

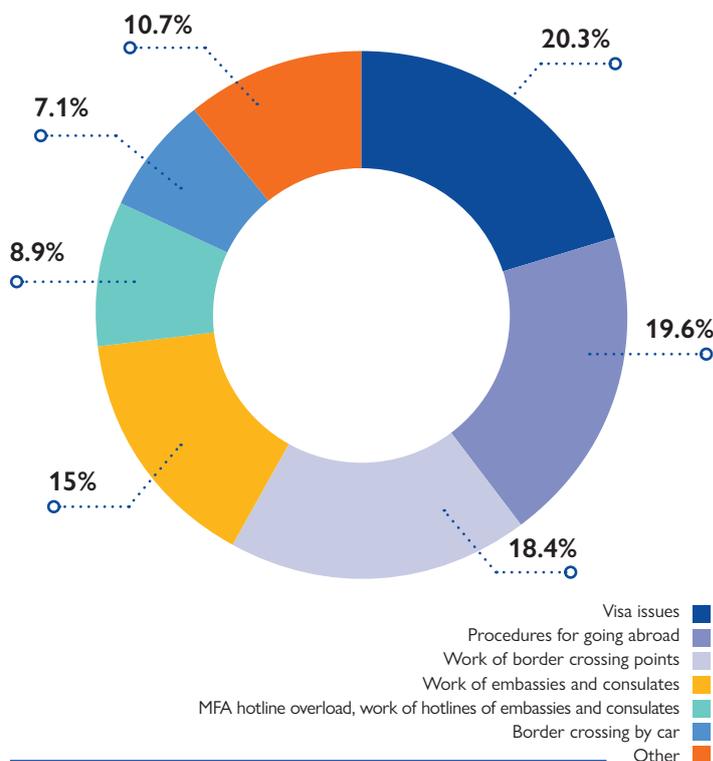
HUMAN MOBILITY AND COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS: IOM-SUPPORTED HOTLINE PROVIDES THOUSANDS OF CONSULTATIONS

In May 2020, the IOM-supported National Toll-Free Counter-Trafficking and Migrant Advice Hotline 527 continued receiving requests about COVID-19 travel restrictions and consequences of the quarantine measures. In total, **the hotline received 1,808 calls and provided 14,140 consultations**, out of them, almost a half (49%) concerned COVID-19, including over a thousand consultations not related directly to the hotline specialization.

Out of 5,789 consultations provided to migrants, potential migrants and their family members affected by COVID-19 restrictions, the majority concerned visa issues (20.3%), procedures for going abroad (19.6%), work of border crossing points (18.4%), work of embassies and consulates (15%), border crossing by car (7.1%). As many as 8.9 per cent of consultations were related to an overload of the hotline of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) as well as the work of hotlines of embassies and consulates.

The COVID-related consultations not directly linked to human mobility, the specialization of 527 hotline, were mainly about quarantine lifting measures (58%) and complaints about the operation of the Ministry of Health and other governmental hotlines (22.3%).

CONSULTATIONS ON MIGRATION AND COVID-19 PROVIDED BY 527 HOTLINE, MAY 2020



Below are some of the stories revealed by clients to hotline consultants.

- A Ukrainian migrant worker reached the hotline to ask for advice on how to deal with his employer in the European Union, as he did not receive the salary for the last two months of his work. According to the man, he was employed officially and came back to Ukraine in March 2020 due to the quarantine restrictions.
- A woman needs to go to Poland, as her husband who worked there on construction had an accident and injured his legs. He is on sick leave and cannot return home, while she has no visa and no more possibility to travel visa-free with her biometric passport.
- An elderly bedridden man stays alone in the non-government controlled area of eastern Ukraine, as his son who had been looking after him died, and his daughter cannot travel through the contact line due to quarantine restrictions.
- A brigade of construction workers from Ternopil Region went to Poland in January 2020. The employer took their documents and kept them by force. They had to work for 14–16 hours per day without any payment and were scarcely provided with law-quality meals. With the introduction of the quarantine in March 2020, the employer gave them back their documents and phones without sim-cards, brought them to the border and released. As it was impossible to cross the border on foot and they had no money to pay for transportation to the Ukrainian side, they had to spend the night out in the open until a Ukrainian borrowed them money and allowed to use his phone to ask for help.



MIGRANTS AND MIGRATION AGENCIES STAFF RECEIVE PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

IOM Ukraine continues to support the State Border Guard Service (SBGS) and the State Migration Service (SMS) in their efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19.

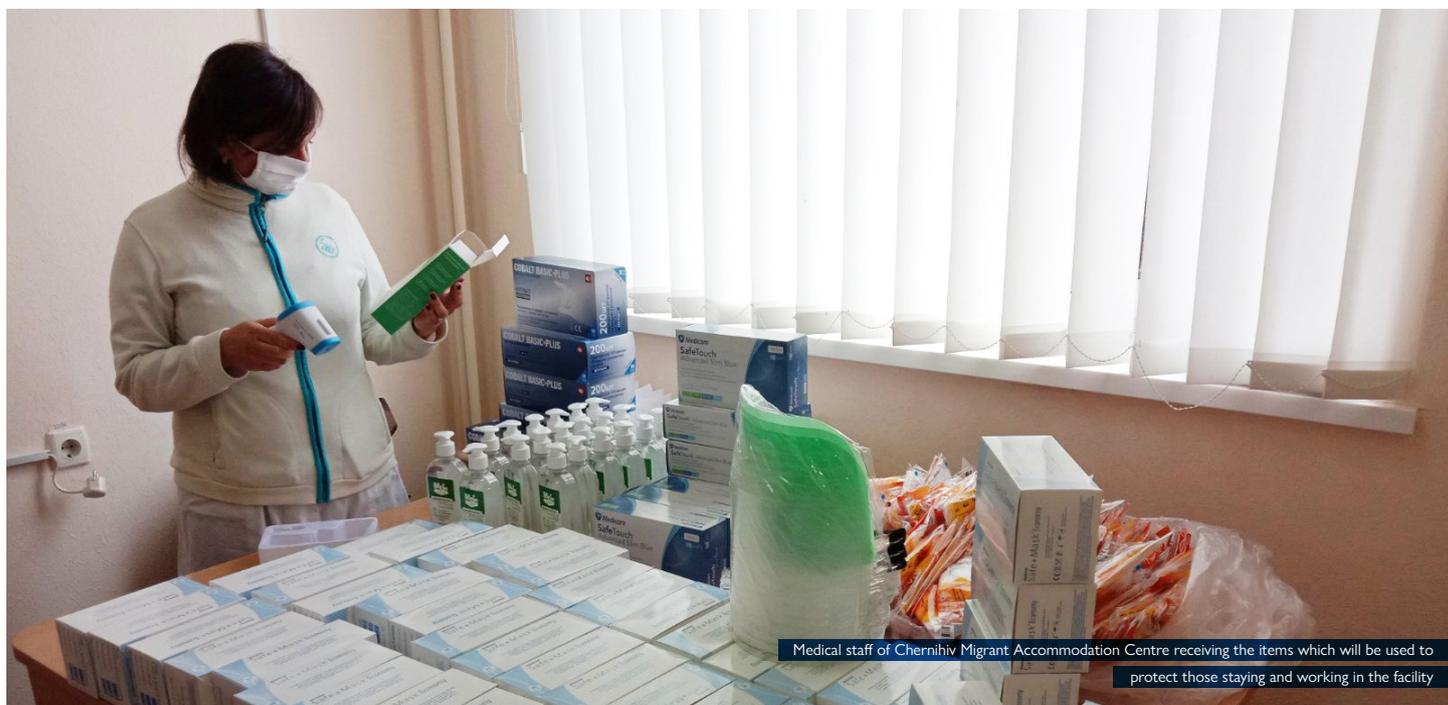
In May, IOM handed over additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to the SBGS and SMS. In particular, 10,000 surgical masks, 2,550 FFP2 respirators, 6,000 pairs of gloves, more than 100 litres of handwash disinfection liquids, 150 litres of disinfectant for premises and surfaces, 45 contactless thermometers and 386 protective visors were purchased with funding from the European Union. The provided equipment will be used at border crossing points throughout the country and at the Migrant Accommodation Centres in Chernihiv, Mykolaiv and Volyn regions.

"We express our sincere gratitude to the EU Delegation to Ukraine and



IOM staff handing over PPEs to the border guards in Kyiv

IOM Ukraine for their support and care for both staff of Migrant Accommodation Centres and foreigners, who are placed there," reads the State Migration Service official statement.



Medical staff of Chernihiv Migrant Accommodation Centre receiving the items which will be used to protect those staying and working in the facility

CONTACTS:

8 Mykhailivska St., Kyiv 01001, Ukraine
+38 044 568 5015

iomkiev@iom.int
ukraine.iom.int

[IOMUkraine](https://www.facebook.com/IOMUkraine)
 [iomukraine](https://www.instagram.com/iomukraine)