

INFORMATION PROVISION - PERCEPTIONS OF PEOPLE ON THE MIGRATION TRAIL

As part of the [Mixed Migration Platform](#), Ground Truth Solutions conducted a series of surveys between March and August 2017 to look at the perceptions of people in a range of locations along the migration route from the Middle East to Europe. This brief presents their views on one aspect of

the surveys: access to information and the extent to which they trust what they are told. The findings point to the need for humanitarian organisations, governmental agencies, and the media to improve the way they communicate with people whose need to know is great.

NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED



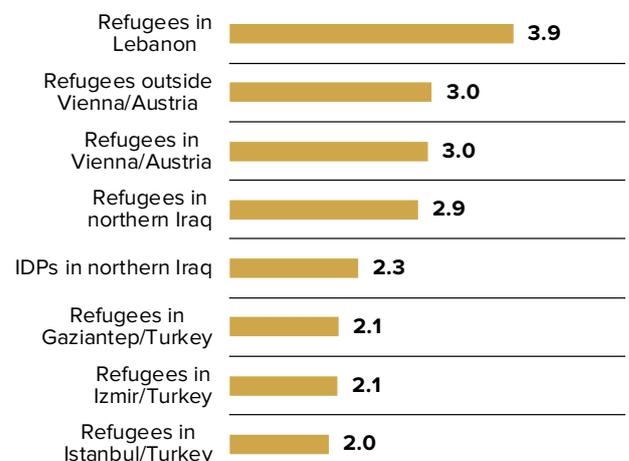
Information on available aid

Do you feel informed about the kind of services and support that are available to you?*

Most respondents in Lebanon consider themselves well informed about the aid available to them, while perceptions are more diverse among refugees in northern Iraq and Austria. In Turkey and among Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in northern Iraq, respondents say they have little information about support options.

When asked about the type of information they need, most respondents in northern Iraq and Lebanon are non-specific, saying they would like to know where they can find information and the kind of aid that is available. In Austria, demands are more specific, including employment, asylum procedures, education, and housing.

Bar charts are used to display response means along a 1 to 5 likert scale, with 1 being the most negative and 5 being the most positive.



Men are also slightly more informed about the aid available to them than women are.



* In Turkey, participants were asked "Do you know what kind of support is available to you from aid agencies and the local authorities?" and in Iraq, participants were asked "Do you have the information you need to get help from relief agencies or local authorities?"

Similar findings

A September 2016 report by BBC Media Action suggests Ground Truth Solutions’ findings are also relevant in Greece and along the Balkans Route. “Refugees reported needing basic information on where to sleep, where to go next, where to find medical care for their children and themselves, what supplies to take, and where to charge their phones or buy a

Sim card.”¹ Internews’ 2017 report about information access for migrants in Italy reveals similar shortcomings: Migrants across Italy “have no means of accessing critical services or information... There is simply not enough capacity to meet the information needs of newly arrived migrants.”²



Preferred information channels

How would you like to receive information about the support available to you? Top three:

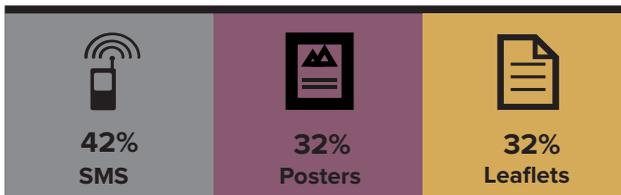
Austria



Turkey - Istanbul



Turkey - Gaziantep



Turkey - Izmir



Refugees in Vienna and other regions of Austria prefer to receive information in face-to-face meetings. This contrasts with preferences in Istanbul, where the preferred means

of receiving information is digital. In Gaziantep, SMS is the favoured information channel, followed by posters and leaflets.

“There is not ‘one magic answer’ to the question of which media channel is the most effective – rather a variety of channels must be used to reach as many people as possible.”

– International Media Support Report on Syrian refugees in Northern Iraq, August 2014

¹ BBC Media Action, *Voices of refugees: information and communication needs of refugees in Greece and Germany*, 19.

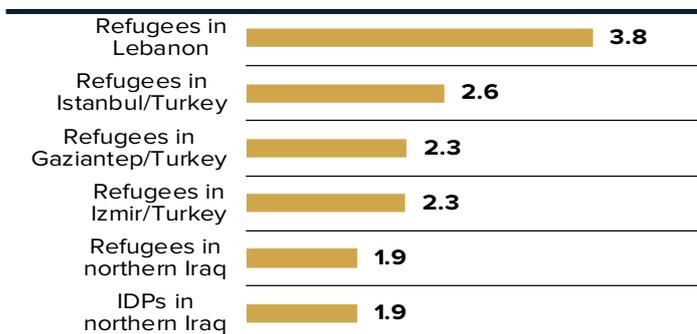
² Foran & Iacucci, *Lost in Translation: the misinformed journey of migrants across Italy*, 9.

Information about further movement

Do you have the information you need to make informed decisions about moving to other countries or within this country?*

Refugees in Lebanon feel more informed about further movement than in other places covered by the GTS surveys. In Turkey, respondents are split almost evenly in their understanding of their options within and outside Turkey. Less than a third of them know where to access additional information on this topic. In northern Iraq, neither refugees nor IDPs feel they can make informed decisions about further movement.

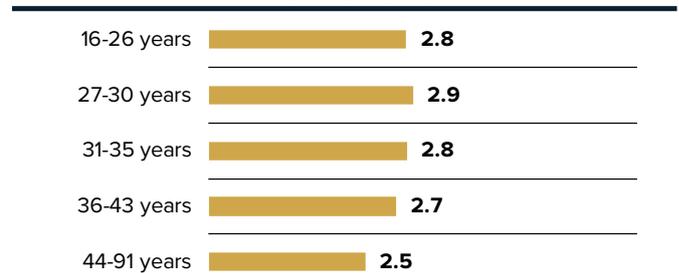
Refugees in Lebanon feel most informed about further movement



Women feel slightly less informed than men about moving to other countries or within their current country.



Those aged 44 years and older report having less access to relevant information than younger people



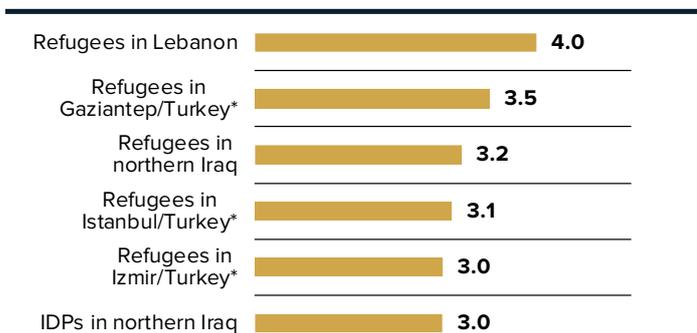
The information collected by Ground Truth Solutions echoes findings from other studies involving migrants. The September 2016 BBC Media Action report, for example,

found that migrants and refugees in Greece wanted to know when and whether the borders would open so they could continue their journey.³

Trust in information for further movement

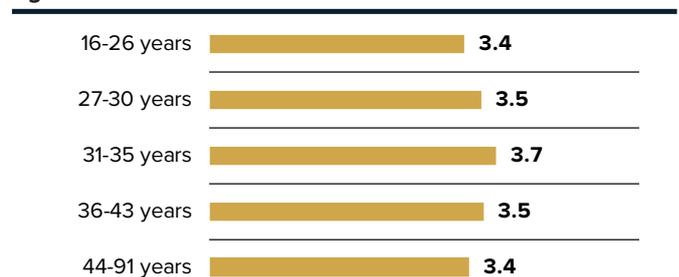
Do you trust the information you receive from aid agencies and authorities about moving between countries or within this country?***

Location



Respondents in all countries report some degree of trust in information about movement and resettlement. Refugees in Lebanon have the highest level of trust; IDPs in northern Iraq have the lowest.

Age



There is little difference across age cohorts although the youngest and oldest respondents are marginally less trusting of the information they receive from aid agencies and the authorities than other age groups.

³ BBC Media Action, *Voices of refugees: information and communication needs of refugees in Greece and Germany*

*In Turkey, participants were asked "Do you understand your options to stay in Turkey or apply for resettlement in another country?"

**In Turkey, participants were asked only: "Do you trust information you have been given from aid agencies about [further movement]?"

Personal smartphone usage among respondents

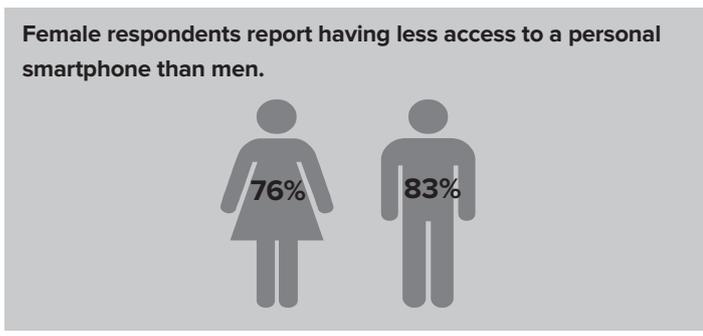
Do you use a smartphone every day?

Refugees living outside Austria's capital were interviewed on the telephone, partly using Facebook and WhatsApp. Those in Vienna, meanwhile, were interviewed face-to-face. This accounts for the

significant proportion of people outside Vienna in possession of a smartphone.

Most respondents across survey locations report having access to a personal smartphone that they use every day. Northern Iraq is the exception, where less than half of IDP respondents do so. The figures in the chart do not include the use of shared smartphones. In Turkey and northern Iraq, this category adds marginally to overall smartphone use.

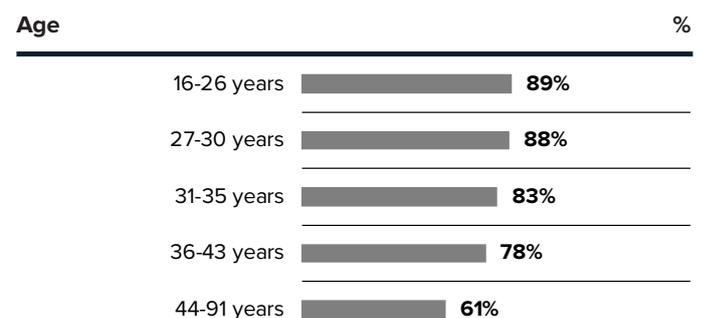
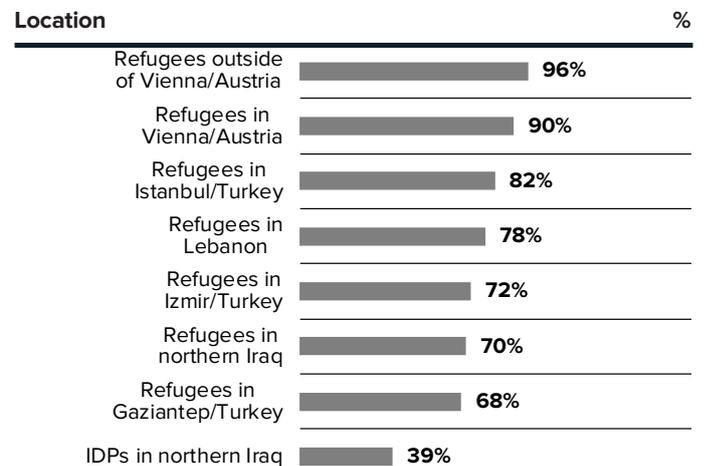
Those using a personal smartphone every day report feeling more informed about the available aid than those not using one on a daily basis, corresponding, respectively, to a mean of 2.9 and 2.7 on a 1 to 5 Likert scale. They also feel more confident about making informed choices regarding moving to another country or within their current country, with means 2.9 and 2.3 respectively.



The widespread use of smartphones, combined with a preference for digital information sources in some locations, makes the use of digital platforms a viable option for information provision as part of a broader package of information channels.

Next steps

Our surveys find that refugees and IDPs lack critical information, but largely trust the information they do receive. Without proper access to information, people affected by crises cannot access vital services or make informed decisions about further movement for themselves and their families. Humanitarian organisations, governmental agencies, and the media must focus more attention on communicating with people in all the countries covered by this research. If



People aged 44 and older were less likely to be using a personal smartphone every day.

your work on the ground confirms our findings or provides a complementary or alternative perspective, we would like to hear from you. Please share your thoughts at info@groundtruthsolutions.org.

For more information about Ground Truth Solutions surveys of people on the move, see the [Mixed Migration Platform](#) page on our website.

Works Cited

BBC Media Action. *Voices of refugees: information and communication needs of refugees in Greece and Germany*. (BBC Media Action, 2016).

Foran & Iacucci. *Lost in Translation: the misinformed journey of migrants across Italy*. (Internews, 2017).

