secure employment in a preferred field</b>	<b>12.0</b>
<b>There is an opportunity to earn a substantial income here</b>	<b>23.5</b>
<b>The higher standard of living here allows for more significant purchases</b>	<b>22.9</b>
There is access to insurance-covered healthcare services	17.3
<b>There is greater freedom for personal expression</b>	<b>17.1</b>
I like this place (including its people, culture, and social atmosphere)	32.3
I have always wanted to live here	13.7
I have visited before, and I enjoyed Canada	1.8
<b>I wish for my children to establish themselves better in life</b>	<b>44.7</b>
<i>The immigration process is clear and transparent</i>	9.7
Other	3.6
I do not wish to stay here	21.9

Security, economic and political stability, and the aspiration for a better future for their children stand out as the **primary factors** motivating Ukrainians to pursue permanent residency in Canada. Amidst the challenges of war, individuals seek a peaceful and welcoming environment, and Canada aligns with such aspirations. Motives of self-fulfillment, opportunities for lucrative employment, and an elevated standard of living **rank second**. Nevertheless, the influence of factors such as the presence of relatives, a robust Ukrainian diaspora, a quality education, or a clear and transparent immigration process, which might be expected to significantly impact the desire to stay in Canada, *is not definitive*.

Noteworthy responses from the *Other* category and focus groups include the following.

I want to live where jobs pay well enough to live comfortably. I'm realizing Canada might not be as great, but there are no other options. The USA's immigration is like a lottery, not a process, and I don't like European countries (plus, I don't know their languages, and I don't want to learn them). *M, 18-24*

A Canadian passport opens up a ton of doors. *F, 25-34*

I can marry my girlfriend here, which is awesome. *F, 25-34*

The nature is amazing here, and folks really appreciate it. *F, 35-44*

We've got nowhere else to go, and I genuinely love this country. *F, 35-44*

Just managed to get away from the occupation. No more! *M, 35-44*

I'll never feel safe and sleep peacefully at home after what I went through there. I don't want that kind of future for my kids. Even if the war ends, who can promise it's the last? Who can guarantee it won't happen again in 5 years? *F, 25-34*

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## Section II

# CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS AND THEIR CORRELATION WITH IMMIGRATION ATTITUDES

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### 1. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

#### ➤ Citizenship, sex

1,011 Ukrainian newcomers under the CUAET program took part in the survey, among them:

- 1002 citizens of Ukraine,
- 9 citizens of other countries.

The distribution by sex is as follows:

- 639, or 63,2% women,
- 372, or 36,8% men.

*Table 1.1. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their sex (N, % per sex)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently?	\ Sex	women		men	
		N	%	N	%
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently		228	35.7	161	<b>43.3</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently		260	40.7	141	37.9
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over		96	15.0	33	<b>8.9</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity		24	3.8	25	6.7
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity		31	4.8	12	<b>3.2</b>

The data presented in Table 1.1 indicate a greater willingness of men to do all they can to stay in Canada permanently, with a 7.6% gap from women. Overall, 76.4% of women and 81.2% of men express readiness to stay in Canada permanently, but the difference is slight.

Women are also more inclined leaving Canada in the future – 23.6% (almost a quarter), while among men this figure is 18.8% (not even a fifth).

➤ **Age**

The distribution of research participants by age is presented in Table 1.2 below.

*Table 1.2. Distribution of research participants by age (N, %)*

Age	N	Share, %
under 18	5	0.5
18–24	118	11.7
25–34	365	36.0
35–44	328	32.4
45–54	137	13.6
55–64	48	4.8
65 and over	10	1.0

Young, working-age individuals aged 25 to 44 years (68.4%) were the main research participants. Many respondents arrived with children and older individuals, this is why the figures in this table cannot serve as representative data in terms of showing a true age distribution among Ukrainian newcomers under CUAET. However, the distribution based on immigration attitudes and age presented in Table 1.3 below is representative.

*Table 1.3. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their age (% per age category)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently?	\ Age category				
	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	32.2	<b>40.6</b>	<b>42.1</b>	36.5	22.4
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	<b>42.4</b>	39.7	36.6	40.9	<b>48.2</b>
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	10.2	11.8	12.8	13.9	<b>27.2</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	<b>7.6</b>	<b>6.6</b>	4.0	1.5	0
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	<b>7.6</b>	1.3	4.5	<b>7.2</b>	2.2

Individuals aged 25 to 44 are more inclined to stay in Canada permanently, while those aged 55 and older are less decisive. Overall, among the youth aged 18–24 and those aged 55+, an uncertain desire to stay in Canada prevails – one group yearns for a lived past, while the other struggles to part with childhood and adapt to a new social reality.

The willingness to leave Canada fluctuates around 20% among those aged 25–44, increasing with the older age groups. It is also higher among those under 24 years old.

Such a distribution between age and immigration attitudes is not surprising – working-age young people are much more mobile and ready for change than the elderly and children.

## ➤ Marital status

Marital status is a significant factor in both the social adaptation of immigrants to a new place and their immigration attitudes. The presence of other family members in immigration can either simplify the settlement process (for instance, when all working-age individuals are employed, or when the earnings of one or two family members are sufficient for the entire family, or when family support significantly eases the mental state of all family members) or complicate it (the same, but opposite factors). Similar adaptation mechanisms work for those who immigrate alone, when an immigrant relies solely on oneself which can be both challenging and simpler.

The marital status of research participants is presented in Fig. 1.1 on the right. More than 2/3, specifically 69.5% of respondents, are in some form of relationship, while less than a third are not in a relationship. Table 1.4 shows the correlation between immigration attitudes and the marital status of the participants. Data include same-sex couples.

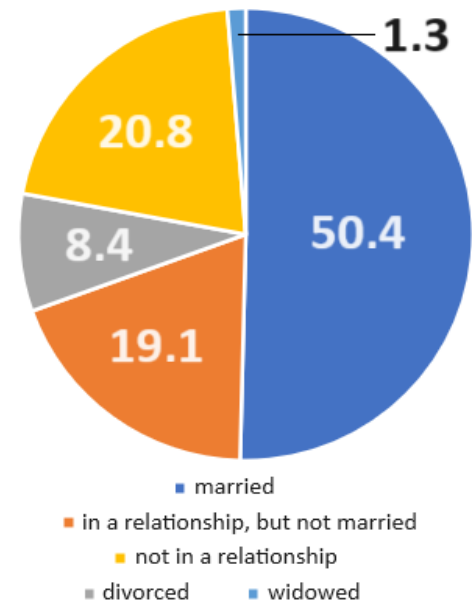


Fig. 1.1. Marital status of research participants (%)

Table 1.4. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their marital status (% per marital status category)

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently?	Marital status	Married	In a relationship, but not married	Divorced	Not in a relationship
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently		40.3	<b>33.3</b>	38.6	38.0
Do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently		38.1	<b>43.8</b>	41.0	38.4
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over		14.2	9.4	14.5	12.5
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity		3.0	6.3	4.8	8.3
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity		4.4	7.2	1.1	2.8

There is no significant difference in immigration attitudes based on marital status. Those who are in relationship but not yet married are slightly less determined to stay in Canada permanently. This may be associated with being in a relationship but without official marriage registration, where partners have not definitively decided where they would like to build their future together. Widowers were intentionally excluded from the table due to their low number, but all widower participants expressed a desire to stay in Canada permanently.

➤ **Language spoken at home**

There is a stereotype that the language spoken at home may influence immigration attitudes meaning that those who communicate at home in the official language of the country they came from are less likely to stay in a new country, while those using a different language are supposedly more inclined to stay in a new country. We examined whether this stereotype is true for Ukrainian newcomers under the CUAET program.

Fig. 1.2 on the right illustrates the distribution of respondents based on their language spoken at home, revealing considerable diversity. About 83.3% use Ukrainian on a daily basis, although more than a third, or 37.8%, also use another language (such as English or Russian). Russian only is preferred by 11.7% of participants, while English only is chosen by 2.4%. The remaining 2.6% use other languages, including Arabic, Italian, Turkish, Farsi, etc.

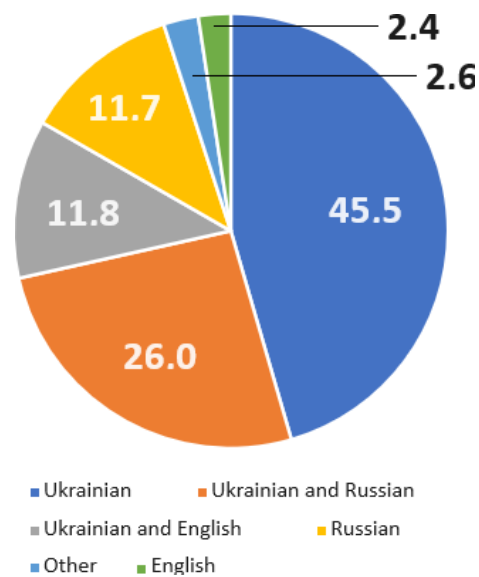


Fig. 1.2. Distribution of research participants by language spoken at home (%)

Table 1.5 presents data on language spoken at home and immigration attitudes.

Table 1.5. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their language spoken at home (% per language spoken at home)

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently?	Language spoken at home	Ukrainian	Ukrainian and Russian	Ukrainian and English	Russian
	I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently		<b>32.0</b>	40.2	42.9
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently		41.1	42.4	36.1	39.8
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over		<b>17.4</b>	8.3	14.3	6.8
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity		3.9	5.3	5.0	5.9
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity		5.7	3.8	<b>1.7</b>	3.4

The stereotype is partially confirmed: those who use two languages or one other than Ukrainian at home are more inclined to stay in Canada permanently (a difference ranging from 7 to 13%). Return intentions among Ukrainian speakers are also higher (up to 14%). While both values do not significantly differ from other groups, as indicated by the above data, the language spoken at home can be a significant factor in determining one’s immigration attitudes. Those who communicate at home in English were not included in the table due to their small number, but they all expressed the highest desire to stay in Canada permanently – up to 80%.

➤ **Place of residence in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)**

Ukrainian newcomers under the CUAET program choose various locations for settlement and further residence within the GTA. The majority prefers Toronto and the surrounding cities. However, there are also those who opt for small towns, townships, and even villages. People are motivated by various factors: some have relatives and friends in the area, others hope to find good employment, and some simply feel comfortable in either a large city or a small village. Fig. 1.3 illustrates the distribution of research participants based on their place of residence within the GTA at the time of the survey.

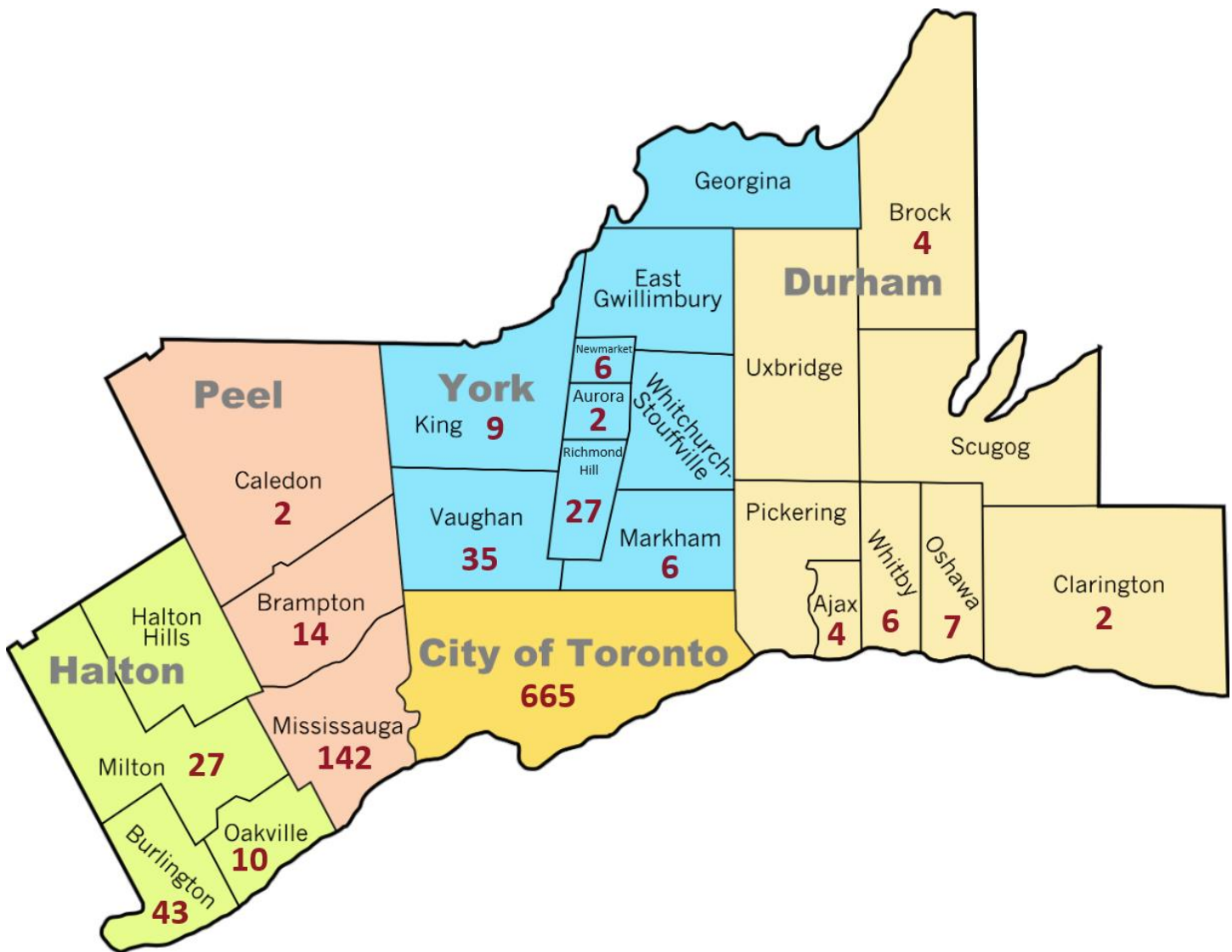


Fig. 1.3. Residence of research participants in the Greater Toronto Area municipalities (N)

The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) is divided into five municipalities: Toronto, Halton, Peel, York, and Durham. While Toronto encompasses the city itself, the other municipalities include several cities, towns, and villages.

Table 1.6 illustrates the distribution of research participants based on their municipality of residence.



*Table 1.6. Distribution of research participants across municipalities of the Greater Toronto Area (N, % of all respondents)*

GTA municipality	N	Share, %
City of Toronto	665	65.8
Halton	80	7.9
Peel	158	15.6
York	85	8.4
Durham	23	2.3

Urban agglomerations serve as primary magnets for newcomers. Toronto and Mississauga, being the largest cities in the GTA, are the main settlement centers for research participants, with 79.8% (or 4 out of 5) choosing to reside there. Additionally, the cities of Vaughan, Richmond Hill, and Burlington prove to be attractive. Sparsely populated municipalities north and east of the city of Toronto are not appealing to Ukrainian newcomers.

Table 1.7 below examines the immigration attitudes of Ukrainian newcomers in the cities where the majority resides: Toronto, Mississauga, Burlington, and Vaughan.

*Table 1.7. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their place of residence within GTA (% per research participants in the city)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently?	\ City of residence	Toronto	Mississauga	Burlington	Vaughan
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently		<b>37.0</b>	38.0	39.5	40.0
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently		<b>38.7</b>	46.5	32.6	51.4
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over		14.3	8.5	18.6	2.3
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity		5.6	3.5	9.3	0
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity		4.5	3.5	0	5.7

There is a noticeable, yet non-critical, difference in responses among the cities of residence. Perhaps in Toronto, the percentage of those inclined to stay in Canada permanently is slightly lower (75.7%, 9% less than in Mississauga and 15% less than in Vaughan), attributed to the dynamics of a large city, job search challenges, high housing costs, and overall cost of living (although the actual difference in the cost of living among all four cities is not significant). However, in Burlington, it is even less at 72.1%. Vaughan stands out significantly, with 91.4% expressing a desire to stay in Canada permanently.

➤ **Prospects of changing residence within Canada**

Those who wish to stay in Canada permanently (790 research participants) were asked about their further living plans within Canada, specifically whether they plan to continue residing in the Greater Toronto Area or consider moving elsewhere.

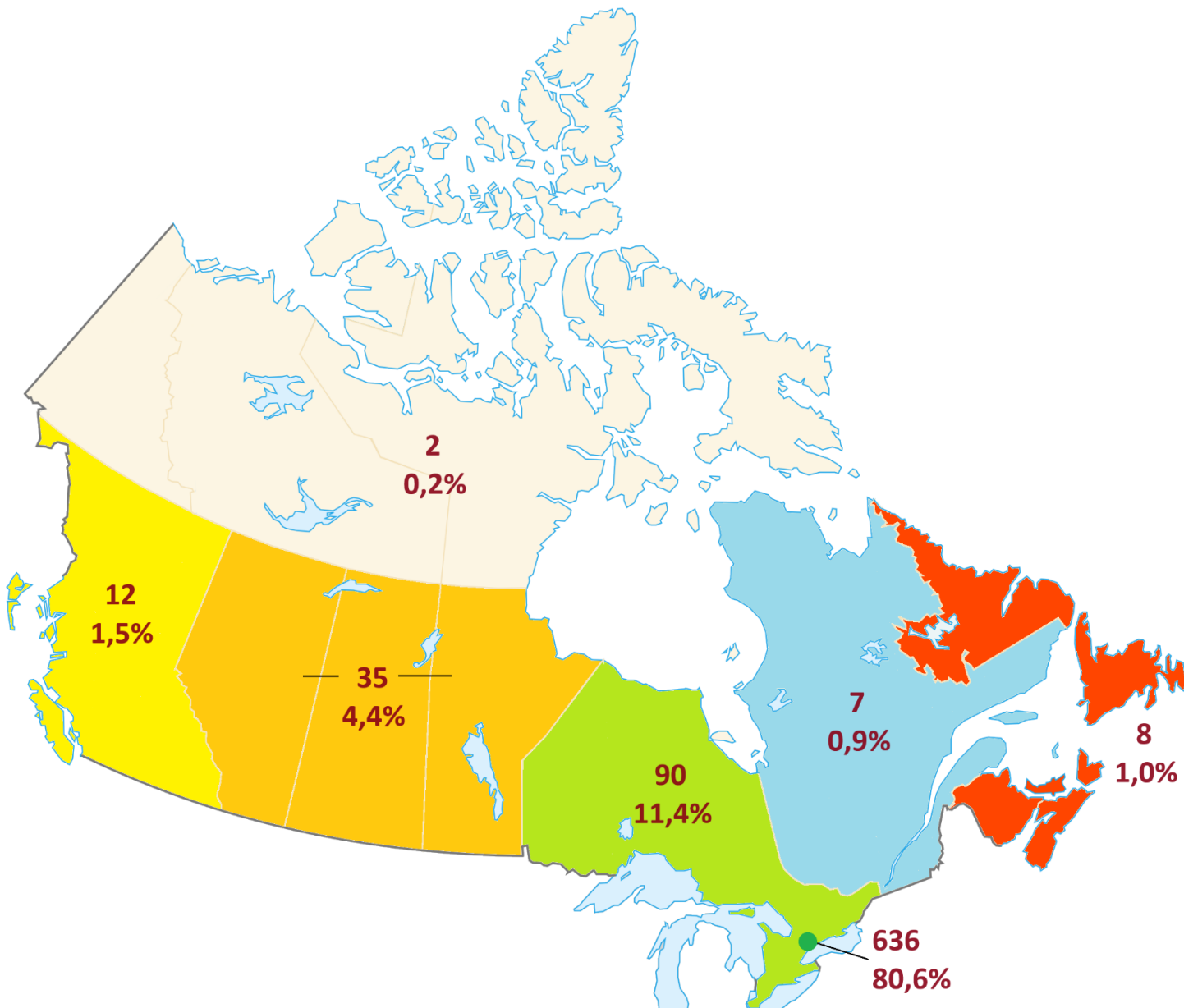


Fig. 1.4. Prospects for a change of the place of residence within Canada among research participants who wish to stay in Canada permanently (N, %)

The data presented in Fig. 1.4 show that 4/5 of the respondents plan to continue residing in the Greater Toronto Area. At the same time, one-tenth plan to leave the GTA but remain in Ontario. Thus, 92% of those surveyed who wish to stay in Canada permanently and were residing in the GTA at the time of the survey, intend to stay in Ontario. Only 5.9% plan to move west, and even fewer, 1.9%, plan to move east. There is almost no inclination to move north.

## 2. LIFE IN UKRAINE

### ➤ Last region of residence in Ukraine

Ukrainian newcomers under CUAET arrived from various regions of Ukraine. Respondents' last region of residence in Ukraine is taken into consideration regardless of whether they came to Canada directly from Ukraine or had lived in another country before arriving in Canada. Fig. 2.1 depicts the number of research participants from different regions of Ukraine.

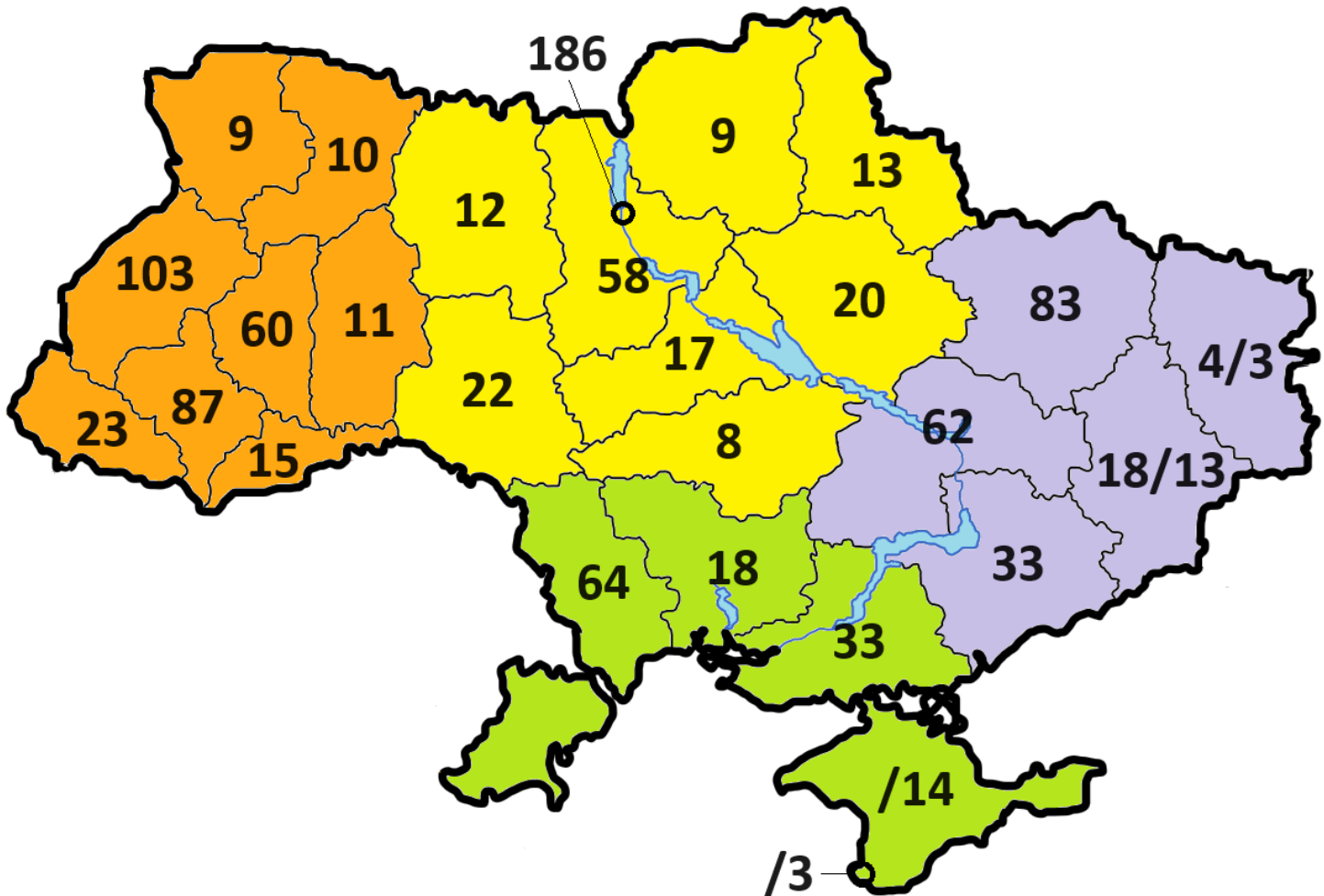


Fig. 2.1. Distribution of respondents by last region of residence in Ukraine (N)  
(number of respondents from temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine as of February 23, 2022, to the right of the slash)

The last region of residence in Ukraine was: **western region** – 318 respondents (31.4%), **central region** – 345 (34.1%), including 186 respondents (18.4%) from Kyiv, **eastern region** – 216 (21.4%), **southern region** – 132 (13.1%). Leading regions were the city of Kyiv and Lviv Oblast; 33 respondents (3.3%) emigrated from the territories of Ukraine temporarily occupied by Russia as of February 23, 2022 – their number is marked on the map with a “/” sign.

Table 2.1 below provides data on immigration attitudes based on the last region of residence in Ukraine.

*Table 2.1. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their last region of residence in Ukraine (% per research participants from a region)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently? \ Region of last residence	West	Centre	Kyiv	South*	East*	TOT**
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	<b>33.3</b>	39.0	35.5	<b>46.2</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>48.5</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	44.3	32.1	41.9	40.9	35.7	39.4
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	<b>15.4</b>	<b>17.0</b>	12.4	<b>6.8</b>	9.7	<b>6.1</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	3.8	6.3	4.8	1.5	7.4	3.0
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	3.2	5.6	5.4	4.6	3.7	3.0

\* including temporarily occupied territories by Russia as per the departure date from Ukraine

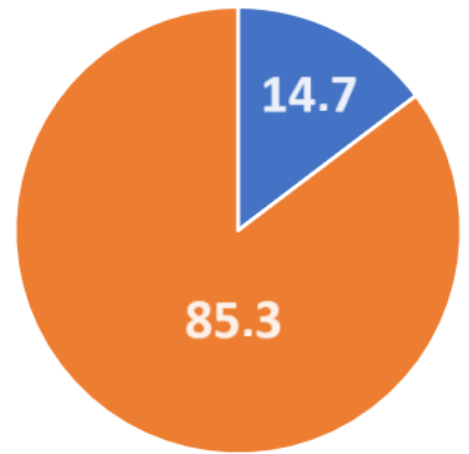
\*\* temporarily occupied territories (TOT) only as per February 23, 2022

The data in Table 2.1 indicates that the closer to the border with Russia the respondent resided, the higher the determination to do all they can to stay in Canada permanently. The willingness to return to Ukraine also partially depends on the proximity to the border with Russia.

➤ **Place of residence under occupation**

Experience of leaving the occupation zone by all possible means and of what people left there (relatives, friends, acquaintances, work, real estate) is very traumatic. While the presence/absence of the first four categories is subjective (who to consider a friend, acquaintance, what it means to have a job, etc.), the question of property is more straightforward and objective because it pertains to ownership. Fig. 2.2 on the right provides data on the presence of property in the occupied territories by Russia and not yet liberated by Ukraine at the time of the respondent’s departure from Ukraine.

As of the survey date, 149 individuals (14.7%) indicated that their property was located in the occupied zone. The data presented in Table 2.2 below illustrates the correlation between immigration attitudes and the property ownership in/outside the occupation zone.



■ Under occupation ■ Not under occupation

Fig. 2.2. Respondent’s property was under occupation or not as per the departure date from Ukraine (%)

*Table 2.2. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and the property ownership in or outside the occupation zone (% per the presence of real estate in a particular zone)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently?	\ Property ownership	Not under occupation	Under occupation
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently		37.6	<b>43.6</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently		39.7	39.6
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over		13.5	8.7
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity		4.9	4.7
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity		4.3	3.4

Those who have property in the occupied zone are slightly more determined to do all they can to stay in Canada permanently – a difference of 6%. They are also less willing to return to Ukraine after the war.

➤ **Damage to property due to hostilities**

Damage to property can also play a role in the respondent’s desire to stay in Canada permanently. There is a stereotype that those who have nowhere to return, who have lost their homes and other property, are more inclined to stay in a new place permanently.

Fig. 2.3 on the right illustrates the distribution of respondents based on the condition of their property due to active combat or shelling without reference to the occupation as of the survey date; 87% of respondents reported that their property was unaffected: 196 respondents had undamaged homes, but the infrastructure of their locality was severely damaged due to active combat or shelling, while 684 respondents had undamaged homes, and the infrastructure of their locality did not suffer significant damage. For 96 respondents, their property was damaged, and 35 respondents essentially lost their homes.

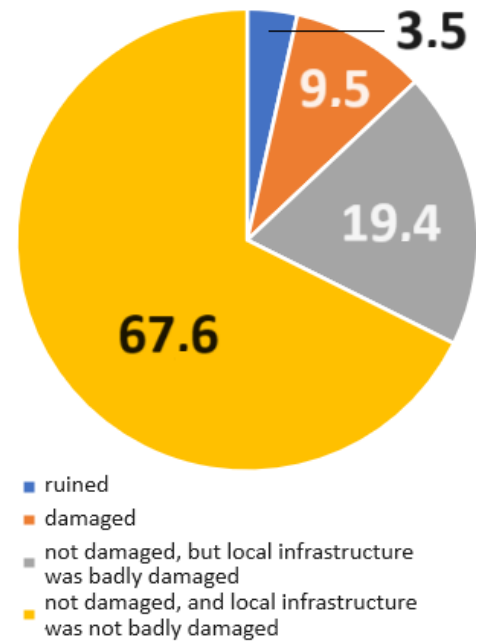


Fig. 2.3. Condition of property in Ukraine among respondents (%)

Table 2.3 below provides data on the immigration attitudes of Ukrainian newcomers based on the condition of their property in Ukraine.

*Table 2.3. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and the condition of their property in Ukraine (% per property condition)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently?	The state of property in Ukraine	Ruined	Damaged	Not damaged, but local infrastructure was badly damaged	Not damaged, and local infrastructure was not badly damaged
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently		<b>60.0</b>	43.8	46.9	<b>34.2</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently		<b>20.0</b>	42.7	34.2	41.8
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over		11.4	5.2	11.7	14.2
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity		5.7	6.3	3.6	5.0
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity		2.9	2.1	3.6	4.8

The property condition significantly influences immigration attitudes. Respondents whose homes and the infrastructure of their localities have suffered serious damage are more determined to stay in Canada permanently, especially those who no longer have property in Ukraine. However, there is no critical difference in the number of those wishing to return.

### 3. ARRIVAL TO CANADA

#### ➤ Reasons for coming specifically to Canada

The reasons for coming specifically to Canada among Ukrainian newcomers are diverse. When asked *Why did you decide to participate in the CUAET program and come specifically to Canada?*, respondents provided the following answers (they could choose up to three answers or write down their own). Table 3.1 below provides this data.

*Table 3.1. Reasons why Ukrainian newcomers chose to come specifically to Canada  
(% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
<b><i>Canada is a safe country to live in</i></b>	<b>61.8</b>
I have relatives here	15.1
<b><i>I want to obtain permanent resident (PR) status</i></b>	<b>54.2</b>
<b><i>Because English is spoken here</i></b>	<b>39.4</b>
Because French is spoken here	0.7
Because there is a strong Ukrainian diaspora here	23.2
There is good government support (payments of \$3,000, settlement agencies, etc.)	16.1
The job market is well-developed with high salaries	21.4
I have been to Canada before, and I liked it	3.1
Simple and understandable entry rules	14.4
For me, Canada is a bridge to the USA	5.0
I have always dreamed of living here	22.9
Because of free housing for two weeks	2.7
<b><i>There are good people and a friendly society in Canada</i></b>	<b>39.2</b>
<b><i>I want my children to have better opportunities, and Canada provides that</i></b>	<b>43.3</b>
<i>I came here randomly, without any specific reason</i>	7.6
Other	3.7

Motives of safety, social stability, the desire for a better future for their children, and an English-speaking environment are the **leading reasons** why Ukrainian newcomers arrived in Canada, particularly into the Greater Toronto Area. Additionally, a **significant motivation** is the desire to obtain permanent resident status in Canada (which does not necessarily mean that respondents are ready to commit their entire lives to Canada). Approximately a quarter of respondents chose the motivation of a powerful Ukrainian diaspora. Some individuals also came to Canada *without any specific reason*, seeking refuge anywhere.

Noteworthy responses from the *Other* category and focus groups include the following.

Canada is very well advertised as a better place for life. *F, 35–44*

We've been issued a visa and decided to see the country. *M, 25–34*

Family, mental, and moral circumstances. I don't have a home in Ukraine anymore. *F, 35–44*

I came to give birth to a child. *F, 25–34*

Here is no xenophobia because the vast majority are immigrants. *M, 35–44*

Came to see what kind of country it is in terms of living standards and future prospects for my family. *M, 25–34*

I made this decision a long time ago, and CUAET helped me. *M, 25–34*

Just wanted to check if what is said about Canada actually true. *M, 35–44*

I have a girlfriend who enrolled in studies, so I came here to build a new life. *M, 18–24*



➤ **Country of residence prior to arrival in Canada**

Experience of living in another country can indirectly influence immigration attitudes. There is a stereotype that those dissatisfied with their new country find it easier to adapt to relocation to a next new country. Fig. 3.1 on the right provides generalized data on the countries of residence of respondents before their arrival in Canada.

Research participants' geography is quite diverse. Fig. 3.2 below presents more detailed quantitative data regarding Ukraine and its neighbors. Slightly more than half of the respondents lived in Ukraine before moving to Canada, and nearly a fifth resided in Poland. Another fifth lived in other EU countries (excluding Poland), such as Germany (35), Italy (18), Hungary (17), Spain (16), etc., totaling 207 respondents. Among European countries outside the EU, Russia (7), the United Kingdom (5), and Switzerland (4) were most frequently mentioned.

In Asia, Turkey (14), Israel (12), and Georgia (9) were the primary countries of residence before coming to Canada. African and American countries were infrequent in the responses and included Egypt, Algeria, Peru, the USA.

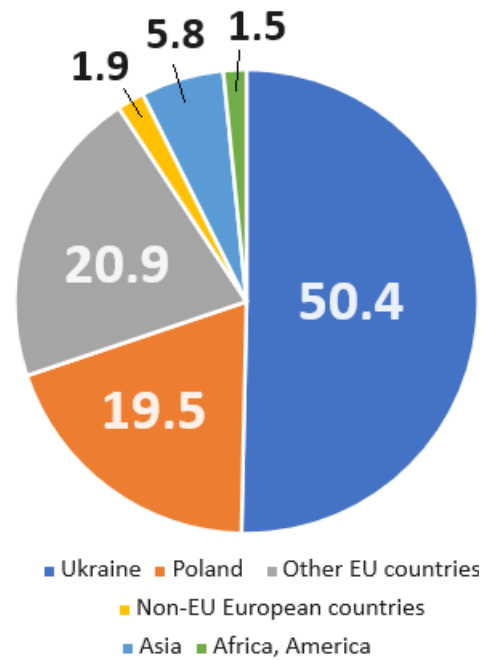


Fig. 3.1. Distribution of research participants by country of residence before arriving to Canada (%)

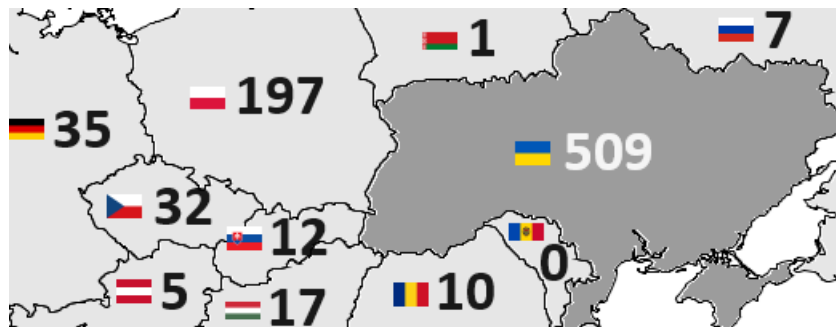


Fig. 3.2. Distribution of research participants by country of residence before arriving to Canada: Ukraine and its neighbors (N)

Table 3.2 below provides data on the dependence of immigration attitudes on Ukrainian newcomers' previous country of residence. The table includes only those who came from Ukraine, Poland, and other EU countries, as individuals from other parts of the world constitute a small fraction of newcomers. However, it is worth noting that Ukrainians arriving from Russia (7 respondents) and the USA (6 respondents) all express a desire to stay in Canada permanently.

The data below show that Ukrainians who came to Canada from Ukraine are less determined to stay permanently and are more open to returning to Ukraine over time compared to those arriving from other countries. This difference is likely associated with the lack of prolonged experience living abroad and a stronger attachment to their home country.

*Table 3.2. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their country of previous residence (% per country of previous residence)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently? \ Country of previous residence	Ukraine	Poland	Other EU countries
I will do all I can I will stay in Canada permanently	<b>34.4</b>	42.6	40.1
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	<b>42.6</b>	35.0	37.7
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	<b>16.1</b>	7.6	10.6
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	2.0	8.1	10.6
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	4.9	6.7	1.0

The distribution based on the country of residence before arriving to Canada and respondents' sex is of interest. Table 3.3 presents data on sex and country of previous residence of those who arrived in Canada from Ukraine and other parts of the world.

*Table 3.3. Distribution of research participants by sex and country of previous residence before arriving to Canada (% per sex)*

Country	Women	Men
Ukraine	70.5	29.5
Other countries	55.8	44.2

The number of men who arrived in Canada from Ukraine is significantly lower than of men who arrived from outside Ukraine. This is primarily due to mobilization and border closure for men emigration from Ukraine. However, specific categories of men have the right to leave, so the percentage of men participants is not extremely low, accounting for nearly one-third.

### ➤ People arrived with respondents

Having someone to provide moral and financial support while settling in a new place can make it easier to adapt. Usually, this support comes from relatives or close friends.

Fig. 3.2 on the right shows who the respondents arrived with, and 72.1% of them arrived being accompanied by someone, while a quarter arrived alone. The most common answer is two people, which includes young couples or those who are not yet married (partners).

Table 3.4 below shows the dependence of immigration attitudes on the number of people arrived with a respondent.

The results show that the more people who arrived together, the more determined the respondent is to stay in Canada permanently.

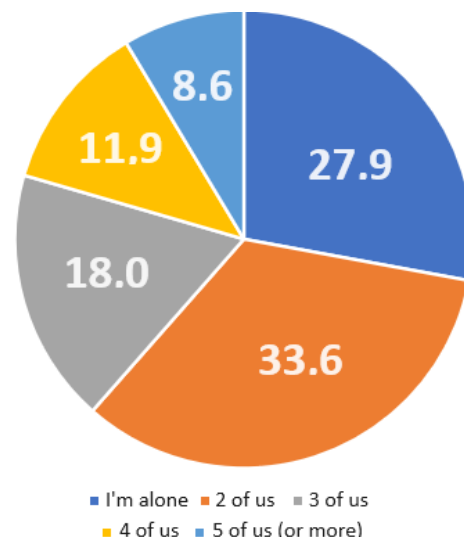


Fig. 3.2. Number of people arrived with a respondent (%)

*Table 3.4. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and by the number of people they arrived with (% per number)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently? \ Number of people	I'm alone	2 of us	3 of us	4 of us	5 of us (or more)
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	<b>34.0</b>	34.7	42.9	45.8	<b>48.3</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	42.6	38.2	39.0	40.0	36.8
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	11.0	15.9	10.4	11.7	12.5
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	6.7	5.3	5.5	0.8	1.2
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	5.7	5.9	2.2	1.7	1.2

Table 3.5 shows who exactly arrived with the respondent (multiple answers were possible).

*Table 3.5. People who arrived with the respondent to Canada (% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
The respondent came alone	27.9
With spouse (married)	38.1
With a partner (not married)	15.3
With a child (children)	39.8
With parents (or with one parent)	7.6
With other relatives	4.4
With a friend (friends)	5.1

## 4. DOCUMENTS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

### ➤ Federal/provincial documents

Obtaining of necessary documents is crucial as it greatly simplifies social interaction between sides (employer – employee, citizen – state/province). Many Ukrainian newcomers who arrived under CUAET are turning to social media to seek answers regarding documents and various government or provincial services. Having the necessary documents and understanding the procedures and services can simplify life greatly. Table 4.1 shows which federal and provincial documents Ukrainian newcomers received.

*Table 4.1. Possession of federal and provincial documents by Ukrainian newcomers who arrived under CUAET in the Greater Toronto Area (% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
Work permit/study permit/visitor record	100
Social Insurance Number (SIN)	100
Bank card	100
Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP)	97.7
Driver's license	43.3
Ontario PhotoCard	10.7

All Ukrainian newcomers to Canada are issued work permit/study permit/visitor record, SIN (Social Insurance Number), and a bank card. The first document confirms the individual's status in Canada and is obtained at the first port of entry. The second document is issued based on the first and is necessary for employment and receiving various services. Lastly, the third document was crucial for receiving federal financial assistance of \$3,000 but cannot be obtained without the first document.

97.7% of Ukrainian newcomers possess an OHIP (Ontario Health Insurance Plan) card, as it requires a proof of residency in Ontario. An address certificate could be possible to obtain from the Canadian Ukrainian Immigrant Aid Society in Toronto, and that certificate was accepted at determined Service Ontario offices, which was a great help for many newcomers who did not yet have a rental agreement or a driver's licence.

For those planning on driving in Ontario, a driver's license is necessary. The Ontario PhotoCard is another form of ID that is often unknown to Ukrainian newcomers. It serves as local ID in Ontario. Both the driver's license and the Ontario PhotoCard are interchangeable, meaning that only one can be held. Only 54% of Ukrainian newcomers in the Greater Toronto Area have some form of Ontario ID.

➤ **Difficulties in obtaining federal/provincial documents**

Ukrainian newcomers are quite knowledgeable about the process of obtaining necessary local documents, and they do not face any significant obstacles in doing so. This can be seen from the responses provided in Table 4.2 (multiple answers could be selected and added).

*Table 4.2. Difficulties in obtaining federal/provincial documents by Ukrainians who arrived under CUAET (% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
No difficulties were encountered	76.1
Long queues	25.8
Long wait for the documents	10.9
Unfriendly staff	3.4
Too high a fee	2.1
Other reasons	2.7

Some interesting answers from the category of *Other reasons* and from focus groups are provided below.

We are still waiting for new visitor records for our children (we made new passports), and they have been saying for 5 months that everything is ok, just wait. *F, 35–44*

There are long queues to get OHIP. At the medical exam, the panel physician does not care about the procedure. There is no examination, only blood is taken. *M, 25–34*

While passing G and G2 tests, signs of xenophobia and racism were present, leading to a biased attitude. *M, 45–54*

Bureaucratic issues and difficulties in overcoming them. *F, 35–44*

At the airport, I was selected for a random COVID test, but I was not informed that there may be restrictions before receiving the results. Unfortunately, I had to wait in line for 5 hours for a SIN number only to be denied entry to the building because I didn't have the test result. *F, 35–44*

A border security officer forgot to put on my work permit that I am on CUAET, it caused difficulties in obtaining OHIP. *M, 35–44*

Lack of language skills. *M, 45–54*

➤ **Experience in dealing with federal/provincial services**

The way services are delivered as well as experienced by the users has a direct impact on the reputation of the country and the province. It is an essential part of how the government system is perceived. Federal/provincial services such as IRCC, Service Canada, Service Ontario, Drive Test, etc. are known for their simplicity and democratic procedures, but as outlined in the previous section, they have certain issues. Fig. 4.1 illustrates the level of satisfaction of Ukrainian newcomers with their experience with federal/provincial services, where 1 represents an extremely negative experience, and 5 represents an extremely positive experience.

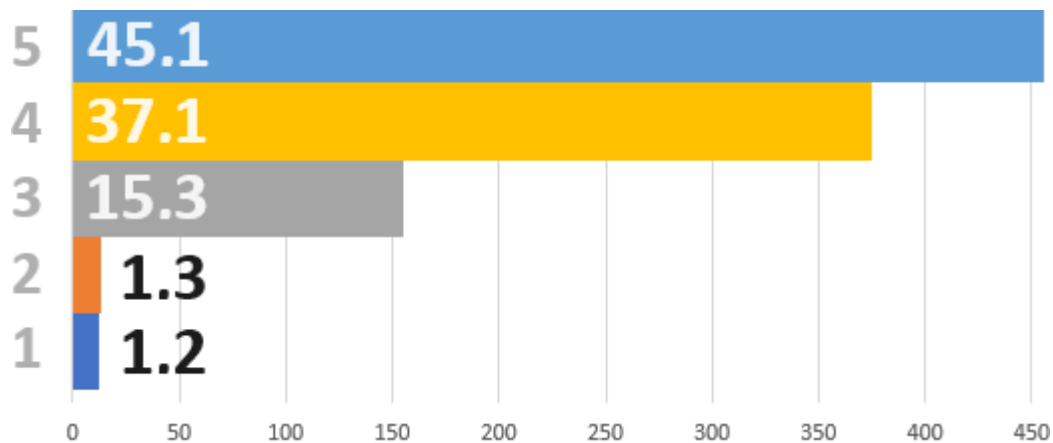


Fig. 4.1. Level of satisfaction with interaction with federal/provincial services (%)

More than 4/5, or 82.2% of respondents, rate their experience with federal/provincial services as positive (rated 5 or 4), 15.3% as acceptable (rated 3), and 2.5% as negative (rated 2 or 1). Positive impressions significantly exceed, which confirms the social image of these services.

## 5. SAFETY AND HEALTH

### ➤ Sense of safety

Sense of safety plays a significant role in shaping one's immigration attitudes. Aristotle said that *humans are social animals*, that is why they seek a safe place for themselves, their children and relatives, just like other animals. During times of war, the need to find a safe place becomes one of the most crucial factors that determine one's desire to stay in a particular place. Although the perception of safety may not always match reality, it will not stop a person from continuing this search.

Canada is considered one of the safest countries in the world, along with its major cities, such as Toronto. This is one of the reasons why many Ukrainians came to Canada after the war started. Respondents rated their sense of safety in Canada on a 5-point scale, where 5 is *I feel safe in Canada*, and 1 is *I feel unsafe in Canada*. Fig. 5.1 below shows the sense of safety of the survey respondents.

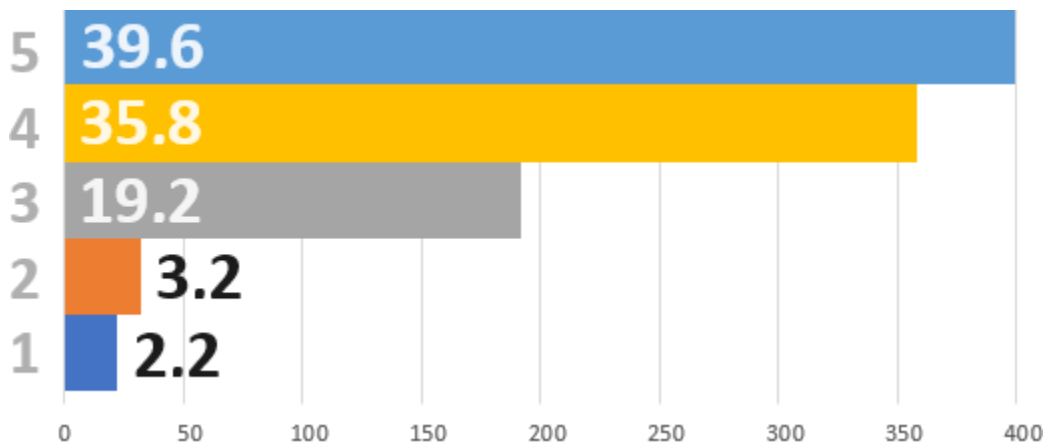


Fig. 5.1. Assessment of the sense of safety (%)

The data show that most Ukrainian newcomers feel safe in Canada. About 75.4% of respondents rated their sense of safety as high (rated 5 or 4), while less than one-fifth rated it as satisfactory (rated 3). Only 5.4% of respondents reported feeling unsafe (rated 2 or 1). This confirms the general belief that Canada is a safe country.

Feeling safe is an important factor in deciding whether to stay in a new place permanently. Therefore, it is likely that one's assessment of their sense of safety affects their immigration attitudes. In Table 5.1, the data shows the respondents' immigration attitudes based on their sense of safety assessment (rates 2 and 1 were combined into one group due to the small number of those who chose them).

The data below reveals that sense of safety is one of the most significant factors in determining the desire to stay in Canada permanently. There is a significant difference between those who feel absolutely safe in Canada and are willing to do anything to stay here permanently, and those who do not feel safe and consequently lack such a desire (more than three times difference). Meanwhile, the sense of safety is not critically important for those who have not yet

decided but are considering staying here permanently. However, those who do not feel safe in Canada are much more determined to leave Canada, in almost equal proportions to Ukraine or to Europe.

*Table 5.1. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and by their assessment of their sense of safety (% per rate)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently?	\ Rate of the sense of safety	5	4	3	2-1
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently		<b>50.3</b>	38.6	20.6	<b>14.8</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently		36.3	42.4	43.8	31.5
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over		9.3	12.7	20.1	13.0
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity		3.0	3.0	5.7	<b>27.7</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity		1.1	3.3	9.8	<b>13.0</b>



➤ **Reasons for concern**

There are reasons why a newcomer may be concerned when moving to a new country. These include external factors such as social differences and unfamiliar rules, as well as internal factors such as previous experiences and lack of confidence.

The respondents were asked an open-ended, optional question: “*If you don't feel safe in Canada, what concerns do you have?*” It was consciously decided to make it open-ended and non-binding so that respondents could freely express their concerns about safety in Canada. In other words, the question was purposely designed not to find out what the respondents are concerned about, but to let them try to identify what makes them feel unsafe occasionally or constantly.

Out of the 1011 respondents, 346 (34.2%) answered to the question. The answers were not organized based on the level of safety felt by the individual, but rather categorized based on the reasons for their concern. Table 5.2 below shows the categorized responses and the number of respondents who shared similar concerns. Respondents were allowed to provide multiple reasons for their concern.

*Table 5.2. Reasons for concern among Ukrainian newcomers, N*

Reasons for concern	N, persons
Spread of drugs (including soft drugs)	132
A large number of unhoused individuals	114
A large number of mentally unstable individuals on the street	93
Aggressive behavior of people in public transport (fights, shouting, harassment, stabbing, low culture of use)	53
Personal financial situation	31
Murders	25
Theft and fraud	18
Absence or inactivity of the police	8
No guarantee to stay in Canada permanently	6
Other reasons	26

Table 5.2 shows that Ukrainian newcomers have three main concerns, which are drugs spread, homelessness, and the mental state of people around them. External reasons that are beyond the control of the respondents are more significant than internal reasons such as their financial situation or the lack of security for the future.

Other reasons that have been cited include *too many immigrants from other countries* (5), *too many Russians who support the war* (4), *low driving culture* (4), etc.

The most interesting answers, including those from the focus groups, are presented below.

Aggressive people on the streets and in public transport. Not always, but when they are around, I am afraid that they will attack me. I saw a man with two knives right on the street, and people just scattered – there were no police officers around. I was almost hit by a car near my house when I started crossing the road when the light was white for me – the cars are the main ones here and no one fines bad drivers.

*F, 35–44*

Assaults on TTC, attacks on the street, a lot of mentally unstable people, a lot of people with weapons despite the ban, lack of clear and normal laws on self-defence, distribution of drugs in improper quantities, possible expansion of the permitted drugs in the future. *F, 25–34*

Drug addicts, murders that no one talks about, and information is hidden; medical system, mentally unstable people in the subway, very old people use to work and they are unable to afford a vacation. *M, 35–44*

Different types of fraud are common, authorities have no control over it.

*F, 35–44*

Today a guy was stabbed in the subway. They are used to it here. I'm not. And I will never get used to it. *F, 35–44*

People who stab children, people at bus stops, steal cars – what a lawlessness! No one does anything! I expected for better. *F, 25–34*

Today, two people were shot near my job. I never feel safe on public transport at all. Before coming to Canada, I didn't have this kind of stress.

*F, 25–34*

There is no guarantee that I will stay here. I must work hard to settle in, and anyway I may not get PR in Ontario. *F, 35–44*

The presence of the Russian narratives and loyalty to them on the part of Canadian society.

*F, 35–44*

It is impossible to rent a place, there are too many requirements. It is difficult to find a proper job even with good English and extensive work experience. People often lie and make inappropriate private offers. *F, 25–34*

I was attacked several times by drug addicts in downtown Toronto, and I met many times Russians who supported the war. *M, 18–24*

Drug addicts, aggressive people on the street and in public transport, total culturelessness and selfishness of pedestrians.

*F, 35–44*

I'm worried that tomorrow I'll have to make a choice between paying for housing and food. Also increase of criminality in Toronto. *F, 25–34*

The number of mentally unstable, unhoused people on the streets, bad drivers (many violations due to lack of photo recording), incidents of car or home robberies among my acquaintances. *F, 25–34*

There are too many inadequate people in public transportation and on the streets, also too many people consume marijuana. Several of my friends had their cars stolen and the police could not help. My child's classmate was attacked with a knife in the subway. *F, 55–64*

## ➤ Mental health

Mental health is a significant factor that influences attitude towards immigration. After arriving in a new country, one's mental health can change significantly due to various circumstances. For instance, someone may have had high expectations when they arrived in Canada, which were shattered by the harsh reality leading to a decline in their mental health. Conversely, someone who had low expectations may exceed them leading to an improvement in their mental health. These are just rough examples of how the mental health can change. Sometimes, a small thing can worsen one's mental health, while a chance or a new opportunity can unexpectedly improve it.

Fig. 5.2 below shows how the mental health of respondents in Canada has changed compared to their mental health while living in Ukraine.

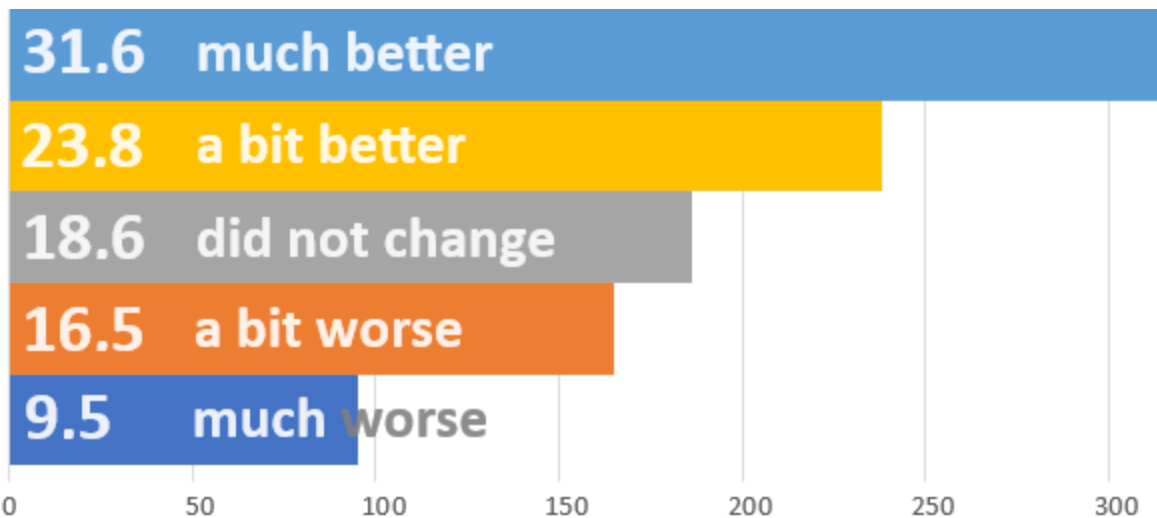


Fig. 5.2. Changes in the mental health of respondents in Canada compared to their mental health in Ukraine (%)

Over half of the survey respondents claimed that they felt mentally better in Canada than in Ukraine. However, a quarter of respondents felt worse, while the mental health of one-fifth of respondents remained unchanged. This suggests that Canada has had a generally positive impact on the mental health of respondents, as 75% of cases either showed no change or improvement, which is a significant positive indicator.

Table 5.3 below illustrates the immigration attitudes of respondents as per the changes in their mental health in Canada compared to their mental health in Ukraine. Significant changes in the mental health indicate the adaptive mechanisms used by the person to settle in a new place, reactions to difficulties and adversities, general emotional state, reaction to stress, and overall ability to cope with the situation.

As shown in Table 5.3, having good mental health is an important factor in determining confidence to stay in Canada permanently. The difference between *feeling much better* in Canada and all other responses is enormous. Those who feel mentally much worse in Canada but are ready to do anything to stay here permanently are in a state of despair due to the absence of knowledge of what to do and where to go. Intentions to leave Canada are higher the worse the respondent's mental state is in Canada compared to Ukraine.

*Table 5.3. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their assessment of their mental health in Canada compared to their mental health in Ukraine  
(% per mental health change assessment)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently? \ Your mental health in Canada now compared to your mental health in Ukraine is	much better	a bit better	did not change	a bit worse	much worse
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	<b>65.5</b>	35.7	32.5	14.4	<b>9.4</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	27.3	51.5	45.7	48.5	24.0
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	<b>5.0</b>	8.7	14.9	21.0	<b>30.2</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	<b>1.9</b>	2.5	3.7	9.0	<b>15.6</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	<b>0.3</b>	1.6	3.2	7.1	<b>20.8</b>

## ➤ Mental health improvement

Mental health improvement can have a significant impact on overall well-being. The effectiveness of the actions taken, however, can vary depending on their nature. This could include seeking the help of professionals or simply engaging in deeper and more frequent conversations with others. Table 5.4 below shows what actions individuals take to improve their mental health.

*Table 5.4. Actions taken by respondents to improve their mental health (% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
I take no action, I feel good, I have nothing to complain about	59.7
I do nothing, even though I feel worse	9.0
I communicate more with my family and friends to distract my attention from current problems	22.0
I visit a psychologist	3.3
I visit a psychotherapist	1.1
I consult with a social worker	1.0
Other	3.9

It was found that more than 50% of respondents do not take any steps to improve their mental health. Only slightly over 5% of them seek professional help. Nearly a quarter rely on their close friends and family to improve their mental health. Some interesting answers from the category of *Other* and from focus groups are provided below.

I had panic attacks when I arrived in Canada, and I also had them in Ukraine at the beginning of the invasion. I went to my family doctor and took antidepressants.

*F, 25–34*

I try to maintain an active lifestyle and not read the news. *F, 25–34*

Wine, cognac, other beverages.

*M, 35–44*

When I have work, I do it; when I don't have work, I look for it. It's always easier when I'm busy.

*F, 35–44*

I am looking for a job that can provide me with financial stability and ease the burden of worrying about buying food. The stress I am feeling is due to the fact that I had high hopes for finding professional growth opportunities in Toronto, but unfortunately there seems to be a shortage of such opportunities. It is disheartening to see that there is a lack of professional work available. *M, 18–24*

I attend the church and go to confession; talking to God helps the most. *F, 35–44*

In Canada, I feel better than I did in Ukraine under occupation, but my mental health requires professional intervention. While my focus has shifted and many of the things that were concerning me at home have been resolved, I still feel homesick and I am deeply affected by the events taking place in Ukraine. Furthermore, the possibility of never seeing some of my friends again is a source of great distress, and it all makes me feel very uneasy. *F, 35–44*

Drugs. *M, 25–34*

➤ **Physical health**

Physical health can also be an influential factor in determining attitudes towards immigration. A new place can affect the body differently due to various factors such as climatic conditions, food, accessibility of doctors, ease of making medical appointments, and the overall condition of the healthcare system. All these factors can significantly impact one’s physical health.

Fig. 5.3 illustrates the distribution of respondents based on how their physical health has changed in Canada compared to their health in Ukraine.

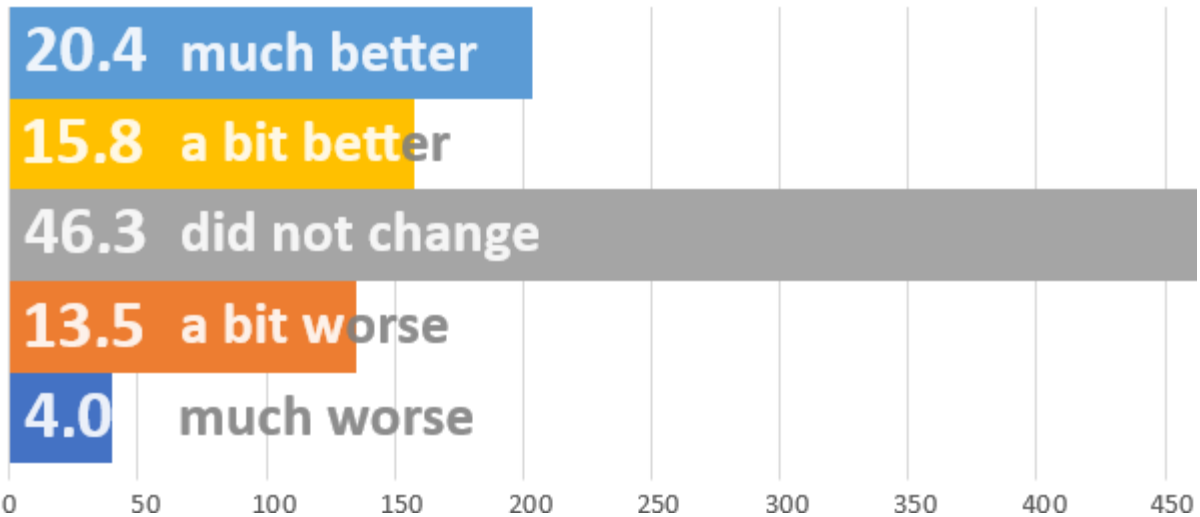


Fig. 5.3. Changes in the physical health of respondents in Canada compared to their physical health in Ukraine (%)

Almost half of the respondents stated that their physical health remained the same after coming to Canada, while more than a third reported an improvement. The reasons for the improvement varied from receiving prescriptions for necessary medications and undergoing surgeries that were not covered by insurance in Ukraine or Europe but were covered in Canada, to simply feeling better in general.

Table 5.5 presents the responses of participants regarding their immigration plans and their physical health in Canada as compared to their physical health in Ukraine. The table shows the percentage of participants who plan to stay in Canada permanently and how they assessed their physical health in Canada compared to their health in Ukraine.

*Table 5.5. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their assessment of their physical health in Canada compared to their health in Ukraine (%)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently? Your physical health in Canada now compared to your physical health in Ukraine is	much better	a bit better	did not change	a bit worse	much worse
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	<b>66.7</b>	38.5	32.9	22.1	<b>12.5</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	27.7	46.0	43.6	41.2	25.0
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	3.4	10.6	13.0	<b>24.3</b>	<b>27.5</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	1.6	1.9	5.8	7.4	<b>15.0</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	0.6	3.0	4.7	5.0	<b>20.0</b>

The tendency in this case is exactly the same as in the dependence of immigration attitudes on mental health (see pages 43–44).

➤ **Usage of healthcare services**

Access to healthcare services can be a crucial factor in deciding to stay permanently in a new country. The quality and availability of healthcare services matter to most people. Luckily, Canada offers a broad range of excellent medical services that are free of cost. Ukrainian newcomers in Ontario can generally avail of OHIP provincial health insurance program, ensuring good health maintenance.

However, the availability of provincial insurance is not the only critical factor. Access to family medicine and a good family doctor also affect one’s health and overall impression of the medical system. Healthcare is an area where Canada faces some challenges.

Table 5.6 below provides data on how Ukrainian newcomers use medical services, including whether they have a family doctor or visit walk-in clinics when needed.

*Table 5.6. Availability of a family doctor and use of walk-in clinics among respondents  
(% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
Yes, I have a family doctor and I have visited them several times	20.7
I have a family doctor, but I do not visit them; instead, I visit walk-in clinics	2.1
I have a family doctor, but have not visited them yet and have not used walk-in clinics’ services	9.1
I do not have a family doctor, but I visit walk-in clinics	21.6
I do not have a family doctor and have not used healthcare services in Canada	46.5

The data indicates that 31.9% of respondents have a family doctor, 23.7% visit walk-in clinics periodically, and almost half of the respondents do not use any medical services.

➤ **Difficulties in obtaining healthcare services**

Canada’s healthcare system is currently facing numerous challenges and is considered to be in a crisis. Some of the challenges include a shortage of doctors and hospitals, underfunding, difficulties in obtaining licenses for foreign specialists to practice medicine, low salaries for nurses, and very long waiting lists for appointments with specialized doctors and for medical procedures. These problems are particularly severe in large cities, such as Toronto and its surrounding areas, due to their faster population growth. It remains unclear how the government will address these challenges. Additionally, Ukrainian newcomers face the same issues. Table 5.7 presents the data on the difficulties that newcomers face when receiving medical services. Respondents could choose several answers, and additional responses could also be added.

*Table 5.7. Difficulties in obtaining healthcare services for Ukrainian newcomers  
(% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
It is difficult to find a family doctor	23.0
Long waiting lists	23.5
Needed services/medications are not covered by OHIP and cost too much	11.5
My English is not good enough to explain my problem to healthcare staff	15.5
I have not had any difficulties	25.5
I have not sought for medical services	46.6
Other	5.1

Around half of the respondents who sought medical services encountered difficulties in receiving them. More specifically, 25.5% of the respondents reported no issues, while almost half (53.4%) of those who sought medical services faced challenges. Some interesting answers from the category of *Other* and from focus groups are provided below.

Pregnant women wait in lines for 2–3 hours for appointments that start late. The surgery, which was supposed to start at 8:00, started at 10:40. Waiting times can last up to 5 hours with a one-month-old baby. *F, 18–24*

The doctor forgot to schedule the examinations we had discussed, even though he had agreed to them. I changed doctors. *F, 35–44*

One might have to wait a long time to see a specialized doctor, but while waiting, one can find the right medicine and order it from Ukraine. *F, 45–54*

Incompetent doctors. I can say three times more about my own blood test than my family doctor. *F, 25–34*

We went to the emergency room. Everything was great except for the waiting time (7 hours at night with a child). *F, 25–34*

Diseases that are not life-threatening are not treated here; the most common medicines can only be obtained with a prescription. Also, ineffective drugs. *F, 35–44*

This is a joke, not a medical system. *M, 35–44*



## 6. EMPLOYMENT AND FINANCE

### ➤ Employment

Permanent official employment provides a sense of stability and influences one's attitudes towards immigration. The availability of work, ease of finding a job, and income are all factors that can affect one's immigration attitudes. Employment increases confidence and professional growth regardless of whether the job is in the same field as before coming to a new country. Developing new skills, improving proficiency in the official language and building new contacts can help a person progress further. Table 6.1 presents the data on job availability for respondents on the day of the survey.

*Table 6.1. Employment of respondents (% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
I have a permanent job in my field in Canada	14.6
I have a permanent job in Canada, but not in my field	27.1
I have a temporary job in my field in Canada	2.4
I have a temporary job in Canada, but not in my field	11.4
I work in Canada and have a remote job in Ukraine	0.6
I have a remote job in Ukraine and looking for a job in Canada	5.1
I am looking for a job in Canada	30.2
I do not have a job and I am not looking for it because I do not have the opportunity (children, health, etc.)	5.8
I do not have a job and not looking for it because I do not need one	1.2
I am retired, so I do not work	0.6
I am a student, so I do not work	1.0

Based on the data presented, slightly more than half of the respondents (56.1%) have some job in Canada, but only 41.7% have a permanent job; 35.3% are actively searching for a job, and 8.6% are not looking for employment in Canada.

Table 6.2 examines the availability of jobs based on the respondents' time of arrival in Canada. This analysis provides an approximate understanding of how long the respondents have been in their current employment situation as of the survey's date in August 2023 (with a margin of error of 1 month as the survey was conducted between July and October 2023). This excludes those who are neither employed nor actively seeking work.

*Table 6.2. Employment depending on the time of arrival in Canada (% per time of arrival)*

Employment	Time of arrival to Canada: year month	2022			22–23	2023	
		02–05	06–08	09–11	12–02	03–05	06–08
I have a permanent job in my field in Canada		<b>22.8</b>	<b>31.2</b>	12.5	19.9	13.2	1.4
I have a permanent job in Canada, but not in my field		<b>41.6</b>	31.3	39.1	34.9	27.9	10.8
I have a temporary job in Canada		11.9	12.5	21.9	21.5	13.6	9.5
I am looking for a job in Canada ( <i>unemployment rate</i> )		<b>23.7</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>26.5</b>	<b>23.7</b>	45.3	78.3

The longer a person stays in Canada, the greater their chances of having a permanent job, both qualified and non-qualified. By comparing the unemployment rates between the first four columns (February 2022 – February 2023) and the last two (March–August 2023), it becomes apparent that the unemployment rate is notably higher in the latter, which indirectly supports the claim that on average a person finds a job in Canada within six months (taking February and August 2023 as the endpoints). However, in the first four columns, the unemployment rate remains relatively stable – around 23–27%, which implies that a quarter of newcomers are unable to find a job within six months or more.

Table 6.3 analyzes the immigration attitudes of respondents based on their employment status (excluding those who are not currently employed and not seeking employment).

*Table 6.3. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their employment in Canada (% per group of job availability)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently?	Employment in Canada	Permanent job in my field	Permanent job but not in my field	Temporary job	Looking for a job
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently		<b>52.4</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>31.9</b>	<b>31.5</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently		34.7	34.7	41.3	45.3
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over		<b>6.1</b>	10.0	12.3	<b>16.1</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity		4.8	4.1	7.3	2.9
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity		2.0	3.2	7.2	4.2

The data presented above indicates that having a permanent job greatly influences the immigration attitudes of Ukrainian newcomers. These individuals are more determined to stay in Canada permanently and are willing to do whatever it takes to make that happen. On the other hand, unemployment or temporary work causes uncertainty and a higher likelihood of wanting to return to Ukraine after the war.

## ➤ Workplace challenges

Often immigrants face challenges at their first workplace for different reasons: work culture differences, language barrier, different approaches to the same responsibilities, etc. Ability to adapt to the labour standards of the host country shows readiness of a newcomer to adapt to different labour behaviours and new experiences. This is why many Canadian employers prefer candidates with local work experience<sup>18</sup>.

Table 6.4 below demonstrates the challenges Ukrainian newcomers face dealing with their responsibilities at work. This question was necessary to answer only for those who was employed at the moment of the survey completion. Respondents could select from available answer options and/or add their own.

*Table 6.4. Challenges at the current workplace (% of those employed)*

Answers	Share, %
I do not face any challenges at work	37.5
I lack knowledge of English and I do not always understand everything	23.6
Cultural differences	9.1
Differences in approaches to work	9.8
Salary is not paid on time	1.1
I encounter aggressive behavior from employees	2.1
I encounter aggressive behavior from managers	2.1
I encounter aggressive behavior from clients	1.6
I face fraud from employees or management regarding me	2.1
I feel discrimination	4.1
Other	6.8

The major challenge for newcomers is the language barrier. Almost a quarter of respondents indicated their knowledge of English as limited, what impacts their ability to communicate with others. Other challenges did not exceed 10%.

More than a third of respondents noted that they face no challenges at their workplaces. These numbers demonstrate a positive trend because Ukrainians adapt to Canadian work culture without significant conflicts.

Still there are some challenges existing. For example, social networks like Facebook literally abound with different complaints about Canadian employers. Quite often Ukrainians become victims of scams and unreliable employers who do not pay salaries according to the agreement. It might seem to them that workers' rights are not protected and there is no accountability for unreliable employers. Mainly newcomers might think this way because of limited understanding of their rights and who may be contacted as a result.

Some interesting answers from the category of *Other* and from focus groups are provided below.

<sup>18</sup> See: Zhang, T., Banerjee, R., Amarshi, A. (2023). [Does Canada's Express Entry System Meet the Challenges of the Labor Market?](#) in *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 21:1, 104–118, DOI: 10.1080/15562948.2022.2133201.

I was very allergic to the chemicals used to clean the hotel, and I was never given a suitable mask with filters or glasses. It was difficult to breathe in a regular mask, so I wore my own. *F, 35–44*

I've been hired and promised to sign a contract, but after 10 days we didn't sign anything. I quit because it looked like fraud and disrespect. *F, 35–44*

I used to work in an office my whole life; now it's difficult for me, because I work in a factory. I hope that over time I will be back in my specialty. *F, 35–44*

I work for Uber, and I am shocked by unprofessionalism of such a large company in many ways. *M, 35–44*

Minimal wage. Usually, people are paid more for the same work. In my case the reason is insufficient English. *F, 45–54*

Everyone lives on credit and penniless, hard work for very little pay. *M, 35–44*

Some job interviewers offered "relationships", what is unacceptable for me. *F, 25–34*

Insufficient English, lack of Canadian experience and no Canadian education hinder my ability to find a better paid job. *M, 25–34*

I was working part-time at one job, and when the hours worked were recorded, all Ukrainians were given 7 hours but Canadians were given 8 hours. It was not crucial, but unpleasant – it was made clear that we still were guests here after all. *M, 35–44*

The working conditions were hazardous to health, and the manager did not respond to this, which was the reason to quit. *M, 35–44*

Problems with very low wages, with the fact that it is difficult to improve English because I'm hardly allowed to speak at work; and another problem is that a factory can give days off whenever they want, even if working officially. Therefore, a factory is not concerned about where to get money for rent and other expenses. *F, 25–34*

➤ **Further employment prospects**

The way a person sees themselves at work can also affect immigration attitudes. There are those who are completely satisfied with their current employment, and those who work only to earn money, hating work passionately. Assessment of one's prospects, readiness for changes if one does not like something, or the desire to immerse oneself even deeper in the current work is extremely important, as it affects a person's mental health and the feeling of personal satisfaction.

Table 6.5 shows both the state of satisfaction among those who work and how they image their employment in the future. This table shows data relevant to those who have been working at the time of the survey.

*Table 6.5. Assessment of one's satisfaction and prospects at current workplace  
(% among only those who work)*

Answers	Share, %
I like where I work now, and I will continue to work there	29.7
I like where I work now, but I plan to change jobs because of the low salary	23.5
I like where I work now, but I plan to change jobs for other reasons	19.7
I do not like where I work now, but I have no choice but to stay there and continue working	16.6
I do not like where I work now, and I will definitely change jobs	10.5

The above data show that less than a third (only 29.7%) are satisfied with their work and will remain working at their current place of employment. A little less than half (43.2%) like their current workplace but will change it for various reasons. In general, almost 3/4 of respondents (72.9%) are satisfied with their current workplace. But a little more than a quarter of respondents (27.1%) do not like it.

A little less than half (46.3%) will continue to work at their current place despite a positive or negative assessment of their satisfaction. But as many as 53.7% of respondents are thinking of changing jobs.

It is quite difficult to give an unequivocal assessment of the above data; only 27.1% negatively evaluate their current employment, but as many as 53.7% plan to change jobs for various reasons.

## ➤ Financial situation

Assessment of one's current financial situation is an important factor in determining immigration attitudes. This estimate is highly subjective because everyone assesses their own financial needs and their financial situation differently. For some people, \$2,000 per month is enough, while for others, \$5,000 is not enough, given the same criteria (the same rent, the same groceries, the same number of family members, etc.) It is believed that the higher the assessment of current financial situation, i.e. the more the immigrant considers it, the fewer reasons the immigrant wishes to return to the country of emigration.

Fig. 6.1 below presents data on respondents' assessment of their current financial situation. The respondents were asked to rate it on a five-point scale, where 1 is *I have no money at all*, and 5 is *I have enough money for all my current needs*.

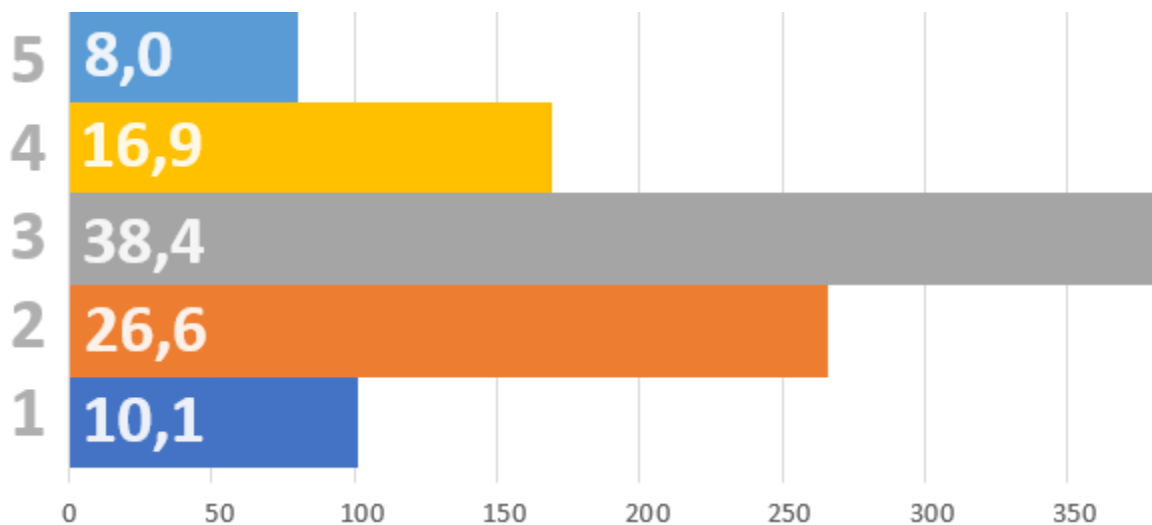


Fig. 6.1. Respondent's assessment of their current financial situation (%)

A quarter of respondents (24.9%) consider their financial situation to be good (rated 5 or 4), more than a third (38.4%) consider it satisfactory (rated 3), and more than a third (36.7%) consider it poor (rated 2 or 1). In other words, less than two-thirds of respondents (63.3%) feel roughly stable, while 36.7% of respondents do not.

Table 6.6 presents data on the immigration attitudes of respondents depending on reflection of their current financial situation.

The statement about the dependence of immigration attitudes on the assessment of one's own financial situation is only partially confirmed, and only in terms of the determination to do everything possible to stay in Canada permanently. The difference between the extremes is quite significant. It is also reflected in the determination to leave Canada at the earliest opportunity—those with worse financial situations are more determined to leave Canada.

*Table 6.6. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their assessment of their own financial situation (% per rate)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently? \ Assessment of own financial situation	5	4	3	2	1
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	<b>43.2</b>	53.5	40.5	27.1	<b>32.0</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	39.5	31.2	40.2	45.7	35.9
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	11.1	9.4	13.4	15.2	10.7
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	4.9	2.4	3.4	6.7	<b>9.7</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	1.3	3.5	2.5	5.3	<b>11.7</b>

➤ **Provincial financial assistance**

As a response to the financial difficulties faced by Ukrainian newcomers, Ontario has introduced a special program *Ontario Emergency Assistance*, which can be applied for by those who have not yet found a job, are renting housing, have already spent some time in the province, and whose personal finances are running out. Assistance is paid every 48 days based on an application and submitted documents and can be extended for up to six months.

It is important not to confuse this assistance with the one-time \$3,000 assistance from the federal government; these are two different benefits. Provincial assistance is only available to those who meet certain criteria, while federal assistance was available to all who arrived in Canada under the CUAET program.

Fig. 6.2 on the right shows the share of respondents who had received it or were receiving it at the time of the survey. As can be seen, more than a third of respondents (37.7%) had used it at least once.

Table 6.7 below shows whether the respondents' immigration attitudes depend on the fact that they have received provincial financial assistance.

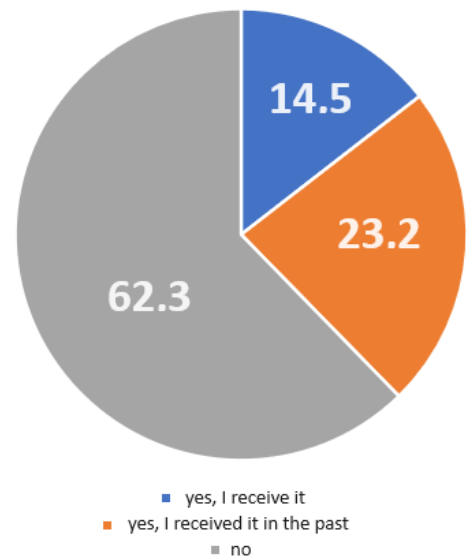


Fig. 6.2. Receipt of provincial financial assistance by respondents (%)

Table 6.7. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and whether they received provincial financial assistance (% per fact)

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently? \ The fact of assistance receipt	Currently receiving	Received in the past	No
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	38.4	36.2	39.4
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	38.4	39.6	40.0
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	13.7	15.3	11.6
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	4.1	4.7	5.0
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	5.4	4.2	4.0

Data presented in Table 6.7 show that the fact of receiving provincial financial assistance does not affect the immigration attitudes of respondents; the distribution of immigration attitudes among all groups of respondents does not differ, which means that receiving it is not decisive for Ukrainian newcomers, and this is a positive development since receiving of it does not affect the desire to stay in Canada.



## 7. HOUSING

### ➤ Place of residence

The place of residence (apartment, house, etc.), the way of paying for it (rent or free of charge (with relatives/friends)), and that it is a stable place to live are important in determining how a newcomer feels in a new place. Having a roof overhead, being able to pay for it (especially in the Greater Toronto Area where rental prices are sky-high and literally everything is more costly), and feeling comfortable at home can influence immigration attitudes, as it is a factor of personal security and peace of mind.

Table 7.1 below shows where (in what kind of housing) the respondents live and whether they pay rent.

*Table 7.1. Place of residence of respondents and the fact of paying for housing  
(% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
I rent a house at market price	12.9
I rent an apartment at market price	43.2
I rent a room at market price	26.7
I live with friends for free	2.1
I live with friends and pay a certain amount for rent	3.4
I live with relatives for free	3.7
I live with relatives and pay a certain amount for rent	3.6
I live in a student dormitory because I am a student	0.2
I found a host family and live with them	2.0
I do not have a permanent housing (I live in a shelter/tent/on the street)	2.4

The data in Table 7.1 shows that 90% of respondents pay for their rent, 83% of them rent at market price, and the remaining 7% pay some cost. Only 7.8% of respondents have friends/relatives/host families whom they do not pay the rent. But 2.4% found themselves in an extremely difficult situation – they have no money to pay and no friends/acquaintances here, so they do not have permanent housing, but live either in a shelter, in a tent or on the street.

Table 7.2 below illustrates immigration attitudes among the largest groups from the previous table.

The data in Table 7.2 shows that the relative size of rented housing partially influences immigration attitudes: those who rent houses are more likely to do whatever it takes to stay in Canada permanently, while those who rent apartments and rooms are less likely to be so determined.

As for other, smaller groups outside of Table 7.2, it is worth noting that among those who live with friends or relatives, the percentage of those who are inclined to stay in Canada permanently, but not sure yet, is on average twice as high as those who plan to do everything to stay in Canada permanently. But this figure does not depend on the fact of paying for housing.

*Table 7.2. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently among market-rate renters (% per type of housing rental)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently? \ I rent at the market rate	a house	an apartment	a room
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently.	<b>50.0</b>	42.6	<b>38.2</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently.	31.5	41.0	38.2
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over.	12.3	11.4	12.2
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity.	3.9	3.4	6.3
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity.	2.3	1.6	5.1

The highest percentage of those who would leave Canada is among those who do not have permanent housing in Canada (living in a shelter/tent/on the street), but it is nevertheless two times lower than those who would like to stay in Canada permanently.

➤ **How respondents found their current housing**

There are many ways to find housing. Certain methods are more popular in certain areas of the world than others: some have specific housing search sites, some use traditional ways (newspapers), and in many cases the power of word-of-mouth works. In the Greater Toronto Area, there are many general housing search sites, as well as media used by specific ethnic groups (their own newspapers, their own websites, etc.)

Table 7.3 below shows how respondents found their current housing.

*Table. 7.3. Ways of finding housing by respondents (% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
Via the Internet (specific housing search websites, Facebook Marketplace, social networks, etc.)	39.1
Through acquaintances/friends	29.1
Through a realtor/residential search agency	17.6
I was not looking for a place to live, I already had someone to live with	9.5
Other (announcements in the newspaper, on the street, in church)	2.3
I do not have permanent housing (live in a shelter/tent/on the street)	2.4

The Internet and other modern ways of searching for housing are leading among the ways to find housing. Various specific websites, social networks, and specialized platforms were used by 39.1% of respondents to find housing. Interpersonal relationships helped to find housing in almost a third of cases – 29.1%. Services of specialized companies were used by 17.6% of respondents. It can be said that the Internet is gradually replacing all other ways of finding housing, except for personal contacts.

### ➤ Living conditions and comfort

A high level of comfort and decent living conditions are undoubtedly very important components of every person's life nowadays. The level of satisfaction with living conditions and comfort also affects immigration attitudes, as they influence how a person feels (calmness, wellness). A more comfortable atmosphere in a new place increases the level of satisfaction and, accordingly, the level of desire to stay in a new place. But the feeling of comfort and the assessment of what constitutes decent living conditions are subjective. For some, a small room is enough, while for others, a whole mansion is not enough.

Fig. 7.1 below shows how respondents assess their living conditions and comfort in their current residence on a five-point scale, where 1 – completely dissatisfied, very uncomfortable, 5 – completely satisfied (they like everything, it is very convenient and comfortable for them).

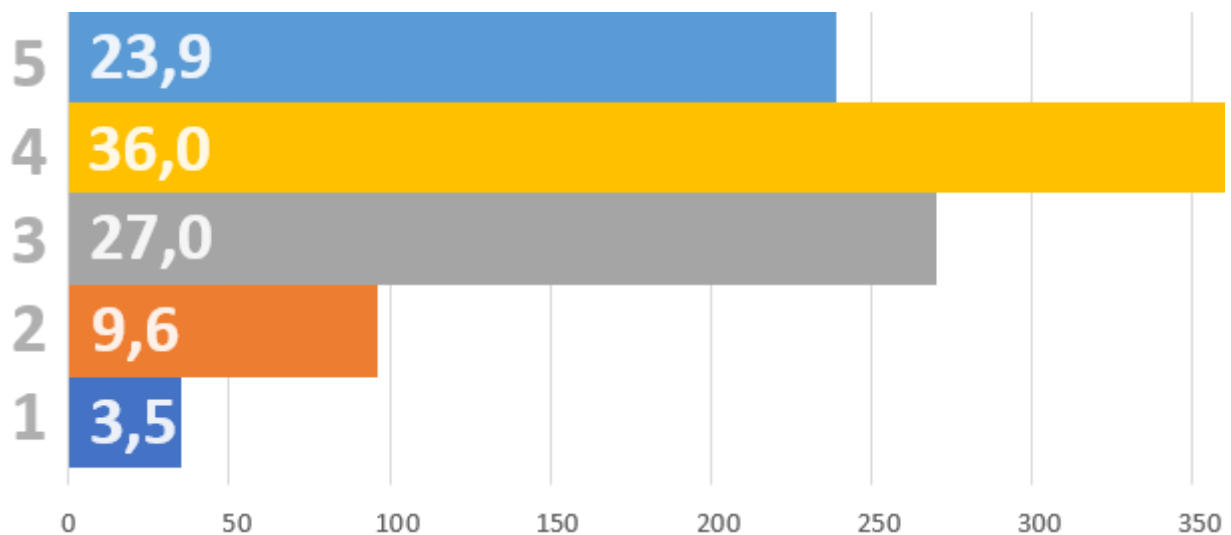


Fig. 7.1. Respondents' assessment of their living conditions and comfort (%)

Fig 7.1 shows that more than half of respondents (59.9%) assess their living conditions and comfort as good (rated 5 or 4). Slightly more than a quarter rated their living conditions and comfort as satisfactory – 27% (rated 3). However, 13.1% of respondents rated their living conditions as poor (rated 2 or 1). In general, respondents are satisfied with their living conditions and comfort in their current housing.

Table 7.4 below shows how immigration attitudes depend on respondents' assessment of their living conditions and comfort.

The results show that living conditions and comfort have an impact on respondents' immigration attitudes. The higher the comfort rate, the higher the determination to do everything possible to permanently stay in Canada. Lower living and comfort conditions generally encourage respondents to consider leaving Canada. Better living conditions and comfort contribute to a higher level of life satisfaction, peace, comfort and stability.

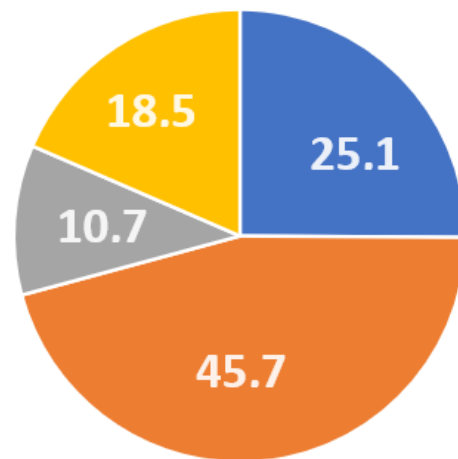
*Table 7.4. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their assessment of own living conditions and comfort in their current housing (% per rate)*

Do you plan \ Assessment of living conditions/comfort to stay in Canada permanently?	5	4	3	2	1
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	<b>45.5</b>	41.5	33.7	<b>27.8</b>	<b>25.7</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	36.0	40.4	45.1	37.0	<b>22.9</b>
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	12.4	11.3	12.5	20.0	14.3
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	<b>2.9</b>	4.1	3.7	<b>11.2</b>	<b>17.1</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	<b>3.2</b>	2.7	5.0	4.0	<b>20.0</b>

➤ **Plans to change the current place of residence**

Living conditions and comfort, as mentioned above, play an important role in determining immigration attitudes. Therefore, this question logically followed from the previous one – what do the respondents think about changing their current place of residence, do they see it as a permanent one, how do they imagine their further prospects in dealing with the housing issue.

Fig. 7.2 on the right shows that only a quarter of respondents (25.1%) are completely satisfied with their current place of residence (which almost coincides with the rating “5” in Fig. 7.1). Around three quarters of the respondents would like to change their current residence to another one. However, almost half (45.7%) cannot afford it. Among those who planned to look for new housing at the time of the survey and could afford it, the prerogative was given to something cheaper.



- no, I'm satisfied with current place
- yes, but I can't afford it now
- yes, I plan to look for something bigger
- yes, I plan to look for something cheaper

*Fig. 7.2. Respondents' plans to change their current place of residence (%)*

## 8. OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

### ➤ Level of English language proficiency

A high level of proficiency in the official language of the country of arrival contributes to faster adaptation and more successful settlement in a new place. Ukrainian newcomers under the CUAET program, unlike many other groups of immigrants, have a lower level of English proficiency on average, because English is not a widely spoken language in Ukraine since Ukraine has not had extensive interaction with the English-speaking world. But Ukraine has recently seen significant progress in English language popularization.

Fig. 8.1 below shows how respondents rate their level of English language proficiency.

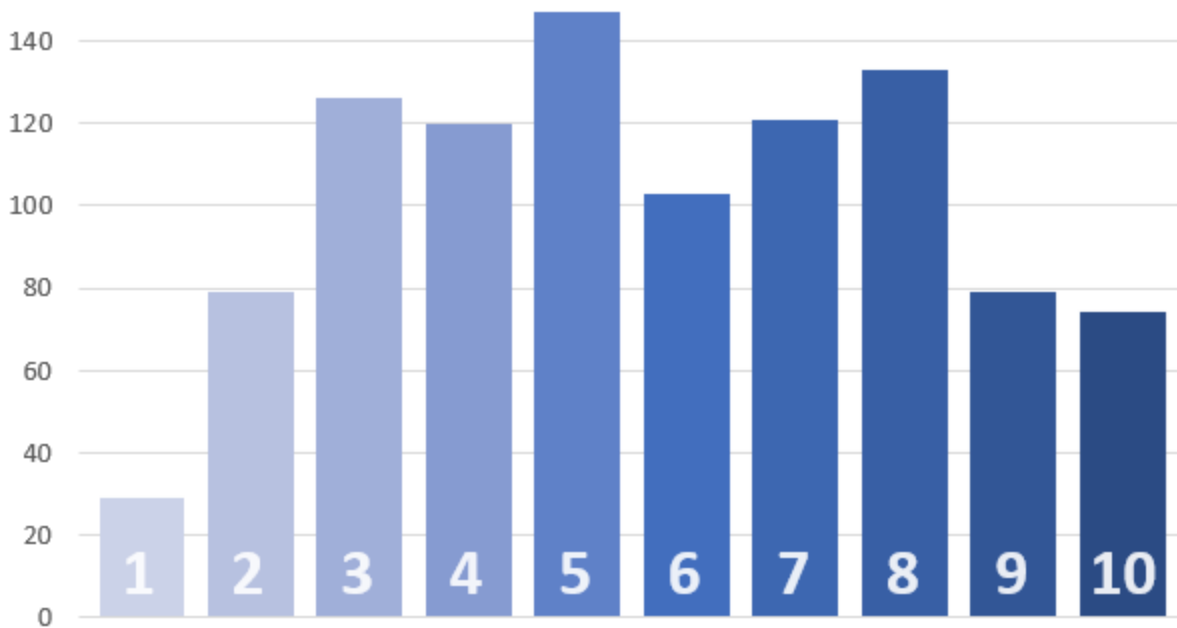


Fig. 8.1. Respondents' assessment of their level of English language proficiency (N)

Of all the respondents, 23.2% rate their level of English proficiency as low (rated 1 to 3), as average – 36.6% (rated 4 to 6), as high – 40.2% (rated 7 to 10). A little less than half of respondents feel almost free in social interaction, and a little more than a third actively integrates into an English-speaking environment.

Table 8.1 below shows the dependence of immigration attitudes on the level of English language proficiency.

The data below shows that the assessment of the level of English proficiency only slightly affects the level of determination of respondents to do everything in order to stay and live in Canada permanently, and if we consider it together with those who are still doubtful but inclined to stay and live in Canada, we cannot observe a significant difference (a difference of 4 to 8%). Accordingly, the level of English language proficiency is not an obstacle for Ukrainian newcomers in their desire to stay and live in Canada permanently or go back. These values are essentially independent of each other, especially taking into account the high percentage of those who came to Canada precisely because English is the official language here. This is indirect evidence

of the fact that in general Ukrainians feel comfortable in the English-speaking environment and try to adapt to it. Most succeed in doing so.

*Table 8.1. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their assessment of their own English language proficiency level (% per rate)*

Do you plan \ Assessment of English proficiency level to stay in Canada permanently?	High	Average	Low
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	40.1	40.6	32.5
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	36.9	41.6	41.5
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	13.8	10.3	15.0
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	5.7	3.8	5.0
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	3.5	3.7	6.0



### ➤ **English language proficiency tests**

Canada offers a wide range of English language proficiency tests. They include free LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) tests, which are usually taken to determine proficiency level to send a potential student to one of the LINC schools; paid tests such as IELTS, TOEFL, CAEL, CELPIP, etc. The purpose of each test is different, but they all allow the applicant to objectively understand their level of English language proficiency. According to the research results,

- 35.6% of respondents passed any English test at least once in their life,
- 64.4% have never passed such tests.

Most respondents specifically passed the LINC test to determine the level of English for being allocated to a certain LINC school for studying it.

No significant difference was found between immigration attitudes and the fact of passing English language proficiency test, regardless of their necessity for the purpose of immigration.

## ➤ Learning English

Improving mastery level of the official language both promotes more active integration into the host society and is also a guarantee for successful social adaptation. Ukrainian newcomers are especially in need of attention because English is not widely spoken in Ukraine.

Table 8.2 below shows whether Ukrainian newcomers had been learning English as of the survey date. While answering this question, they could choose several options or write down their own answer.

*Table 8.2. Whether Ukrainian newcomers had been learning English as of the survey date – if yes, what means they have been using; if no, why (% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
Yes, I attend in-person courses	21.9
Yes, I attend online courses	20.5
Yes, I study with a tutor	9.3
Yes, I study on my own	57.4
No, I have no need, I am fluent in English	13.7
No, I do not have the opportunity to study (children, work, health, etc.)	12.4
No, I have no desire to study despite the need to	2.0
No, I do not have access to educational courses or internet programs	2.2

The results above show that most respondents prefer to master English independently – 57%. Furthermore, 51.7% of respondents learn it in an organized manner – they either attend courses or have a private tutor (these answers may overlap because they can learn it both independently and in an organized way), 30.3% do not learn English, but only 13.7% do not have such a need because of their high proficiency level.

Some interesting answers below from *Others* and from the focus groups show what other means Ukrainian newcomers use to learn English, or why they do not learn English.

I read books, listen to English-language content, speak while looking for a job. *F, 45–54*

My priority is work, and only then English. If I learn English first, I won't have money left to live, and I will be left hungry on the street with my suitcases. *F, 35–44*

I just need to prepare for CELPIP to apply for PR. *M, 18–24*

I signed up for an online LINC course, have been told to wait. I have been waiting for 3 months already. *M, 25–34*

I don't have money for English courses. I want to study, but it's not working for me without a teacher. *F, 25–34*

I need language courses, but due to my schedule I cannot afford it right now. *M, 18–24*

I study online with a tutor at weekends due to a huge time difference, or I do it on my own. I didn't like free LINC courses. *F, 25–34*

Only in-person communication with clients and in society in general may help. *F, 25–34*

## ➤ French

Canada has two official languages at the federal level, and one of them is French. However, provinces and territories have the right to appoint their own official languages. In Ontario the official language is English, but some provincial services may be offered in French. French is an even less widespread language in Ukraine than English, although its popularity has been growing there recently.

Survey data shows that:

- 87.9% of respondents do not speak any French,
- 9.7% of respondents speak French at the beginner level,
- 1.6% at the intermediate level, and
- 0.8% at the advanced level.

Canada also offers a wide range of tests to determine the French language proficiency level. There are free CLIC tests, which are usually taken to determine the level to enroll a potential student to one of the CLIC schools, and paid tests such as TCF, TEF, etc. The purpose of each test is different, but they all allow the applicant to objectively understand the level of French language proficiency. According to the study results,

- 1.5% of respondents have at least once passed a test to determine their level of French,
- 98.5% have never passed such tests.

The results are not surprising because the dominant language in the Greater Toronto Area is English, and respondents primarily focus on learning it first.

## ➤ Language tests for immigration

Canada accepts five language tests specifically for immigration purposes, which are IELTS General, CELPIP-General or PTE Core (since 2024) for English, and TCF or TEF for French. Since passing the language test is a mandatory condition for starting the immigration process in almost all immigration programs, Ukrainian newcomers who incline to stay and live in Canada permanently are interested in successfully passing them.

Table 8.3 below shows at what stage of interaction with the language test (whether they have passed it or not, preparing or planning to prepare, etc.) the respondents' answers are as following.

*Table 8.3. Stages of interaction with language tests (% of all respondents)*

Answers	English tests		French tests (TCF, TEF)
	IELTS General	CELPIP-General	
I have already passed the test	3.4	1,7	0
I am preparing to pass the test	17.5	7.3	0.1
I am only planning to start preparing	32.4	12.7	0.7
I am not planning on passing the test in any language at all	24.2		

The data above shows that only 5.1% have already passed the test. A quarter of respondents (24.9%) had been preparing for the test at the date of the survey. Almost half (45.8%) had only been planning to start preparing. And yet the other quarter (24.2%) had not been planning to pass language tests at all: these were mostly either those who do not plan to stay in Canada permanently (62% of those who do not plan to pass a language test), or those who plan to immigrate under programs that do not require language tests (38% of those who do not plan to pass a language test).

Table 8.4 below shows the dependence of immigration attitudes on the stage of respondents' interaction with language tests.

*Table 8.4. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their stage of interaction with language tests (% per stage)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently?	Stages of interaction with language tests	I have already passed the test	I am preparing to pass the test	I am only planning to start preparing	I am not planning on passing the test at all
	I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently		45.1	48.0	46.7
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently		41.2	42.9	46.2	<b>23.7</b>
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over		5.9	6.8	5.8	<b>33.5</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity		7.8	0.8	1.1	<b>15.5</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity		0	1.5	0.2	<b>15.5</b>

The above data shows that those who do not plan to pass language tests at all have a significantly lower percentage in terms of their desire to stay in Canada permanently compared to other groups – a difference of almost 3 times.

At the same time, the share in the first three groups does not differ significantly, i.e. the very fact of the active nature of interaction with language tests (from plans to their implementation) shows a much greater orientation to stay in Canada permanently.

## 9. INFORMATION SUPPORT AND SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

### ➤ Sources of information about life in Canada

Information support is extremely important for newcomers. The sources from which they get information can affect the perception of the surrounding social environment since information is not always truthful, especially from unreliable sources. Table 9.1 below shows which sources of information about Canada are used by Ukrainian newcomers (respondents could choose several options and add their own).

*Table 9.1. Sources from which respondents obtain information about Canada  
(% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
Official Canadian sources (websites, newsletters, etc.)	52.2
YouTube bloggers	47.7
Facebook users and communities	64.8
Ukrainian diaspora organizations	32.5
Settlement agencies	27.3
Internet	60.1
Friends/acquaintance	59.3
Work colleagues	24.0
Other	0.4

The sources of information above can be conditionally divided into reliable (official) and unreliable (unofficial). Official sources of information (official Canadian sources, Ukrainian diaspora organizations, settlement agencies) are slightly less popular than unofficial sources of information (bloggers, Internet, friends/acquaintances etc.). Unofficial sources of information are more easily accessible and therefore more popular.

## ➤ Services in Ukrainian diaspora organizations

The Ukrainian diaspora is one of the most powerful in Canada with extensive network of service, cultural, academic, artistic, professional, religious, sports, educational, youth organizations. There are about a hundred Ukrainian diaspora organizations of various areas of activity in the Greater Toronto Area only. These organizations play an important role in supporting the Ukrainian diaspora and in promoting the interests of Ukraine in Canada.

Ukrainian newcomers also use their services. Many organizations literally experienced “a fresh breath” in their activities thanks to active newcomers from Ukraine. According to the survey results,

- 42.7% of respondent used or use the services of Ukrainian diaspora organizations of the Greater Toronto Area, while
- 57.3% of respondents have never used their services.

Ukrainian diaspora service organizations provide a wide range of services to Ukrainian newcomers. Table 9.2 below shows what services are used by Ukrainians who came under the CUAET program (they could choose several answers and add their own).

*Table 9.2. Services which respondents received in the Ukrainian diaspora organizations  
(% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
Job search	17.3
Resume building according to Canadian standards	11.3
English courses	20.2
Filling out various forms	12.6
Housing search	9.3
Applying for federal/provincial financial aid	5.0
Registration of children to school/kindergarten	5.3
Information/consultative support	17.2
Volunteering	3.7
Attend their various events	3.4
Just get some help there (food, clothes)	7.9
Other	4.5
I have never contacted them	57.3

English language courses are the most popular – a fifth of all newcomers prefer Ukrainian diaspora organizations both in learning English and in at least enrolling into LINC courses at other organizations. Information and consulting support (familiarization with available services like help with documents, orientation to the area) is also important because life in a new country is vastly different from the previous one, and Canada has a lot of unique local features which newcomers can become familiar with “firsthand” from professionals. Another urgent issue is the job search – available job openings, retraining courses, job search strategies, etc. Other services are less popular, but no less important.

The next question “Which Ukrainian diaspora organizations did you ask for assistance?” was open, the respondent had to write the answer oneself. This was done on purpose in order to assess whether Ukrainian newcomers remembered the names of organizations which they asked for assistance; 218 answers were received to this question. Respondents could write several names of organizations. The distribution of organizations named by respondents is shown below in Table 9.3.

Table 9.3. Organizations which respondents addressed and which they mentioned

Organizations' names	N
Canadian Ukrainian Immigrant Aid Society (CUIAS)	111
Ukrainian Canadian Social Services Toronto Inc. (UCSST)	56
Ukrainian Canadian Parachute	15
Leleka (Ukrainian Moms of Toronto)	11
Ukrainian National Federation (UNF)	7
Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC)	6
Others	12

Respondents who contacted Ukrainian diaspora organizations were asked to rate their experience with them on a 10-point scale, where 1 represents a terrible experience and 10 represents an exceptional experience (Fig. 9.1).

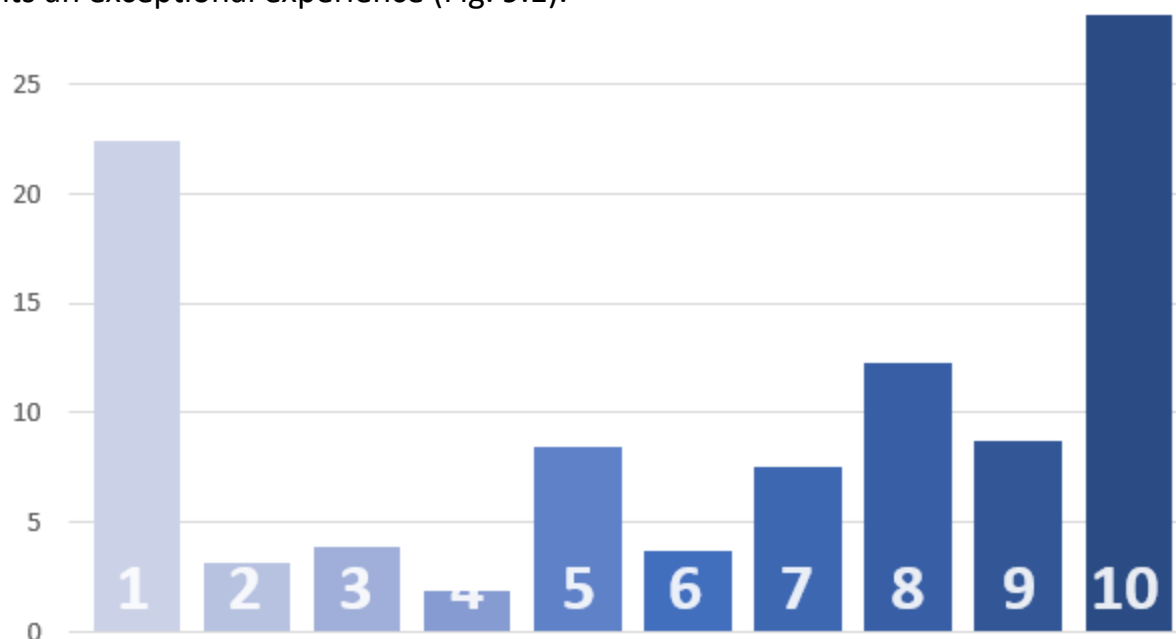


Fig. 9.1. Impressions from interaction with Ukrainian diaspora organizations of the Greater Toronto Area (%)

Impressions of interaction with Ukrainian diaspora organisations of the Greater Toronto Area are as follows: 29.4% of respondents rated their experience as negative (rated 1 to 3), 14% as average (rated 4 to 6), 56.6% as positive (rated 7 to 10; 28.1% of respondents rated their experience as 10 out of 10). More than half rate their experience as positive, which is quite a high evaluation rank compared to other settlement agencies for immigrants. It can be assumed that those who evaluated their experience as negative either could not receive the expected assistance there, or due to misunderstanding with their employees. There is no dependence of respondents' immigration attitudes and their experience with Ukrainian diaspora organizations.



➤ **Services in other organizations for assistance and adaptation of immigrants (Settlement Agencies)**

There are many organizations in the Greater Toronto Area that offer services for immigrants in preparing documents, searching for housing and work, filling out various forms for federal and provincial institutions, and providing consultations on various matters. Some organizations offer a wider range of services, such as help with translations, language courses, support in resolving personal issues, filling out tax returns, etc.

In the previous section, the services that Ukrainian newcomers receive in Ukrainian diaspora organizations were discussed. As for other settlement agencies, the research results show that

- 49,7% of respondents have used or currently use the services of settlement agencies, while
- 50,3% of respondents have never used their services.

Table 9.4 below represents what services are used by Ukrainian newcomers (respondents could choose several answers and add their own).

*Table 9.4. Services which respondents received in settlement agencies (% of all respondents)*

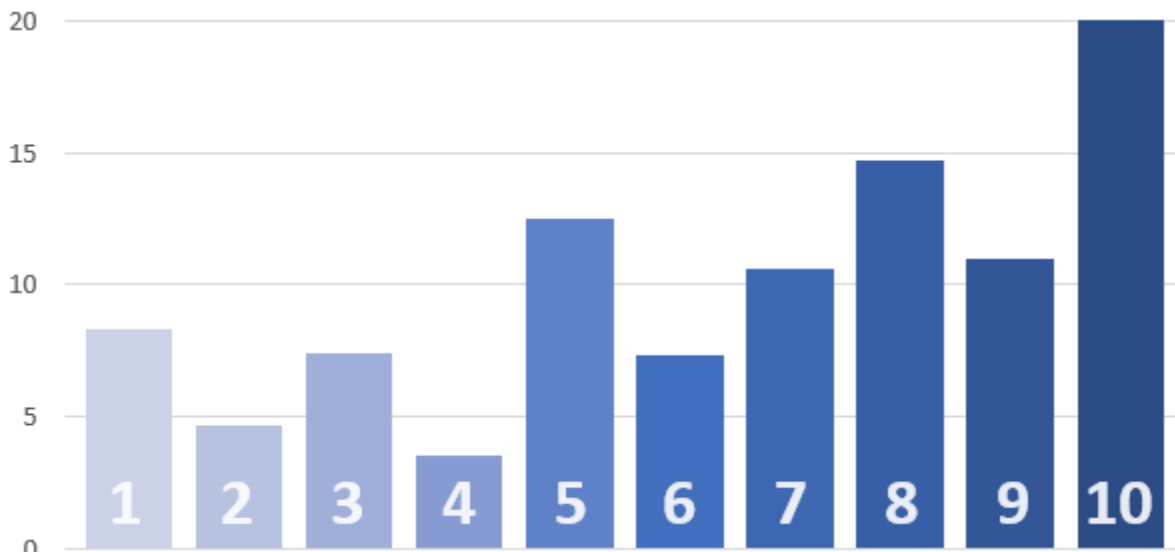
Answers	Share, %
Job search	34.2
Resume building according to Canadian standards	19.2
English courses	27.2
Filling out various forms	6.8
Housing search	8.4
Applying for federal/provincial financial aid	3.6
Registration of kids for school/kindergarten	2.9
Informational and consultative support	14.2
Other	1.5
I have never contacted them	50.3

The most popular requests for assistance to settlement agencies among Ukrainian newcomers are job search (job openings, search strategies, retraining courses), English courses (at least registration for testing and then registration to LINC schools), and resume building. Ukrainians prefer to receive these services from settlement agencies, while all other services (filling in forms, finding housing, information and consultative support, etc.) they prefer to receive in Ukrainian diaspora organizations.

Respondents who received assistance in settlement agencies were asked to rate their experience on a 10-point scale, where 1 represents a terrible experience, 10 represents an exceptional experience (Fig. 9.2).

Ukrainian newcomers rate their experience with settlement agencies in the Greater Toronto Area as follows: 20.4% of respondents rate their experience as negative (rated 1 to 3), 23.3% as average (rated 4 to 6), 56.3% as positive (rated 7 to 10; 20% of respondents rated their

experience at 10 out of 10). More than half of them evaluate their experience positively, which is a high rating. In general, there is no significant difference in experience evaluation between settlement agencies and Ukrainian diaspora organizations.



*Fig. 9.2. Experience of interaction with settlement services in the Greater Toronto Area (%)*

Also, there is no dependence of respondents' immigration attitudes and their experience with settlement agencies.

## 10. SOCIAL CIRCLE

### ➤ Who do Ukrainian newcomers communicate with?

A social circle is of great importance for newcomers. It is difficult to overestimate the influence of the surrounding social circle on the formation of thoughts and attitudes of newcomers. Past and new experiences are intertwined and give way to the formation of new thoughts and ideas. A person goes through a reassessment of values, learns new behavioural patterns and with time finds oneself in a new social reality. The people around newcomers, through their actions and their example, show them how to act and how not to act. The social norms of the host society can cause disgust or the opposite – can make one think about something new, expand the perception horizons. Social contacts that remain with the newcomer from the past life are mixed with new contacts, with new people. All this leads to social transformation, to perception transformation.

The data in Table 10.1 below shows with whom Ukrainian newcomers contact with the most while already in the Greater Toronto Area. Respondents could choose several options.

*Table 10.1. Social circle of Ukrainian newcomers in the Greater Toronto Area  
(% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
My family	60.4
Ukrainians who arrived in Canada through CUAET	75.2
Ukrainians who arrived in Canada before the full-scale invasion	36.7
Canadians of Ukrainian origin	28.5
Canadians of other origins	47.2
Other immigrants	53.4

The data above shows that Ukrainian newcomers communicate the most with their families and with the same Ukrainian newcomers who arrived in Canada under the CUAET program, which is quite logical – the family are the closest relatives, and other Ukrainian newcomers under CUAET have a similar social experience, face similar problems and group together to solve them.

A slightly smaller number of newcomers communicate with Canadians and other immigrants (the numbers fluctuate around 50%) meaning that about half of Ukrainians have good acquaintances and friends among Canadians and immigrants of other origins. On the one hand, this indicates certain difficulties in communication, but on the other hand, the percentage is not that low, therefore, there is no total isolation.

➤ **Ways of finding new acquaintances and friends**

A new social environment inevitably forces a person to make new acquaintances. This is especially relevant for immigrants, because being stuck in their past social circle does not allow them to move forward. There are many new ways to find new friends, and meanwhile, the old ways are also being transformed. Ukrainian newcomers are no exception to this rule – they also look for new contacts, new acquaintances, with different goals – and find them.

Table 10.2 below shows the methods Ukrainian newcomers typically use to find new acquaintances in the Greater Toronto Area. Respondents could choose several answer options, as well as add their own.

*Table 10.2. Where Ukrainian newcomers were looking for new acquaintances  
(% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
At work	22.3
At public events	12.4
In interest groups	7.5
In social networks (Facebook, Telegram, etc.)	23.0
In Ukrainian diaspora organizations	15.1
In other organizations (settlement agencies, churches, etc.)	13.0
I am not looking for anyone in particular	75.1
Other	2.7

Work is a place where one is forced to make new acquaintances, because in the working process, communication arises itself. Other places are places of choice and Ukrainian newcomers visit them specifically with the purpose of making new acquaintances (it is in fact one of their purposes). But it is worth noting that only a quarter of respondents were looking for acquaintances intentionally, while 75.1% did not have such a specific goal.

Some interesting answers from the category of *Other* and from focus groups are provided below.

I am looking for acquaintances mainly online while looking for a job (LinkedIn) because there is no other way. *M, 18–24*

I have no time to look, I am constantly working and too tired for looking for new contacts. *F, 35–44*

While just visiting some new location, I can meet new friends. *F, 25–34*

My wife is a very sociable person. *M, 35–44*

It always happens randomly. I just communicate wherever I can. And I just continue to get to know those with whom it was a pleasure to communicate. *F, 35–44*

➤ **A social circle by language**

The dominant language of an immigrant’s communication with others can show which group of people the newcomer communicates with the most: whether it is family and friends, immigrants from the same country or from other countries, or those that were born in the host country. The dominant language of communication of an immigrant can also influence immigration attitudes (as it was already shown earlier in the example of the language of communication at home).

Fig. 10.1 on the right shows the dominant language of the social circle of Ukrainian newcomers. A little more than half mostly communicate with their social circle in Ukrainian – 52.5%, more than a quarter in English – 28.0%, and less than a fifth in other languages (including Russian) – 19.5%. The results are significantly different from those given in the analysis of the language of communication at home, which means that Ukrainian newcomers gradually but actively integrate into the host society.

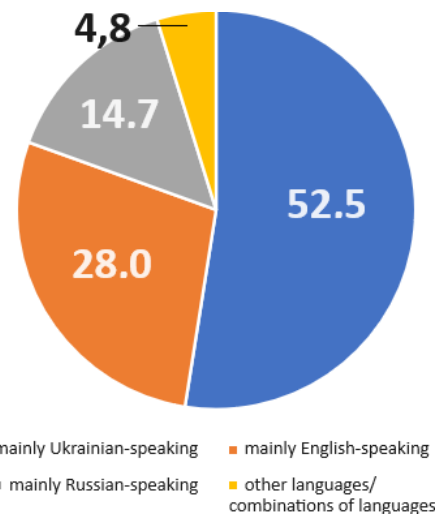


Fig. 10.1. Newcomers’ social circle by the dominant language (%)

Table 10.3 below shows which immigration attitudes prevail among Ukrainian newcomers depending on the dominant language of their social circle.

*Table 10.3. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and the dominant language of their social circle (% per the dominant language)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently? \ Social circle is predominantly	Ukrainian-speaking	English-speaking	Russian-speaking
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	<b>32.0</b>	<b>50.2</b>	39.6
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	42.6	34.3	39.6
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	<b>17.1</b>	8.3	<b>5.4</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	4.3	4.3	8.1
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	4.1	<b>2.9</b>	<b>7.4</b>

The data shows that the dominant language of newcomers’ social circle has a certain influence on immigration attitudes. The most determined to stay in Canada permanently are those whose dominant language of their social circle is English – 50.2%. The least determined are those whose social circle is mostly Ukrainian-speaking – only a third are ready to do all they can to stay in Canada permanently. However, those with a predominantly Ukrainian-speaking circle are more inclined to return to Ukraine in the future – two to three times more than in any other groups. Those whose social circle is predominantly Russian-speaking are a little more determined to leave Canada as soon as possible.

## 11. RETURN TO UKRAINE

### ➤ Motives for returning to Ukraine

Despite the desire to immigrate to Canada, stay and live here permanently, immigrants can still be drawn to their historical homeland. The question “*What motivates you to return to Ukraine?*” was asked to take a closer look specifically at the determinators to immigrate to Canada (how strong it is), as well as to examine specifically the motivators for return to Ukraine. Respondents could choose several answer options, as well as add their own. The data is provided in the Table 11.1.

Table 11.1. Motivators for returning to Ukraine (% of all respondents)

Answers	Share, %
Parents, relatives, family, loved once	50.1
The job I love	11.8
Social circle (friends, acquaintances)	29.5
Love for my hometown/my country	38.2
My house/apartment	35.1
Better conditions for children (schools, kindergartens, etc.)	9.1
Better access to medicine in Ukraine	23.9
I just miss my life in Ukraine	37.6
Other	4.0
Nothing, I am determined to stay and live in Canada	35.4

Motivators of interpersonal relationships, namely family and friends, are dominant – half of the respondents expressed them. Patriotism and nostalgia for life in Ukraine are relevant for a third of the respondents. Personal housing is also an important motivator for a third of respondents. Also, a third of the respondents have firmly decided to stay in Canada – the numbers roughly coincide with a similar question about plans to stay and live in Canada permanently (p. 13).

Some interesting answers from the category of *Other* and from focus groups are provided below.

Canada has not lived up to its reputation as the better country to live in. *F, 35–44*

We are not planning to go back to Ukraine, but we are considering a return to Europe. *M, 35–44*

There is nowhere to return and no one to return to. *F, 25–34*

My brothers and sisters are being killed and I have to offer a helping shoulder to those in need. I lived in Warsaw for 10 years and when the war started, I knew the language and had a good job – better paid than in Canada. I consistently fed 15 people, had groceries from my work and thought that it would be easier to help them when I am in Canada, but I was wrong. I can barely make it here. *M, 45–54*

I will go to Ukraine to die, but I will live here. *F, 45–54*

Ukraine is a country with kind and beautiful people, with culture, food, art, and values. *F, 45–54*

➤ **The possibility of returning to Ukraine when the war ends**

The end of the war can make a change in immigrant’s attitudes towards immigration to Canada because the situation stabilization may actualize the question of one’s place here and opportunities there. In the questions above, it was considered whether Ukrainian newcomers under CUAET are inclined to return to Ukraine when the war ends through the prism of many factors. Here, the attitudes toward return after the war are considered regardless of other factors, and the question of return itself is put differently: whether the end of the war will encourage a return to Ukraine. This question also became a control in checking the immigration attitudes of the respondents.

Fig. 11.1 on the right shows that more than a quarter of the respondents strongly consider the option of returning to Ukraine after the end of the war – 28.2%. This partially coincides with the answers about immigration attitudes on p. 13 if we consider the answers *I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over* and the two questions about an immediate return to Ukraine or Europe which give a total of 22%.

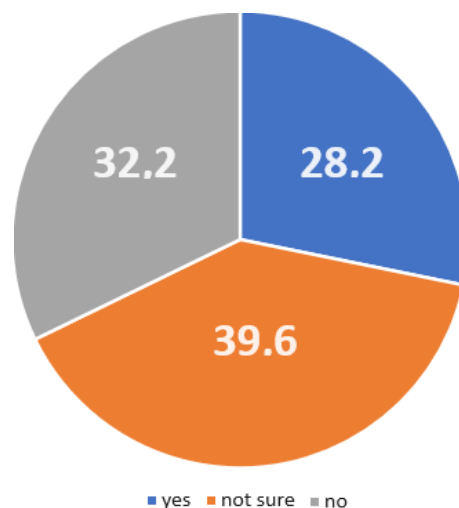


Fig. 11.1. Will the end of the war encourage respondents to return to Ukraine? (%)

➤ **Reasons which can force the return to Ukraine**

A person cannot control everything in their life. Outside factors oftentimes force a person to make unwanted decisions. The desire to settle in Canada permanently may meet numerous obstacles and not come true, remaining unfulfilled. Respondents were offered to answer the question regarding the circumstances which can force them to return to Ukraine despite their intentions. Respondents could choose multiple answers, as well as provide their own. Resulting data is shown in the Table 11.2.

*Table 11.2. Reasons forcing to return to Ukraine despite initial intentions (% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
Visa/work permit expiration	53.6
Emergency with relatives in Ukraine	43.9
Good job offer in Ukraine	17.8
Pension	3.7
Other	2.1
No such reason, I am firm in my decision to remain in Canada	35.0
I will return to Ukraine in any case	14.6

The dominant reason forcing Ukrainian newcomers under CUAET to return to Ukraine is the factor of their interaction with Canada. Namely, it is visa or work permit expiration (their proof of legal status in the country). If newcomers fail to extend or renew their legal status, or convert it into another status, they must return to Ukraine. The second most important reason is the state of relatives in Ukraine. In case something bad happens to their relatives, just under half of respondents are ready to come back to Ukraine as soon as possible and help them.

This question became a control point as well. The data on those who firmly decided to stay in Canada permanently almost coincides with the data on p. 13 concerning plans to remain in Canada. The same can be said about the data on those returning to Ukraine in any case – the numbers are similar.

Some interesting answers from the category of *Other* and from focus groups are provided below.

I will come back in case I end up working a lot but earning not enough money for a good life. For now, we are paying bills and getting by. I am here in Canada for the sake of our child. If our child graduates from high school here, I'll gladly return to Ukraine for retirement. Perhaps even earlier than that. *F, 35–44*

I will return if Ukraine gets serious security warranties like NATO's Article 5, becomes an EU member, and undergoes all the required reforms with good results. Specifically, the judiciary and economic reforms. *F, 25–34*

I won't return to Ukraine until the war ends, but I'll have to return to Europe if I don't have enough time to get a PR or renew my work permit here. *F, 35–44*

I can't return. I would be interrogated in Ukraine, as I lived on the occupied territories. *M, 35–44*

I will return if my family's standard of living in Canada will be bad. *F, 25–34*



## 12. IDENTITY. IMPRESSIONS OF CANADA

### ➤ Identity change

Moving to a new place causes the identity to change with time. The identity may gradually be replaced with another one; or multiple identities can co-exist; or the identity may be broken under stress and changes in the person's worldview, when the old behavioural patterns are replaced with new ones, and the old identity is pushed aside and denied; or the identity may not change at all because the person has deep ties to their historical roots. Time spent in the new country, the size of one's social circle also affect identity. Most often, they shift the identity or cause multiple identities to co-exist. As an example, a person may consider oneself Ukrainian in one situation, Canadian in another, and Ukrainian-Canadian in yet another.

Changes in identity vary depending on the individual and time. Newcomers under CUAET are not an exception. Table 12.1 below presents identity changes in Ukrainian newcomers since their arrival to the Greater Toronto Area.

*Table 12.1. What newcomers under CUAET identify as (% of all respondents)*

Answers	Share, %
I always have been and will remain Ukrainian	59.1
I feel more Canadian, even though I remain Ukrainian	30.0
I identify as Canadian more than Ukrainian	3.4
I have never identified as Ukrainian, yet I don't identify as Canadian either	5.2
I fully identify as Canadian now	2.3

Above a third of all respondents have felt some change to their identity; 35.7% have reported to have some Canadian component in their identity, and for 5.7% the changes have been dramatic, with 3.4% identifying as more Canadian than Ukrainian and 2.3% fully identifying as Canadian. However, for more than a half of respondents the change has not yet occurred, with 59.1% having a Ukrainian-only identity.

Changes in identity can affect sentiment toward immigration, too. Those whose identity changes quicker are considered to favour staying in the new country more. In comparison, those with an unchanged identity and those whose identity solidifies through internal protest, favour leaving the new country. Responses in Table 12.2 show whether this applies to Ukrainian newcomers to Canada under CUAET (respondents from two most numerous answer categories from Table 12.1 are shown).

Data above shows that shifting identity indeed strongly correlates with decisiveness to stay in Canada permanently. Those with a Canadian component to their identity are far more decisive in their plans to stay in Canada permanently. They are also less likely to consider returning to Ukraine or Europe.

*Table 12.2. Distribution of respondents by their plans to stay in Canada permanently and their identity (% per identity)*

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently?	\ Your identity	I always have been and will remain Ukrainian	I feel more Canadian, even though I remain Ukrainian
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently		<b>23.8</b>	<b>58.6</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently		44.7	35.5
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over		<b>19.1</b>	<b>3.3</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity		6.2	<b>1.3</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity		6.2	<b>1.3</b>

➤ **Causes of identity change**

Identity does not change out of nowhere. It changes because of stressful situations, certain circumstances, pleasant moments, comparison of one’s former and current quality of life, changes in the worldview, etc. The survey contained an open-ended question regarding the factors which make the respondent feel more Canadian (not necessarily meaning the prevalence of Canadian traits, but rather their introduction and development). In essence, this question is about the factors influencing identity changes. The question was optional. It was answered by 148 respondents. The replies were generalized into several groups, as can be seen in Table 12.3 below.

*Table 12.3. Factors bolstering respondents’ feeling more Canadian*

Reasons	N
Canadian mindset, worldview, habits	32
Social circle	29
English language	19
Canada being a country of immigrants	11
Tranquility	10
Possession of Canadian legal documents	10
Feeling safe	8
Freedom	8
Stability	7
Rule of law	5
Other	9

Despite the fact that the Canadian mindset, worldview, and habits mean different things to different responders, this reason was particularly highlighted for bolstering newcomer Ukrainians feel more Canadian. Social circle and the English language mark how the environment is perceived. Considering that they take the second and third place respectively, they also actively influence the newcomers’ identity changes.

Some interesting answers from the category of *Other* and from focus groups are provided below.

I had been living in Poland for 4 years before the war, so I adapted to Canada quickly, because it is a Western state with regulations good for its citizens. *M, 25–34*

I feel at home here, but I remain Ukrainian. I had been living for many years in Europe and never felt at home there. *F, 35–44*

I have always been a law-abiding citizen and was accepting of people regardless of their gender, skin colour, or religion. Canada functions the same, so it’s mutual. *M, 25–34*

Canadians treat me respectfully as an equal, not as an inferior worthless person. *F, 35–44*

I’m less troubled about what the others think of my appearance. *F, 35–44*

People are kinder here. Now I want to become kinder as well. *M, 18–24*

## ➤ Impressions of Canada

It is naïve to assume that every newcomer likes Canada. As a country with high standards of living and wealth, Canada has its own specific traits, lifestyle, unspoken rules, and law. Not every newcomer considers them understandable and logical. All of this influences the perception and evaluation of Canada by the newcomers. Fig. 12.1 below shows what Ukrainian newcomers think of Canada on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means horrible impression, and 10 means superb impression.

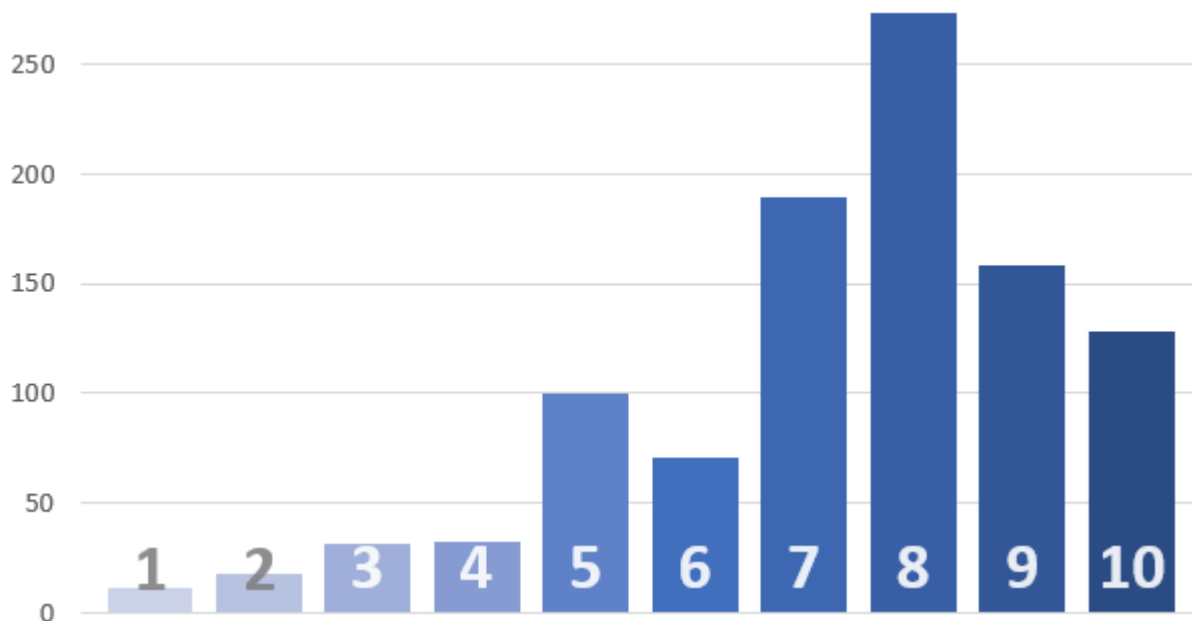


Fig. 12.1. Respondents' rating of impressions of Canada (N)

Negative impressions (rated 1 to 3) were reported by 5.9% of respondents, neutral impressions (rated 4 to 6) by 20.1%, positive impressions (rated 7 to 10) by 74% (12.7% reported a 10 out of 10). Evidently, 2/3 of respondents have very positive impressions of Canada, which means that their adaptation is going maybe not smoothly but still generally positively.

Impressions of a new country can also influence attitudes toward immigration. Table 12.4 shows this data.

Table 12.4. Distribution of respondents by plans to stay in Canada permanently and ratings of their impressions of Canada (% per rating group)

Do you plan to stay in Canada permanently	Rating of impressions of Canada		
	1–3	4–6	7–10
I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	<b>1.7</b>	10.8	<b>48.9</b>
I do not know yet, but I incline to stay in Canada permanently	25.0	49.8	38.1
I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	<b>21.7</b>	<b>20.7</b>	9.9
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	<b>30.0</b>	9.4	<b>1.6</b>
There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	<b>21.7</b>	9.4	<b>1.5</b>

Attitudes toward immigration can differ significantly depending on their impressions of Canada. Those not impressed by Canada mostly do not intend to stay here, while those highly impressed are, conversely, very determined to stay here permanently.

Some interesting answers from the category of *Other* and from focus groups are provided below.

Total disenchantment. Standards of living in Canada are nothing but lies. Everyone borrows credit money to get by. It's a labour camp. No other country has disappointed us so much as Canada. What a waste of money and time. *M, 35-44*

In general, lots of negative aspects, but okay as a steppingstone to the USA. If I had an opportunity, I'd move to the USA, but I don't have such an option now. I realized why people live longer here. That's natural selection. The ill just die with this health care. If health care's speed and quality were any good, and if houses didn't cost \$2 million, maybe I'd stay here. *M, 25-34*

Long distances and living in a basement are something I'm not used to. Canadian holidays are very fun. Job search is the hardest in Canada. Conversations and help are something you can get from everyone you meet, and it calms me down in the times of anxiety. *F, 25-34*

Humaneness is the main trait of Canadians. They're not aggressive. *M, 35-44*

I really like nature and how people handle it with care. It's such a delight when people take care of what they have! *F, 35-44*

Dropped my wallet outside. Came back 20 minutes later, and there it was, carefully picked up and put on the wicket. Everything was still inside. It was a crowded place near a subway station. I was positively impressed. *F, 35-44*

Canada lacks locations for children, e.g. playgrounds. Can't keep the kids busy in the institutions. *F, 35-44*

This country leans heavily toward stability, so in some cases it's technologically behind, but there's a demand for intellectual resource and creative industries. *F, 35-44*

The mindset here is such that Canadian employers don't even realize the value of international work experience. They offered me to start out as a coordinator, even though in Ukraine I worked for international companies as a CFO. *F, 45-54*

I was shelled in Donetsk in 2014, I was shelled in Kyiv in 2022. My house won't be shelled in Toronto. *M, 55-64*

I don't idealize Canada. I mean, I haven't seen much of Canada yet, but it's a great country, and I want my kids to stay and live here. I'm thankful to everyone who helps us. I will never forget this, and I help others, too. *F, 35-44*

This country is so overrated on social networks. One needs to take everything in consideration before taking the move to Canada seriously.

I really appreciate the lack of gender discrimination, I like the Canadians' lifestyle, their positive outlook on things. What I don't like at all is that behind most seemingly sincere smiles hides absolute indifference. *F, 25-34*

## ➤ Impressions of the place of residence

Usually, the newcomer's first general impression of a country is formed based on their first impression of their place of residence – in this case, that is the place of residence in the Greater Toronto Area. Fig. 12.2 below shows responders' rating of impressions of their city of residence at the time of filling out the survey, regardless of the city.

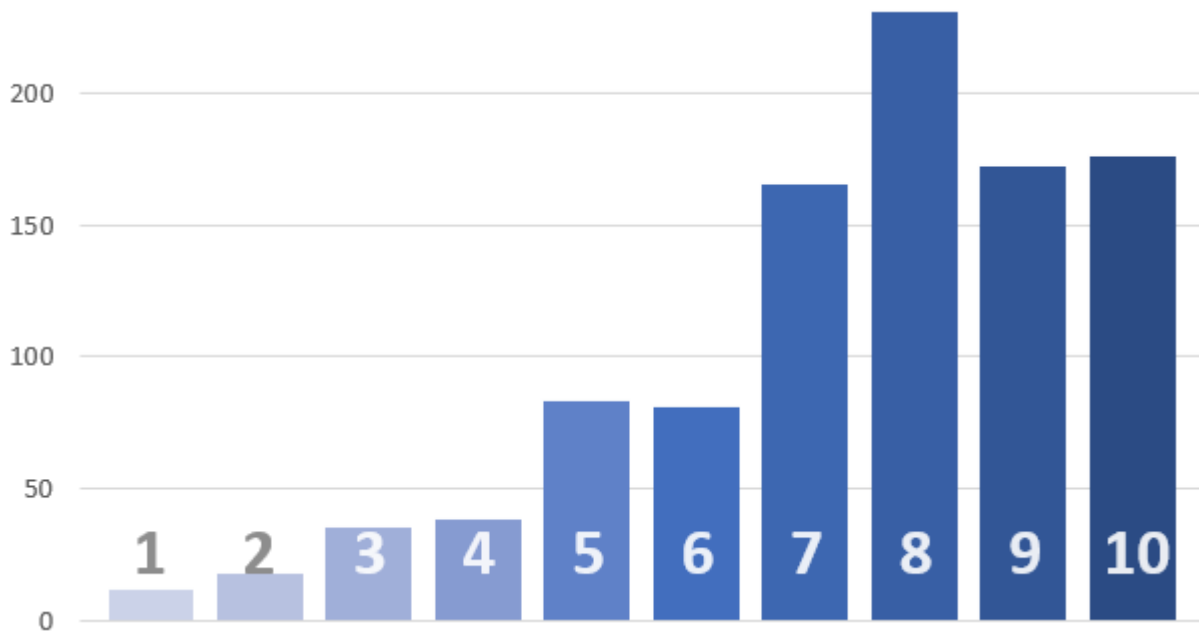


Fig. 12.2. Responders' rating of their impression of the city of residence in the Greater Toronto Area (N)

The ratings of impressions of the city of residence are similar to the ratings of impressions of Canada: 6.4% of responders rated their impression as negative (rated 1 to 3), 20.0% as neutral (rated 4 to 6), 73.6% as positive (rated 7 to 10; 17.4% rated their impressions as 10 out of 10). Table 12.5 below shows the distribution of ratings among the four cities most popular among the respondents.

Table 12.5. Respondents' ratings of their impressions of the city of residence among four most popular cities of the Greater Toronto Area (% per rating groups)

City	1–3	4–6	7–10
Toronto	6.6	20.0	73.4
Mississauga	7.8	19.0	73.2
Burlington	4.7	30.2	65.1
Vaughan	8.6	11.4	80.0

Ratings of impressions of cities share the dynamics with those of Canada in general, even though some deviation may be observed. Below are some responders' descriptions of their impressions of their city of residence, collected from the survey.

Few cool restaurants and cafés. *M, 18–24*

Buses go so slowly, they might as well stroll. Wait time can be more than an hour. *M, 35–44*

I miss European architecture and of all necessary infrastructure within walking distance. I like everything else a lot, though. *M, 25–34*

I love those Mississauga vibes! In 5 months, this city feels as home as my native Kharkiv! *F, 25–34*

## CONCLUSIONS

Unambiguous conclusions are hard to draw from this research, as hard as it is to predict how many Ukrainian newcomers under CUAET will remain in Canada and the Greater Toronto Area in a year, in two, five, ten years from now, and how many will come back to Ukraine or relocate to other countries, this is why conclusions are generalised in Table II.1 below. The table is a generalization of the respondents by their characteristics in their choice of “**I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently**” shown in different tables during the entirety of this sociological report.

Please carefully study the instructions below before reading the actual table!

**How to read the table:** this example row

own	43.6	real estate in occupied territory	37.6	do not own
-----	------	-----------------------------------	------	------------

means that 43.6% of the respondents who own real estate in the occupied territory will do all they can to stay in Canada permanently. But only 37.6% of the respondents who do not own any real estate in occupied territory will do all they can to stay in Canada permanently.

Another example row

5	50.3	rating of feeling safe in Canada (out of 5)	14.8	2–1
---	------	---	------	-----

means that 50.3% of the respondents who rated their feeling safe in Canada as 5 on a scale of 1 to 5 will do all they can to stay in Canada permanently. But only 14.8% of respondents who rated their feeling safe 1 or 2 out of 5 will do all they can to stay in Canada permanently.

*Table II.1. Distribution of respondents who chose “I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently” by characteristics shown in different tables during the entirety of this sociological report (%)*

Most firm in their decision to stay in Canada permanently		Characteristics	Least firm in their decision to stay in Canada permanently	
men	43.3	sex	35.7	women
35–44	42.1	age	22.4	55–64
married	40.3	marital status	33.3	in relationships, but not married
Russian	44.1	language used at home	32.0	Ukrainian
Vaughan	40.0	city of residence in the GTA	37.0	Toronto
temporarily occupied territory	48.5	last region of residence in Ukraine	33.0	Ukraine’s Western regions
own	43.6	real estate on occupied territory	37.6	do not own

ruined	60.0	state of real estate in Ukraine	34.2	not damaged, and local infrastructure was not badly damaged
Poland	42.6	previous country of residence	34.4	Ukraine
5 people and more	48.3	number of people arrived with a respondent	34.0	alone
5	50.3	rating of feeling safe in Canada (out of 5)	14.8	2–1
significantly improved	65.5	mental health while in Canada	9.4	significantly worsened
significantly improved	66.7	physical health while in Canada	12.5	significantly worsened
have a permanent job in their field	52.4	job in Canada	31.5	looking for a job
4	53.5	rating of financial state (out of 5)	27.1	2
never received	39.4	receipt of provincial aid	36.2	received in the past
house	50.0	renting	38.2	room
5	45.5	rating of residence's comfort (out of 5)	25.7	1
intermediate	40.6	English proficiency	32.5	low
preparing to pass the test	48.0	language tests for immigration	11.8	not planning on passing the test at all
English	50.2	dominant language of social circle	32.0	Ukrainian
feeling more Canadian	58.6	identity	23.8	has always been and will remain Ukrainian
7–10	48.9	rating of impression of Canada (out of 10)	1.7	1–3

The analysis of the research results revealed which of the respondents' characteristics have the most and the least influence on their attitudes toward permanent immigration. As such, the main characteristics determining attitudes toward immigration are (highlighted in red in Table II.1):

- rating of feeling safe in Canada – the safer a person feels, the more likely a person will stay in Canada permanently (the difference between different safety ratings is more than threefold). This is logical, as perceived safety is one of the main factors in choosing an attractive place to live/country of residence (the instinctual mechanism of safety),
- mental health while in Canada – those who had their mental health significantly improved while living in Canada had a much stronger desire to stay in Canada permanently compared to



those whose mental health significantly worsened (with a sevenfold difference between mental health ratings). This is also completely logical, as tranquility and mental stability significantly influence the choice of a place to live/country of residence (another instinctual mechanism of self-preservation),

- physical health while in Canada – as with mental health, its improvement significantly influences a person’s desire to stay in Canada permanently (with a fivefold difference between physical health ratings). The better physical health in the new place increases the person’s favourability of staying in this new place permanently (self-preservation kicks in again),

- rating of impression of Canada – comparing one’s current life in the new place to one’s previous life, one’s current social circle to the previous social circle, one’s new financial income to the previous income, one’s new opportunities in the new place to the opportunities in the previous place significantly influences the attitude toward immigration, the desire to stay in Canada permanently (with a 28-fold difference between impressions of Canada). One either likes or dislikes the new place, and the attitude towards it, based on one’s personal experience, significantly influences the desire to stay in the new place,

- the attitude toward completing a language test for immigration directly reveals preparedness and desire to immigrate, as these tests are a compulsory part of applying for the permanent immigration status in nearly every immigration program (with a four-fold difference between the options).

Another important characteristic (highlighted in orange in Table II.1) is identity – the increase of the Canadian component in a newcomer’s identity increases their desire to stay in Canada permanently (with a more than twofold difference).

Analysis of the other characteristics showed a twofold or less difference between the options; however, this does not mean their lack of significance. On the contrary, after investigating the difference, we can understand their significance in determining the respondents’ attitude toward immigration.

The factors least influential on the attitude toward immigration and the desire to stay in Canada permanently are (highlighted in green in Table II.1) the city of choice in the GTA (which makes an insignificant difference of only 3%) and the receipt of provincial aid (which makes little difference, namely 3.2%).

➤ **Respondents' impressions of taking part in the research**

Respondents could optionally share their impressions of taking part in this research. Below are several interesting responses from the survey and the focus groups.

This survey is very well composed, and the questions are apt and well structured!  
*M, 25-34*

Thanks for taking interest in Ukrainians and our lives.  
*F, 25-34*

I hope my answers help in piecing together how life in Canada looks like. I really want to stay here.  
*F, 35-44*

I'm happy to help, even if it has just a little influence on the help for those who immigrate to Canada. *F, 25-34*

Thanks for your interest in newcomer Ukrainians and everything that Canada is doing for us! *F, 35-44*

I had great pleasure in responding to all the questions. This is the least I could do to thank Canada back!  
*F, 35-44*

Thanks. I cleared up some of the questions for myself.  
*F, 35-44*

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for such a survey. Feels like I've completed a psychological test for Ukrainians. *F, 25-34*

Thanks for your survey! These answers were both for you and me.  
*F, 25-34*

Thanks for the questions. Some of them clarified my self-esteem. *F, 45-54*

It's great that you're interested in the newcomer Ukrainians' opinions. I hope it serves a good mission. *F, 25-34*

➤ **Afterword: Attitude toward immigration and changes in respondents' lives 4 months after the survey**

While preparing this sociological report, it was decided to send a mini-survey to the same respondents in order to track the changes in their attitude toward immigration 4 months after completing the main survey. To satisfy the needs of the focus groups, respondents were offered to leave their email addresses if they wanted to. Out of 1011 people, 272 left their email addresses. They were sent a mini-survey later, which was filled out by 168 respondents. The data on the mini-survey are provided below.

*Table II.2. Distribution of respondents of the mini-survey and the main survey by sex (%)*

Sex	Mini-survey	Main survey
men	61.9	63.2
women	38.1	36.8

The ratio of women to men in both surveys almost coincides, which confirms the validity of the end results.

*Table II.3. Distribution of respondents of the mini-survey and the main survey by age (%)*

Age	Mini-survey	Main survey
younger than 18	0	0.5
18–24	8.9	11.7
25–34	33.3	36.0
35–44	31.6	32.4
45–54	19.6	13.6
55–64	4.2	4.8
65 and older	2.4	1.0

The age ratio in both surveys almost coincides, which also confirms the validity of the end results.

Respondents were offered to answer the question “*Have you changed your intentions to stay in Canada or leave?*” in order to understand the change in the respondents' attitude toward immigration 4 months after the completion of the main survey. Table II.4 lists this data.

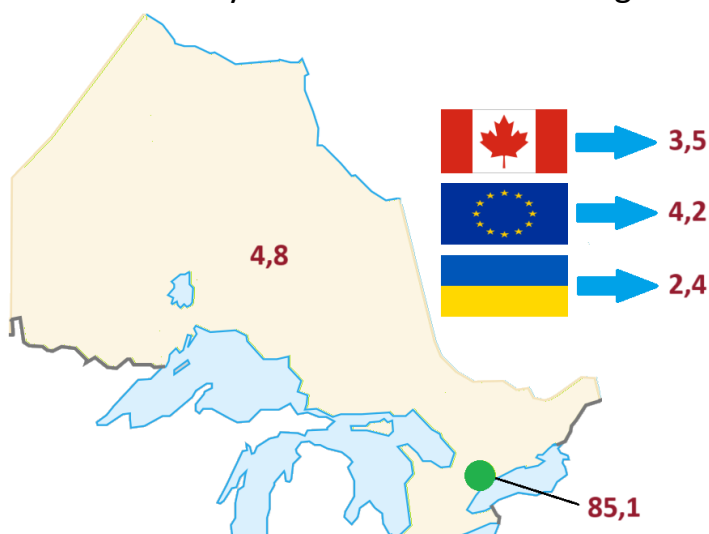
Results reveal that the attitude has not changed for most respondents – 87.4% chose the same option as in the main survey. However, 12.6% changed their mind: 5.4% favoured staying in Canada, and 7.2% intended to leave (6.6% have, in fact, already left Canada, out of which only 0.6% have never intended to stay in Canada for long, and the rest 6% intended to do so).

Noteworthy is the proportion of those who will do all they can to stay in Canada permanently is higher in this mini-survey than it is in the main survey. This is most likely caused by this group being more cooperative than other respondents.

*Table II.4. Changes in respondents' attitude towards immigration 4 month after completion of the main survey (% of all mini-survey respondents)*

Answer	Share, %
My attitude has not changed: I will do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	51.8
My attitude has not changed: I am still not sure, but I still incline to stay in Canada permanently	22.6
My attitude has not changed: I will go back to Ukraine when the war is over	9.4
My attitude has not changed: There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Europe at the first opportunity	1.8
My attitude has not changed: There is no way I will stay in Canada; I will return to Ukraine at the first opportunity	1.2
My attitude is now the opposite: I originally intended to leave Canada, but I will now do all I can to stay in Canada permanently	5.4
My attitude is now the opposite: I originally intended to stay in Canada, but I am now planning to return to Ukraine later on (I am still in Canada)	1.2
I have already returned to Ukraine, even though earlier I intended to stay in Canada permanently	2.4
I have already returned to Europe, even though earlier I intended to stay in Canada permanently	3.6
I have already returned to Ukraine, I never intended to stay in Canada for long	0
I have already returned to Ukraine, I never intended to stay in Canada for long	0.6

Respondents were also asked about their place of residence as of the day of completing the mini-survey. Results are shown on Fig. II.1 below.



*Fig. II.1. Locations of respondents' place of residence at the time of completing the mini-survey (%)*

89.9% of all respondents continue living in the province of Ontario, out of which 4.8% moved from the Greater Toronto Area to other cities and towns of the province. Additionally, 3.5% moved to other provinces of Canada, and 6.6% left Canada altogether: 4.2% returned to the EU, and 2.4% returned to Ukraine.

Results of the mini-survey shown in this afterword demonstrate the dynamics of change in the attitudes toward immigration of Ukrainian newcomers under the CUAET program.

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Author's email: [socadaptimm@gmail.com](mailto:socadaptimm@gmail.com)

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