



Post Distribution Monitoring for Targeted Cash Assistance for Ukrainian Refugees in Poland (May-December 2022)

January 2023





The Russian invasion of Ukraine, which began on 24 February 2022, forced millions of Ukrainians to leave their homes. Until 2 May 2022, 1.07 million registered for Temporary Protection¹ in Poland, the highest number among the EU countries. 94.8% of them were women, children and older people.²

In the initial phase of the response, the provision of unconditional multi-purpose cash assistance aimed to support refugees arriving from Ukraine to meet their immediate basic needs in Poland. Later on, however, a more targeted cash assistance for most vulnerable refugees - and in particular those with limited access to the labor market due to age, disability or caring responsibilities - became more needed.

In May 2022, the Polish Center for International Aid Foundation (PCPM), in partnership with International Rescue Committee and CARE International in Poland, launched a cash assistance program for the most vulnerable Ukrainian refugees, which was later expanded thanks to financial support of HelpAge and the Taiwan Government.

The **Targeted Cash Assistance Program (TCAP)** started in May 2022 and provided cash-based assistance to Ukrainian refugees who met at least one of the eligibility criteria, i.e., have a disability, are over 60-years-old or are a legal caretaker of a person with a disability. Since May, 7,656 individuals (from 5401 households) were registered for the program. 48% of them were persons with disabilities, 30% were people 60-years-old or above, and 22% were legal

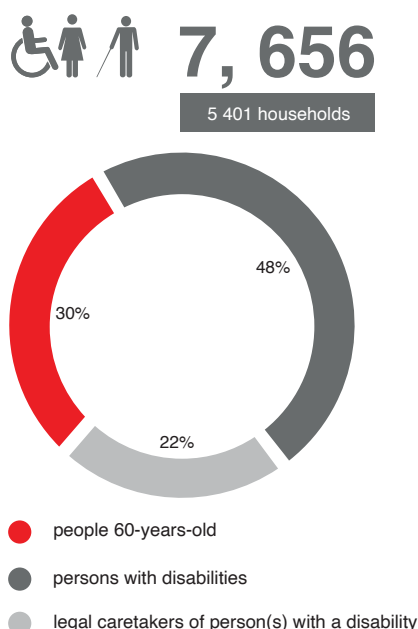
caretakers of person(s) with disability.

Every person enrolled in the program received cash assistance for the period of six months and in the amount of 710 PLN. Among all the registered households, 42% received cash assistance from HelpAge, 36% from International Rescue Committee, 19% from CARE International in Poland, and 3% from the Taiwan Government.

To understand the changing socioeconomic situation of refugees supported through the program, PCPM conducted three surveys on a representative sample of beneficiaries. The questionnaires were conducted at registration (baseline survey: 520 respondents), 2-3 months after the registration (mid-term survey: 637 respondents), and 5-6 months after the registration (endline survey: 358 respondents).³

Sources of income

The average length of stay in Poland before registering for the TCAP program was 4 months. At registration, beneficiaries most often named Ukrainian social benefits (82%), social benefits from the Polish state (48%), savings (29%), family member(s) working in Poland (27%) and cash assistance from humanitarian organizations (23%)⁴ as their main sources of income.⁵ The comparison with endline results shows that while the share of beneficiary families receiving Ukrainian social benefits has not changed significantly over time (80% at endline), more families now receive benefits from the Polish state (32% incre-



¹ Based on the "Special Law" of 12 March 2022, Ukrainian citizens who came to Poland directly from the territory of Ukraine after 24 February, can obtain national identification number (PESEL), enjoy legal stay in Poland and benefit from various public benefits and services for up to 18 months. Importantly, Temporary Protection does not equal obtaining a refugee status. In this report the term "Ukrainian refugees" is used for all Ukrainians who fled their country after 24 February.

² 44.1% women aged between 18 and 59, 44.3% children and 7.4% persons aged above 60. Source: <https://reliefweb.int/report/poland/poland-protection-analysis-may-2022>.

³ In all three surveys women accounted for around 76-80% of the sample and men accounted for 20-24% of the sample. Due to the significant gender disproportion among respondents and the fact that survey questions were designed to measure livelihood indicators on the household level, the presented data is not disaggregated by gender and age of the head of household.

⁴ Receiving cash assistance from other humanitarian actors did not exclude the vulnerable refugees from participating in the TCAP program.

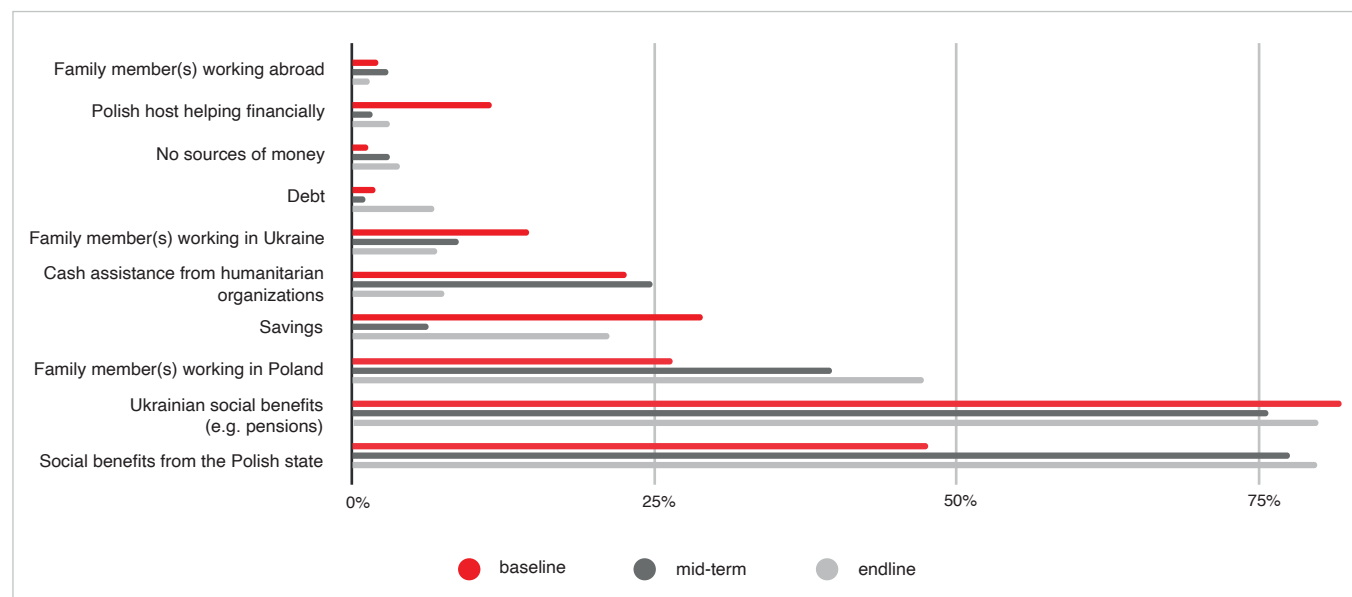
⁵ All questions in the survey included options "prefer not to say" and "other". However, due to the small percentage of respondents choosing them, they were not presented in the analysis.



ase) and have a family member working in Poland (20% increase). At the same time, the collected data indicates a decrease in financial assistance from humanitarian organizations other than the TCAP program (from 23% at baseline to 8% at

endline), from a Polish host (from 12% at baseline to 3% at endline) and from a family member working in Ukraine (from 15% at baseline to 7% at endline).

What are the source of money for your household?



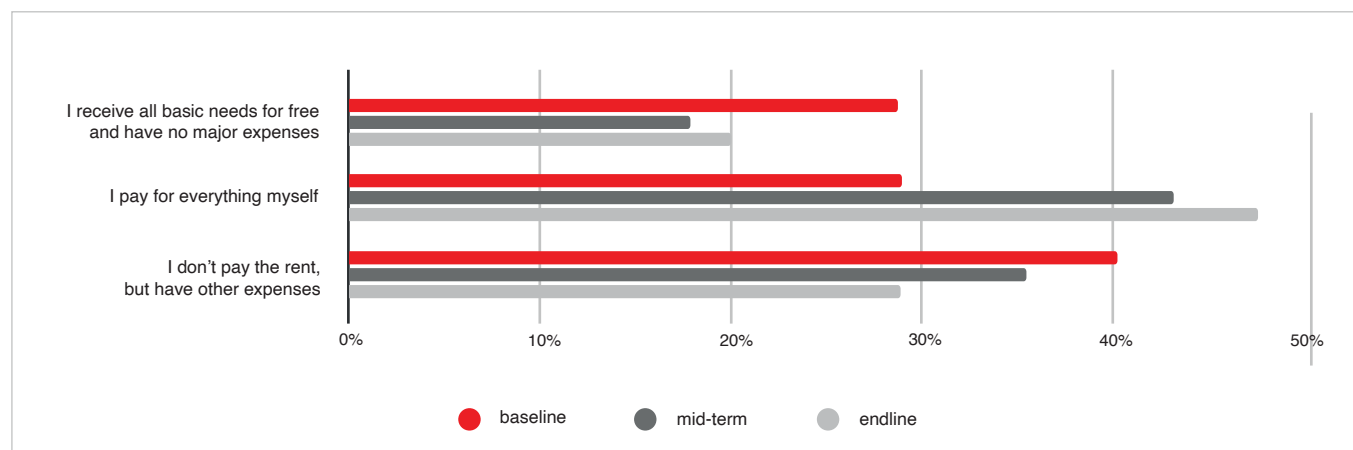
Expenditures

Towards the end of the program the share of beneficiary households that received accommodation for free decreased (from 40% at baseline to 29% at endline), while the percentage of families that have to cover all expenses by themselves increased (from 29% at baseline to 43% at mid-term and 48% at endline).

The results show an increase in household expenditures during the period of receiving the targeted cash assistance. For families that received accom-

modation for free, the average monthly expenditure changed from 1,644 PLN at baseline to 2,100 PLN at mid-term and 2,212 PLN at endline. For families that had to cover all expenses by themselves, average monthly expenditure decreased from 3,734 PLN at baseline to 3,675 PLN at mid-term and increased to 4,123 PLN at endline. One of the significant factors behind this change is a considerable inflation in Poland that changed from 8,5% in February to 17.5% in November.⁶

Which of the following statements is true to describe your living situation in Poland?

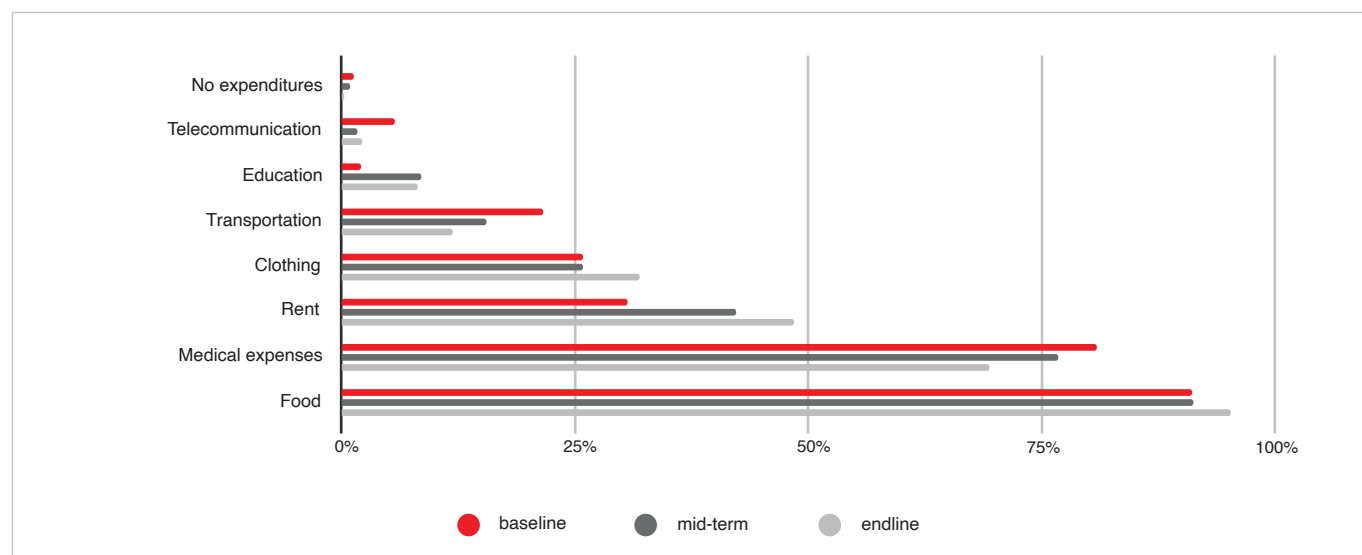


⁶ Source: <https://stat.gov.pl/wykres/1.html>



When asked about the three main expenditure items for their household monthly, in all the three surveys respondents named food and medical expenses as the top two categories. Between baseline, mid-term and endline, more beneficiary families named rent among their top three expenditure items (from 31% at baseline to 42% at mid-term and 48% at endline).⁷

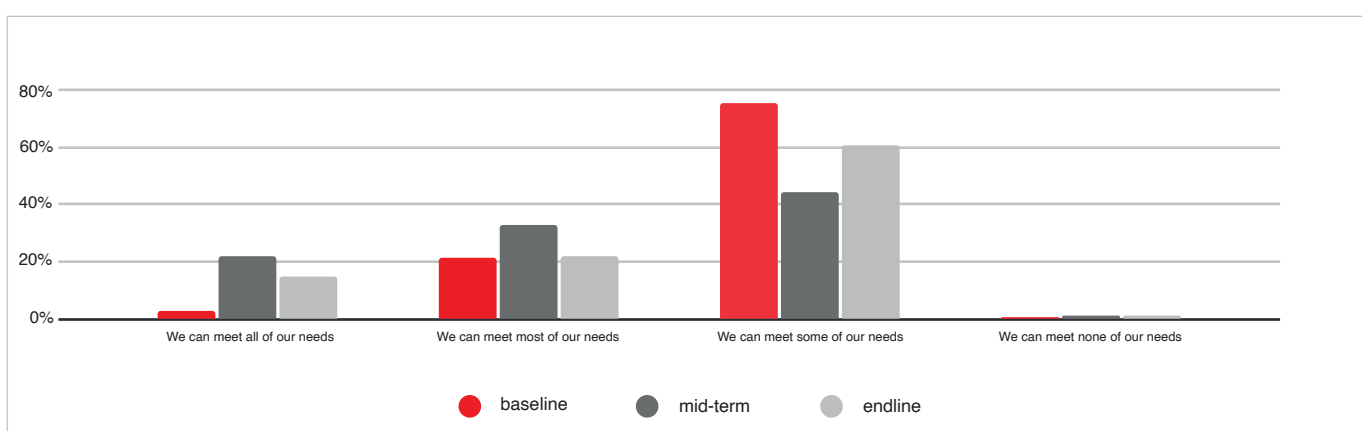
Which of the following are the three main expenditure items for your household monthly?



Basic needs

At endline, 91% of respondents were satisfied with the amount of cash assistance received in the TCAP program and 7% were somewhat satisfied. The results show that during the period of receiving the targeted cash assistance, the level of basic needs' satisfaction among beneficiary families has improved between baseline and mid-term survey, but decreased between mid-term and endline. While at baseline the cumulated percentage of families that were able to meet all or most of their needs stood at 24%, this figure increased to 54% at mid-term, but decreased to 37% at endline.

In the past 30 days, was your household able to meet all, some or none of your basic needs, as you define them?

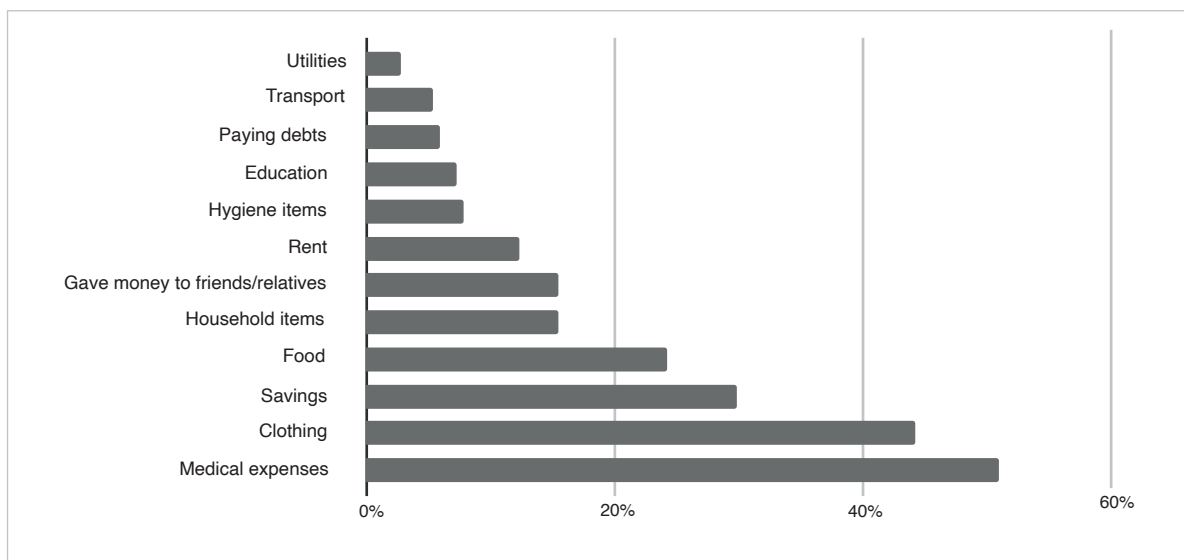


⁷ In the endline survey, additional categories were added to the question on the main monthly expenditure items of the beneficiary households. As a result, 18% of respondents named basic household items, 6% large household items and 14% utilities (e.g. electricity, water and gas bills) as one of the three main expenditures items for their household monthly. However, for these categories no comparison to the baseline and mid-term surveys is possible.



The main needs that the beneficiary families were not able to cover at endline were: medical expenses (51%), clothing (44%), savings (30%) and food (24%).

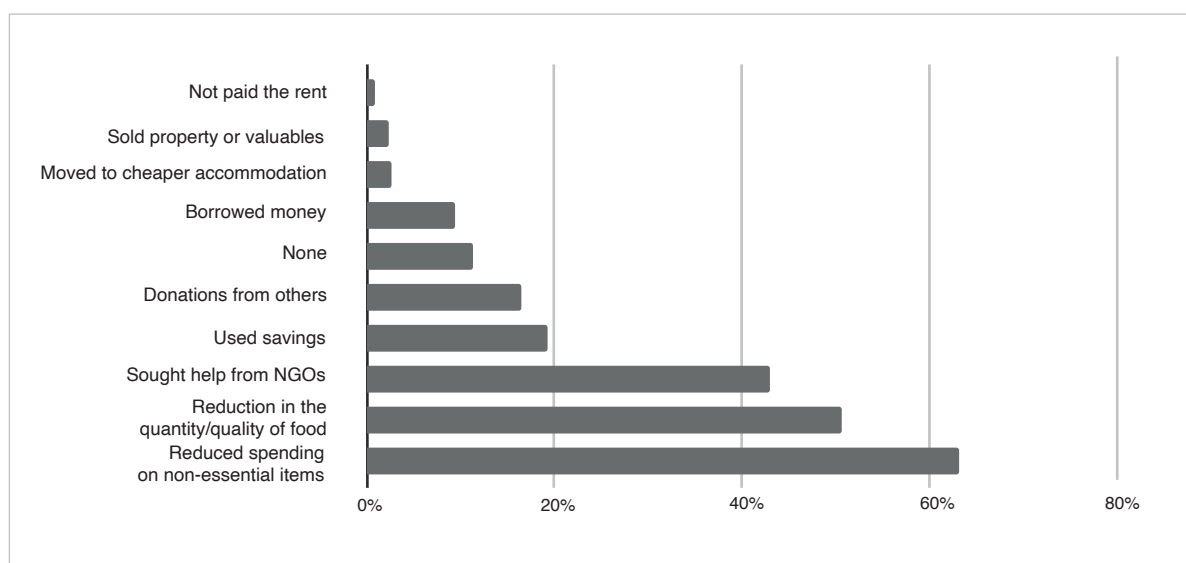
Which of the following are the three main needs your household was not able to meet in the past 30 days?



When compared between baseline and endline survey, more beneficiary families are able to cover their needs in regard to medical expenses (40% increase) and rent (38% increase). At the same time more families cannot meet their needs in regard to clothing (11% increase) and food (5% increase).

The beneficiary households adopted different measures to cover their basic needs. At endline, 63% reduced spending on non-essential items and 51% reduced the quantity or quality of the food consumed. A considerable share of beneficiaries sought help from humanitarian agencies or NGOs other than PCPM (43%) or received donations from others (16%). 19% of beneficiary families used their savings, 9% borrowed money and 3% moved to a cheaper accommodation.

Did you have to take some of the following measures to cover your household's basic needs?





Conclusions

The comparative analysis of survey results allows to formulate some general observations about the changes in socioeconomic situation of Ukrainian refugees that occurred between May and December 2022. On the one hand, as of December more households have a family member(s) working in Poland (20% increase) and receive benefits from the Polish state (32% increase) than at the beginning of the program. This may indicate greater financial stability, however mainly in case of households with family members active on the Polish labor market. For refugees with disabilities and over 60-years-old, the opportunities for joining workforce in Poland are likely to remain limited. At the same time, free housing opportunities for Ukrainian refugees in Poland are clearly decreasing. Between May and December 2022, a clear decrease was observed in the share of beneficiary households who received accommodation for free (by 11%) and who received all their basic needs for free (by 9%). For almost half of the beneficiary families rent is now one of the top three expenditure items.

During the period of receiving the targeted cash assistance, the average monthly expenses of beneficiary households increased by around 530 PLN per month and – for those who pay for rent – exceeded 4,000 PLN. At the same time, the number of families receiving cash assistance from humanitarian organizations decreased by 15%. It is most probably due to the fact that the vast majority of cash assistance programs offered short-term support for three months. Introduction of the de-duplication system in August 2022 meant that the refugees were less likely to register for more than one cash assistance program. Also, as of December 2022, fewer beneficiaries received financial help from the Polish host (9% decrease) or a family member(s) working in Ukraine (8% decrease). As a result, at the end of the program, only 37% of beneficiaries declared that they were able to meet all or most of their basic needs.

Although the number of families unable to meet their needs for medical expenses and rent considerably decreased over this period, the number of those unable to meet their needs in regard to food and clothing has slightly increased. To cover their basic needs, beneficiaries had to take different measures, such as reducing spending on non-es-

sential items and/or the quantity or quality of the food consumed.

Overall, the results show that cash assistance programs are still needed for the most vulnerable Ukrainian refugees to support themselves in Poland – especially for those unable to work. Refugees who are 60-years-old or above find themselves in a particularly vulnerable situation, especially if they live in Poland alone or with another older person and/or person with disability.

The available options for cash assistance provided by the Polish government under Temporary Protection are limited:

01 Ukrainian refugees are eligible for Polish social state benefits on the same terms as Polish citizens. Still, the Polish social security system privileges families with children who can receive several benefits, including the monthly child support in the amount of 500 PLN per child.

02 Ukrainian refugees with disabilities and their caretakers are eligible for state disability allowances. However, the process of obtaining Polish disability documentation is very long and, once completed, the amount of basic disability allowance is relatively small compared to the costs of living (around 719 PLN).⁸

03 Ukrainian refugees who are retired are not entitled to Polish state pensions, unless they have a history of employment in Poland, and the Ukrainian pensions – for those who claim it – are worth around 350 PLN. The older refugees can apply for temporary allowance from social welfare centers, provided that their income does not exceed set limits, and receive cash assistance in the amount of up to 776 PLN (for persons living alone) or 660 PLN (for persons living with family).⁹

⁸ A caretaker who resigns from employment can receive 2,219 PLN per month.

⁹ The income limit is 701 PLN for single-headed households and 528 PLN for persons living with a family. The final amount of cash assistance received under this scheme is reduced by the person's income, in this case, for example, the Ukrainian state pension.



At the same time, the average cost of renting a flat in Poland (depending on location) is around 1800-2800 PLN for a single-room apartment, 2600-3500 PLN for a two-room apartment, and 3000-4600 PLN for a three-room apartment. It means that for older people, persons with disability and other refugees who are unable to work and cannot rely on an income from another family member, it is virtually impossible to rent a flat in Poland.

As the above analysis shows, the total amount of all state benefits available for Ukrainian refugees in Poland may still be insufficient to meet basic needs for this group of refugees. It proves that the cash assistance programs are still necessary to support the most vulnerable Ukrainian refugees in Poland.

The number of households registered for Targeted Cash Assistance Program across Poland

