

Integration experiences of Ukrainian refugees in Ireland

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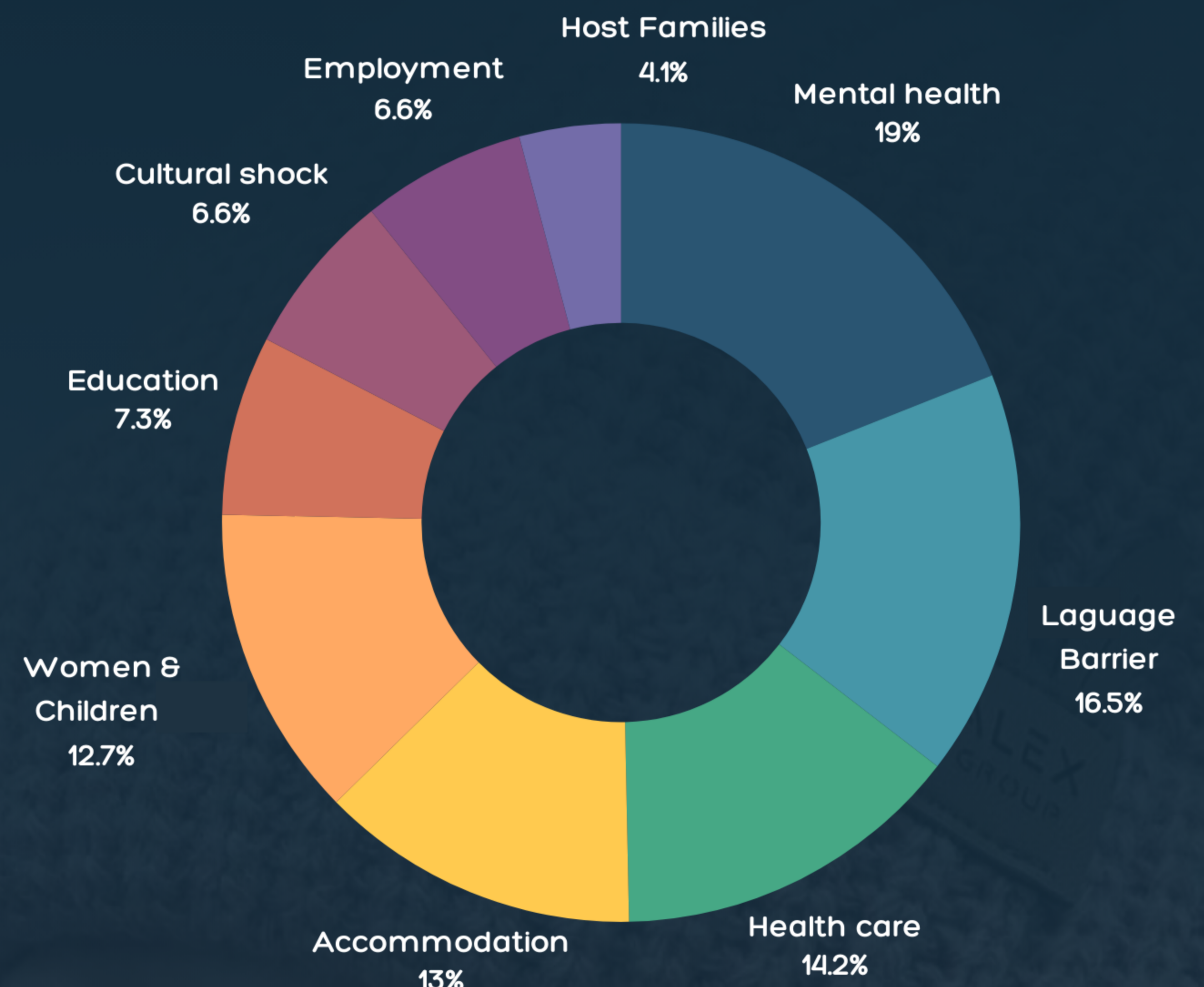
This study engaged with six professionals supporting refugees, exploring diverse perspectives on the integration of Ukrainians in Ireland across various sectors.



Frequency of Mentioned Integration Challenges Among Ukrainian Refugees in Ireland during interviews

Findings

The participant support workers highlighted the main challenges for the integration of Ukrainian refugees in Ireland.



Learnings

The findings reveal several key methods for Ukrainian refugees to integrate successfully into Irish society.

- 1** Mental Health & Trauma: Refugees often bear deep psychological scars but hesitate to seek help due to stigma. Greater awareness, empathy, and trauma-informed care is required.
- 2** Language Barrier: There is a significant language barrier due to limited English proficiency. Accessible information in Ukrainian and improved language supports are essential for successful integration.
- 3** Healthcare: Language barriers and longer wait times in Ireland contrast with quicker healthcare access in Ukraine. The adjustment to these disparities is challenging.
- 4** Accommodation: High rent and limited job opportunities pose challenges like stays in hostels without kitchen access. Matching Ukrainian nationals with Irish hosts needs improvement as safety concerns arise when they resort to social media for accommodations.
- 5** Women & Children: Women and children face challenges in employment and education due to high childcare costs and limited income opportunities.
- 6** Education: Apart from language, the lack of additional childcare support is a primary obstacle for education. While transitional programs help bridge curricular gaps, they are not enough.
- 7** Culture Shock: Encompasses food, gender roles, work ethics, and medical systems. Open dialogues facilitate cultural integration and addressing sensitive topics through awareness and sensitivity.
- 8** Host Families: Challenges setting rules and understanding cultural differences. Ukrainians' direct communication is often misinterpreted as rudeness, and slow responses from organisations risk safety.
- 9** Employment: Language proficiency is an initial obstacle to employment. There is reluctance to apply for higher-level positions due to deteriorated self-confidence and market unfamiliarity.

Cultural Integration Programs: Implement imperative cultural programs encompassing English courses and professional training to enhance accessibility for Ukrainian refugees within Irish society.

Art for Cultural Exchange: Broaden art initiatives to facilitate cultural exchange and providing a platform for expression and establish connections with both the Ukrainian community and Irish population.

Events as a Path to Integration: Emphasise events, trips, and activities for Ukrainians to explore Ireland, fostering cross-cultural understanding and establishing connections between the Ukrainian community and the wider Irish society.

Preserving Culture: Advocate for Ukrainian cuisine, music, traditions and cultural celebrations. Uphold the Ukrainian language through events such as movie screenings and concerts to sustain cultural ties within the diaspora.

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