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Active labour market policies response to Ukrainian citizens entering the European Union's labour market

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Abstract

The article contains a thorough analysis of the European active labour market policies in the face of the influx of Ukrainians following the outbreak of the Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine. An overview of the temporary protection regulations for Ukrainians adopted by the EU states made it possible to determine the conditions of legal residence and labour market access. Statistical data and surveys conducted by international institutions became the basis for identification the Ukrainian refugee's profile on the EU labour market. Thus, the vast majority of Ukrainian citizens staying in EU states are women with higher-than-average educational level; good or high proficiency in English; who used to work before the war with a non-negligible share in the health and education sectors; and who often work below their qualification. In addition, an analytical comparison was undertaken to highlight the image of migrants who came to Poland before February 24, 2022 and that of war refugees who have arrived following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. Acceptance of Ukrainians by Poles, remarkable similarities between countries in terms of culture, favourable access to the labour market and healthcare are of the utmost significance for both economic migrants and war refugees.

Keywords: labour market policy, Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine, European Union, Ukrainian refugee, temporary protection, Poland

Ответ активной политики на рынке труда на выход украинских граждан на рынок труда Европейского Союза

Аннотация

Статья содержит тщательный анализ активной политики Европы на рынке труда в условиях притока украинцев после начала полномасштабной агрессии России против Украины. Обзор правил временной защиты украинцев, принятых в странах ЕС, позволил определить условия легального проживания и доступа на рынок труда. Статистические данные и исследования, проведенные международными институтами, стали основой для определения профиля украинских беженцев на рынке труда ЕС. Таким образом, подавляющее большинство граждан Украины, проживающих в странах ЕС, составляют женщины с уровнем образования выше среднего; хорошее или высокое знание английского языка; которые до войны работали с немалой долей в секторах здравоохранения и образования; и которые часто работают ниже своей квалификации. Кроме того, было проведено аналитическое сравнение, чтобы выделить имидж мигрантов, приехавших в Польшу до 24 февраля 2022 года, и военных беженцев, прибывших после начала войны в Украине. Принятие украинцев поляками, замечательное сходство между странами с точки зрения культуры, благоприятный доступ к рынку труда и здравоохранению имеют первостепенное значение как для экономических мигрантов, так и для военных беженцев.

Ключевые слова: политика на рынке труда, полномасштабная агрессия России против Украины, Евросоюз, украинские беженцы, временная защита, Польша

Introduction

At the end of May 2023, more than four million Ukrainian citizens, who fled the Ukraine in the aftermath of the invasion by Russia, were under temporarily protection in the European Union (EU). Of those granted temporary protection, Germany accounts for the largest share (28%), followed by Poland (25%) and the Czech Republic (8%) (Eurostat, 2023). Key factors in the determination of destination country by war-fleeing Ukrainians include: geographic nearness, political stability, cultural factors (including language

similarity), extensive immigration networks and personal relationships. This is followed by the extent of democratic freedoms, the possibility of participation in policymaking, attitude to ethnic, national or religious minorities, the level of economic development and the attractiveness of the labor market in the host country.

The article aims to investigate the European active labour market policies with respect to the influx of Ukrainians following the outbreak of the Russia's war against Ukraine. As to the Eurofound (2023), active labour market policies cover public interventions, including Public Employment Services or other publicly funded services for jobseekers, which are explicitly targeted at groups of persons with difficulties in the labour market.

Therefore, the key hypothesis is proposed: the European Union member states have introduced a number of regulations and practical solutions, which has facilitated the integration of Ukrainian refugees into the European workforce.

Moreover, the following research questions were used to guide the research:

1. What initiatives has the EU implemented to offer support to Ukrainian citizens in response to Russia's war against Ukraine?
2. What steps are the EU countries taking to facilitate Ukrainian citizens entering the European Union's labour market?
3. What is the Ukrainian refugee's¹ profile on the EU labour market?
4. How does the image of migrants who came to Poland before February 24, 2022 differs compare to that of war refugees who have arrived following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine?

The study was conducted using a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods of data analysis, synthesis and interpretation, as well as structural-functional approach, and comparative analysis. The initial stage of research involves an overview of the legal framework covering temporary protection measures for Ukrainians adopted by the EU states with particular attention to the Polish regulations. The descriptive analysis

¹ In this article, the term 'refugee' is used not only to those who have been officially recognized as refugees in accordance with the Geneva Convention, but also those who have received some kind of international protection, including subsidiary and temporary protection.

was used to summarize statistical data and identify trends concerning the Ukrainian refugee's profile on the EU labour market. Additionally, a comparative analysis was employed to compare the image of migrants who came to Poland before February 24, 2022 and that of war refugees who have arrived following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine.

The article contains a comprehensive analysis of legal documents, international institution reports, and web sources for finding job in the EU states. Employing various scientific techniques facilitates impartial evaluation of the active labour market policies response and recognition of challenges and prospects faced by Ukrainians in enhancing their entering to the EU labour market.

Legal framework of the research problem

To provide assistance to Ukrainian citizens leaving their country due to the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, the European Union has implemented the measure of temporary protection for Ukrainians. Upon the unanimous approval of all member states on March 4, 2022, the Council Implementing Decision 2022/382 was put into force, establishing the existence of a mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine within the meaning of Article 5 of Directive 2001/55/EC, and having the effect of introducing temporary protection.

The object of this Decision is to introduce temporary protection for Ukrainians residing in Ukraine who have been displaced after 24 February 2022 as a result of the military invasion by Russian armed forces that began on that date. Article 2 of the Council Implementing Decision 2022/382 applies to the following categories of persons displaced from Ukraine: (a) Ukrainian nationals residing in Ukraine before 24 February 2022; (b) stateless persons, and nationals of third countries other than Ukraine, who benefited from international protection or equivalent national protection in Ukraine before 24 February 2022; and, (c) family members of the persons referred to in points (a) and (b).

Bearing in mind the fact that about one million people are being temporarily sheltered in Poland, it is noteworthy to draw attention to the Polish regulations more thoroughly in this regard. A person who is a Ukrainian

citizen and legally entered Poland from the territory of Ukraine from February 24, 2022, due to the armed conflict (regardless of whether he/she came directly or through another country), and declares his/her intention to stay in Poland, or is the husband/wife of a citizen of Ukraine who entered Poland under the conditions mentioned above (even if he/she is not a Ukrainian citizen) is qualified for temporary protection in Poland, under the Act of March 12, 2022 on assistance to Ukrainian citizens in connection with the conflict on the territory of that state (Journal of Laws, item 583, as amended). This legislation was introduced to provide a legal basis for Ukrainian citizens fleeing the hostilities in their country to have legally residency. To gain protection, one must go to a municipal authority and apply for a UKR PESEL number within 30 days of entering the country. In addition to legal residence, the act granted the right to work, access to social benefits, and schooling for children.

In October 2022, the Polish government proposed a Draft act for revising the act on assistance to Ukrainian citizens in relation to the armed conflict in Ukraine and other related acts (*Projekt ustawy o zmianie ustawy o pomocy obywatelom Ukrainy w związku z konfliktem zbrojnym na terytorium tego państwa oraz niektórych innych ustaw*). On January 23, 2023 the president has signed an amendment to law on amending the Law on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine in Connection with the Armed Conflict on the Territory of Ukraine and Certain Other Laws (i.e. Special-purpose Act).

The provisions of the Special-purpose Act shall not apply to citizens of Ukraine possessing, i.a. a refugee status. Despite the commonly used term 'refugee' in the case of Ukrainians arriving to Poland after February 24, 2022 this persons do not possess the status of a refugee. To acquire refugee status, a foreigner should personally apply directly to the Head of the Office for Foreigners, or make the request through the commander of the Border Guard post during crossing the border into the territory of Poland. The main differences between temporary protection under the Special-purpose Act and a refugee status one can see on *Portal prawny dla osób uciekających z Ukrainy, Specustawa czy status uchodźcy – plusy i minusy*, from June 14, 2023.

According to Article 22 of the Act of March 12, 2022 (Journal of Laws of 2022, item 583), Ukrainian citizen is allowed to work in the territory of the Republic of Poland during his/her stay if the presence in the territory of

Poland complies with Article 2(1), or he/she is legally residing in the territory of the Republic of Poland. The entity that has employed the Ukrainian citizen have to inform the relevant district employment office of the entity's headquarters or the citizen's place of residence within 14 days of the Ukrainian citizen's commencement of work.

It is noteworthy to mention that during 2022, the Special-purpose Act has experienced a number of amendments. One of them introduced the provision that work entrusted to the Ukrainian citizen could not be at a lower working time or a lower number of hours than indicated in the notification, and with a wage not lower than that specified in the notification, proportionally increased if the working time or the number of working hours is increased. This regulation was imposed on the initiative of the State Labor Inspectorate in order to ensure an appropriate level of protection for the labour rights of Ukrainian citizens in Poland, and above all to reduce the possibility of exploitation by dishonest employers or becoming a victim of human trafficking, as well as to enable labour inspectors to conduct effective control activities in this regard.

In accordance with Article 23(2), Ukrainian citizens can get any job, except for activities involving direct or indirect participation in the exercise of public authority and functions aimed at protection of general interests of the state in accordance to the Law of November 21, 2008 on the Civil Service (Journal of Laws of 2022, item 1691).

Ukrainians on the EU labour market

By mid-November 2022, close to 4.7 million Ukrainians had registered for temporary protection in the European Union due to Russia's war against Ukraine (OECD, 2023). A considerable number of adults are female with higher-than-average educational levels. According to the results of OECD survey (2023), the vast majority of them were employed before the war with a non-negligible share worked in the health and education sectors. The integration of Ukrainian refugees into the labour force has progressed more quickly compared to other refugee groups. In certain European OECD countries, the percentage of Ukrainian refugees of working age currently

employed is above 40% with the Netherlands, Lithuania, Estonia, and the United Kingdom leading the way (OECD, 2023). The rates seem comparable also in Poland and the Czech Republic, when taking into account temporary and informal jobs. In other countries, the percentage is lower but increasing. The influx of early employment has been concentrated in low-skilled jobs, resulting in an abundance of skills discrepancies. Furthermore, the prevalence of part-time employment amongst Ukrainian refugees is likely due to childcare commitments.

Bearing in mind the formal qualifications standards, the matters of skills transferability and foreign qualifications assessments are especially relevant. Some states have advanced their procedures, including through enhanced promotion and intelligence. Governments have also facilitated entrance to regulated professions by simplifying acknowledgment procedures or eliminating particular occupational demands, particularly in the healthcare sector.

Table 1 shows an overview of the regulations concerning access to the labour market in different EU countries within the framework of this legislation and the extent of support Ukrainian citizens can receive at those countries' public employment services (hereafter: PES).

Moreover, to help people escaping from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a new online job-search tool has been created to make it easier for them to find employment in the European Union. After signing up to the EU Talent Pool pilot initiative, those under temporary protection can upload their CVs, so that they can be seen by more than 4,000 employers, national employment centres and private employment agencies. The EU Talent Pool pilot, which can be accessed in English, Ukrainian and Russian, is available via EURES, a job-searching portal managed by the European Labour Authority. This portal unites national employment services, private employment agencies and employers from all over the EU, and contains 3 million job vacancies.

Table 1. Access to the labour market of Ukrainian citizens in the European Union countries

Country	Access to the labour market / PES support	Available information
Austria	Work permit required. PES provides assistance in the following fields: guidance, job placement, German language instruction, professional development/internship, special aid for women, childcare information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMS, <i>Geflüchtete Personen aus der Ukraine einstellen</i>, https://www.ams.at/unternehmen/service-zur-personalsuche/gefluechtete-personen-aus-der-ukraine-einstellen
Belgium – Brussels region	Gaining temporary protection through enrolment in the municipality, which grants access to the Brussels job market and the services they offer. Upon enrolment as a job seeker, a Ukrainian is able to access the common services of PES or can be directed to a team that affords more comprehensive guidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe.brussels, https://www.helpukraine.brussels/en • Safe.brussels, <i>Employment/ Training, Looking for a job</i>, https://www.helpukraine.brussels/en/lookingfor/looking-job
Belgium – Flanders region	Gaining temporary protection through enrolment at the municipality (obtaining the so-called 'A' card), which grants access to the labour market and services offered by PES in the Flanders region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accompagnement des ressortissants ukrainiens, https://www.leforem.be/citoyens/ukraine.html • Accompagnement des ressortissants étrangers, https://www.leforem.be/particuliers/accompagnement-ressortissants-etrange.html • Recruter un ressortissant étranger, https://www.leforem.be/entreprises/recruter-ressortissant-etrange-infos.html
Croatia	Gaining temporary protection (issued by the Ministry of the Interior for a period of one year). It is possible to register at a nearby/regional employment office, upon presenting the temporary protection card and individual identification number (OIB).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hrvatska za Ukrajinu, https://hrvatskazaukrajinu.gov.hr/
Denmark	Gaining residence permit under the Special Law on Temporary Residence Permits for Displaced Persons from Ukraine (issued by the Immigration Service). Access to the labour market and support of the labour office and municipality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobguide. Ukraine.dk, https://jobguideukraine.dk/for-ukrainian-jobseekers/

Country	Access to the labour market / PES support	Available information
Estonia	Gaining temporary protection – full access to the labour market, PES and unemployment benefits. In the case of residence on a visa or visa-free stay, the possibility of taking up only short-term work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eesti Tootukassa, https://www.tootukassa.ee/en
Finland	Gaining temporary protection – access to the labour market and PES.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finnish Immigration Service, <i>Frequently Asked Questions, Russia's attack on Ukraine</i>, https://migri.fi/en/faq-ukraine • Local TE-service, Special pages, <i>Russia's attack on Ukraine</i>, https://toimistot.te-palvelut.fi/en/ukraine
France	Gaining temporary protection – access to the labour market and PES.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Find a job in France! Employment for Ukrainians</i>, https://www.eu4ua.org/jobs-articles/find-a-job-in-france-jobs-for-ukrainians • <i>Jobs for Ukrainians in France</i>, https://www.job4ua.fr/
Spain	Gaining temporary protection – a residence permit is issued together with a work permit (within 24 hours). Access to the labour market and PES. The possibility of getting a so-called job seeker's card. Individual support path.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EmpresasQueAyudan, https://www.universia.net/ua/home.html
Germany	Possibility to apply for a residence permit, under the Directive, giving the right to work without a work permit. The residence permit is issued by the migration authorities with an expiration date of max. 4.03.2024.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Unterstützung für Geflüchtete aus der Ukraine</i>, https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/ukraine • <i>The Germany4Ukraine Informational Guide</i>, https://www.germany4ukraine.de/hilfeportal-ua
Portugal	Gaining temporary protection – access to the labour market and PES.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portugal for Ukraine, https://www.iefp.pt/portugal-for-ukraine • <i>Main job opportunities in Portugal</i>, https://www.iefp.pt/documents/10181/11349748/Job_Opportunities_2022_03_07.pdf/ddf11507-81a2-43d7-b-312-a663d3d8014f

Country	Access to the labour market / PES support	Available information
Sweden	Gaining temporary protection, obtaining a so-called coordination number. Registration in PES grants access to assistance including counselling (with an translator if necessary), job placement, and support in finding the right path.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swedish Public Employment Service, https://arbetsformedlingen.se/other-languages/ukrainska-ukrainska/vi-z-ukraini
Hungary	The possibility of obtaining asylum, humanitarian or temporary residence permits. The person eligible for employment must register as an applicant for service with the district employment office within 5 working days after receiving the first regular subsistence allowance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Important Information For Persons Fleeing Ukraine</i>, https://www.ajbh.hu/en/web/ajbh-en/important-information-for-persons-fleeing-ukraine

Source: own elaboration.

Ukrainian refugee's profiles and the EU initiative

1. Level of education

Investigation² conducted by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) across a few EU states has demonstrated that 71% of Ukrainian refugees indicate to have a tertiary level qualification, with the majority being holders of a Master's degree or higher. Only 8% of respondents attained no higher than a secondary level of education.

The data³ of public employment services from 2022 are likely to show the most reliable representation of the situation but remain deficient. Thus, the share of highly educated refugees from Ukraine is:

² The EUAA-OECD Survey of Arriving Migrants from Ukraine includes an online study of 3 932 adult respondents between April 11th, 2022 and August 15, 2022 via mobile phones. The sample was predominantly female (82%), with an average age of 38 years (median age of 37). The majority (79%) of the sample fell within the 18 to 44 year bracket, with 18% of the sample in the 45 to 64 year group and a 2% aged 65 and above. The sample is largely composed of Ukrainian nationals (96%), with just 4% (161) being non-Ukrainian residents of Ukraine prior to February 24, 2022. Consequently, the results of the Survey may not be representative of the overall refugee population.

³ The period of investigation and the quantity of the sample differs in different countries.

- 78% – as to the Ifo online survey in Germany;
- 79% – selected group from recently arrived refugees under Ukraine Humanitarian Schemes in the United Kingdom;
- 68% – among those registered by public employment support events in Ireland;
- 64% – among those registered with the Swiss PES;
- 62% – among those registered in Spain;
- 52% – among the slightly less than 6 000 Ukrainian refugees registered at the Belgium PES.

2. Level of proficiency in English

According to the survey in the United Kingdom, Ukrainian refugees often demonstrate a high level of proficiency in the English language (ONS, 2022a, 2022b). The United Kingdom Humanitarian Response Insight Survey conducted in April 2022 revealed that approximately one third of those who arrived in the country under the Ukraine Humanitarian Schemes are proficient or highly proficient in English. Meanwhile, only a small share of refugees speaks other languages. In Poland, for example, a significant share of Ukrainian refugees (38%) stated their fluency in Polish, while a mere 4% in Germany stated they had proficiency in German. Not having the required language skills creates a barrier to integration into their host country, but also restricts them from realizing their skill potential in the job market (OECD, 2021). A clearly majority of respondents, approximately 60%, perceived language obstacles to be the most noteworthy difficulty they faced in adapting to their new environment (IOM, 2022). The same opinion have displaced persons in Poland, Belgium, the Slovak Republic and Spain (UNHCR, 2022a; 2022b).

3. Previous work experience

Data from surveys suggest that large number of refugees (77% as to the OECD-EUAA survey) have a work or business background (UNHCR, 2022a; UNHCR, 2022b; INFO GmbH, 2022; Panchenko, 2022). Among them, the majority indicated to have worked in intellectual and scientific professions. Middle-skilled vocations, e.g. cashiers, secretaries, and machine operators, had lower involvement, around 30% in Ireland and Switzerland as well. Only 4% of refugees in both countries had jobs that

require simple, routine tasks and physical effort. A considerable amount of refugees have been employed in education or healthcare. Findings indicate that the previous experience in education have 13% of respondents in the United Kingdom, 8% – in Lithuania, 7% – in Switzerland; meanwhile in the healthcare – about 8% respondents staying in the United Kingdom, Spain and Lithuania (UNHCR, 2022a; ONS, 2022). It has been observed that the health and education sectors tend to have country-specific access requirements which may present challenges and delays when it comes to the integration of Ukrainian refugees into the labour market.

4. The European Digital Skills Awards

The European Digital Skills Awards (hereafter: EDSA) was developed in 2016 to give visibility and encourage the projects and initiatives that are helping Europeans in all areas of digital competence and endeavouring to bridge the digital divide. At the EDSA 2023, eight applications were presented to provide digital skills to Ukrainian refugee, enabling them to either seek employment in Europe or to support the reconstruction of their home country once the war ends. It was a clear demonstration of the ‘European solidarity in action.’ A majority of the programs providing aid to Ukrainian refugees come from neighbouring states, such as Poland and Slovakia. Meanwhile European partnerships and Denmark participated by promptly modifying their local courses to offer Ukrainians with opportunities.

Table 2. European Digital Skills Awards 2023 – projects aimed at providing digital skills to Ukrainian refugee

Title	Explanation
IVDK Hub for Ukrainians	An initiative undertaken by the Danish Entrepreneurs association in alliance with a variety of Danish entities, including scholars and Digital Innovation Hubs, that aims to bolstering Ukrainian refugees in Denmark to launch their own businesses and aid in the reconstruction of Ukraine. This program offers tailored entrepreneurial training, workshops, and support.
Evening Digital Schools for Ukrainians	A Slovak project led by Ženský algoritmus (Female algorithm) that aims to give Ukrainian refugees, particularly females, digital proficiency within the European Union. The project provides both face-to-face and virtual boot camps to foster digital literacy and tech-oriented skills such as UX/UI design, project management, testing, SQL, data analysis, and programming. The project aims to facilitate the integration of refugees into the local workforce to enhance their occupational opportunities.

Title	Explanation
Diia. Digital Education	The government-funded program in Ukraine, based on the European Dig-Comp2.1 framework, aimed at promoting digital literacy and competency through free online education and resources directed towards the elderly, students, professionals, and refugees. The platform has taken up the mission of providing quality digital education to all Ukrainians, crossing the digital gap and fostering inclusivity.
Ukr Education Hub	A Central European Initiative supported by the International Visegrad Fund, and gather Ukrainian Education Hubs in the Visegrad countries, namely Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, and Hungary. They provide free IT training for Ukrainians and IDPs in these countries, focusing on website development, graphic and web design.
Humans in the Loop	A social venture offering digital training for refugees and those impacted by conflict, working in collaboration with partners in Iraq, Yemen, Ukraine, Lebanon, Portugal, the UK and Afghanistan. Addressing the difficulties faced by displaced people, they offer thorough training in digital skills and enable remote job opportunities. The organization has trained 1,100 people who have experienced conflict and provided them with job opportunities, with a special emphasis on female empowerment.
Start IT. Cisco-4Ukraine	An educational program developed by Cisco Networking Academy and the University of IT and Management in Rzeszów, Poland. It provides free training in cybersecurity and programming to Ukrainians, with the purpose of strengthening women for technical jobs in order to bolster the digital transformation.
ITSkills4U	A project by Amazon Web Services in collaboration with the Governments of Ukraine and Poland and few training and business associations. The goal is to train Ukrainian refugees and internally displaced persons in high-demand ICT and cloud capabilities. The project provides both self-paced and teacher-led virtual teaching, concentrating on cloud computing.
Joint Master Study Programme Ukraine – Slovakia	A project of the Digital Coalition of Serbia, the European Migration Agency and the IT Association, in cooperation with four Universities in Slovakia and nine in Ukraine and the private sector, as a response to the current needs of companies to address the shortage of ICT specialists. The key objective is to reinforce the current connections in the academic sector between Slovakia and Ukraine, thereby allowing the further development of the student and labour mobility initiative for Ukrainian students and graduates in Slovakian public universities.

Source: based on Digital Skills & Jobs Platform (2023).

Profile of the Ukrainian citizens in Poland

For many years, a considerable migration of people from Ukraine to Poland for economic purposes has had a major influence on the Polish economy. The National Bank of Poland has reported that the contribution of

Ukrainian immigration to Poland's Gross Domestic Product between 2014 – 2018 amounted to an impressive 11%. Unarguably, the influx of war refugees from Ukraine after the 24th of February, 2022 has significantly changed the migration landscape in the state, thereby modifying the profile of the Ukrainian migrant living in Poland. Currently, most Ukrainian citizens residing in Poland are comprised of women with children, who frequently work at a level beneath their qualifications.

According to the report presented by EWL Migration Platform in cooperation with the Centre for East European Studies at the University of Warsaw on Cross-border Mobility "Citizens of Ukraine on the Polish labour market. New challenges and perspectives" the following results were obtained (EWL Group, 2023):

- 62% of respondents intend to return to Ukraine in the near or distant future;
- 50% have plans to apply for a temporary or permanent residence permit in Poland;
- 56% of Ukrainian citizens in Poland possess university or incomplete higher education;
- 35% declare good or very good comprehension of Polish;
- 70% state that their offspring gain from Polish education;
- 78% of Ukrainian citizens are employed;
- 24% of respondents were sought job opportunities in countries outside Poland within the last year;
- 55% of Ukrainians currently employed in Poland would recommend work in this country to their friends and relatives.
- 56% of Ukrainians in Poland send money to Ukraine (the vast majority donate money to the Armed Forces of Ukraine).

In view of this, it is critical to contrast the migrants who arrived in Poland before February 24, 2022 and the war refugees who have arrived following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, along with highlighting the changes which have happened in Poland. The data presented below comes from the study of EWL Migration Platform (EWL Group, 2023).

By studying the Ukrainian citizens living in Poland, it is noticeable that a considerable decline of almost twofold in the male population has occurred (from 57% in 2021 to 31% in 2023). A significant rise of almost ½ can be

seen in the share of Ukrainians aged 18-25 (23% vs. 16%), while the number of people over 45 years of age decreased (12% against 23%). There is also a significant drop in those who are looking to stay in Poland for an extended period of time (40% vs. 60%). Taking into account professional qualifications, it is clear that there has been nearly a twofold decrease in the share of Ukrainians employed in Poland that are in line with their qualifications (35% vs. 68%) and almost a threefold reduction in the amount of Ukrainians considering launching their own business in Poland (15% vs. 42%).

Data from the Ministry of Family and Social Policy shows Ukrainian citizens on the Polish labour market in 2018 – 2022 by type of labour market permit document over the past few years (Table 3). Nearly two-thirds of Ukrainians are employed in Poland under a contract of mandate, approximately one-third via an employment contract, with other forms of employment comprising a small percentage (Departament Rynku Pracy MRPiPS, 2023). At the same time, it is observable that 79% of issued documents legalizing the work of a foreigner are released for a period of more than 180 days. In 2022, the majority of Ukrainian citizens worked in manufacturing (31%), followed by transport and storage (17%), administrative and support services (16%) and construction (12%). They were generally hired as: personnel to performing simple tasks – 45%, industrial workers and craftsmen – 18%, operators and assemblers of machinery and equipment – 15%, office staff – 8%, service and sales workers – 6%, others – 8% (of which 2% were specialists). The largest number of foreigners worked in the following regions: Masovian Voivodeship – 21%, Greater Poland Voivodeship – 10%, Lower Silesian Voivodeship – 10%, Silesian Voivodeship – 9% and Łódź Voivodeship – 9%.

Table 3. Ukrainian citizens on the Polish labour market in 2018–2022 by type of labour market permit document

Document type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Declaration on entrusting work	1 457 795	1 505 027	1 363 792	1 635 104	610 824
Work permit	237 827	329 815	299 531	325 213	85 074
Seasonal work permit	132 132	124 091	124 008	111 060	22 843
Notification of work assignment	0	0	0	0	784 545
Total	1 827 754	1 958 933	1 787 331	2 071 377	1 503 286

Source: own elaboration based on data from Departament Rynku Pracy MRPiPS (2023).

Nonetheless, Poland has achieved considerable success in providing employment opportunities to refugees from Ukraine, a great majority of whom have been able to find their initial job. In the opinion of 35% of the surveyed, the most beneficial element for Ukrainian integration in Poland is promotion of labour market access and healthcare (36%). Ukrainians in Poland mostly find jobs on their own (31%) or through family/friend recommendations (31%). This brings to light not only the resourcefulness of labour migrants, but also that the citizens of Ukraine have become an essential element of the Polish labour market. The acceptance of Ukrainians by Poles and the cultural similarities between countries are of the utmost significance for economic migrants as well as war refugees.

Final remarks

Employment of Ukrainian citizens has increased across Europe, with the demographic feature as an important aspect in their finding work. Before the war, it was primarily men who left Ukraine to seek work. They were hired in sectors of the economy with labour shortages (i.e. machine operator helper, welder, locksmith, plasterer, or other simple construction works). After the outbreak of war, mostly women with children came to the European countries. They usually take up jobs in the service sector, catering, hospitality, the care sector (i.e. caring for children or the elderly). Ukrainian women often take jobs far below their qualifications, largely due to temporariness, lack of language proficiency, the legal and accounting system, or qualification that required nostrification of a diploma.

A profile of the Ukrainian citizen in Poland who has come due to the war in Ukraine – a woman with offspring, who plans to return to Ukraine soon; her educational background is either a university degree or incomplete higher education with good comprehension of English and Polish; presently working in Poland under a contract of mandate, but below her qualifications; and sending money to her relatives in Ukraine or donates to the Armed Forces of Ukraine; and she would recommend work in this country to her friends and relatives.

Results of the study allow for statement that the key hypothesis was proved. Namely, the European Union member states have introduced

a number of regulations (i.e. the Council Implementing Decision 2022/382) and practical solutions (like access to the labour market, aid in finding job, EU Talent Pool pilot, language instruction, professional development/internship, development of digital proficiency, free training, special aid for women, childcare, etc.), which has facilitated the integration of Ukrainian refugees into the European workforce. Certain states have implemented more advanced procedures, including through greater promotion and intelligence. Governments have also facilitated joining regulated professions by simplifying approval procedures or removing specific occupational requirements, especially in healthcare.

Consequently, the article succeeded in presenting the profile of Ukrainian citizen by taking into account regulations and practical solutions introduced by the EU member states within active labour market policies response to Ukrainian citizens entering the European Union's labour market following the outbreak of the Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine. The research, however, doesn't consider the benefits and drawbacks of such state of matter on the labour market of the EU states, as well as a economy in general, and deserves to be the topic of further research.

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