UKRAINIAN MIGRATION IN TIMES OF CRISIS:
FORCED AND LABOUR MOBILITY

Dušan Drbohlav, Marta Jaroszewicz
(editors)
Ukrainian Migration in Times of Crisis: Forced and Labour Mobility
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The project was carried out by *Geomigrace* from Charles University (Czechia), together with the *Centre for Eastern Studies* (OSW) from Poland, the *Slovak Foreign Policy Association*, and ‘*Europe without Barriers*’ from Ukraine.

This book is accompanied with Volume II (*Monitoring of Migration Data and Policy Changes Conducted in Ukraine, Poland, Czechia and Slovakia, September 2015 – June 2016*) where results of the monitoring of available migration data and policy changes are presented. The monthly reports served as a statistical and policy basis for our field qualitative study.
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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Dušan Drbohlav, Marta Jaroszewicz
This publication presents the results of one-year in-depth statistical and field research conducted in the framework of the project *Ukraine’s migration monitoring: forced and labour mobility (2015–2016)* financed by the *International Visegrad Fund*. The project was carried out by *Geomigrace* from Charles University in Prague, together with the *Centre for Eastern Studies* (OSW) from Poland, the *Slovak Foreign Policy Association* and ‘Europe without Barriers’ from Ukraine. The project aimed to investigate the possible impact of the deteriorating security situation following the Russian annexation of Crimea and the eruption of armed conflict in Eastern Europe on migration from Ukraine to the EU, particularly to Poland, Czechia, and Slovakia. The project also attempted to identify any new trends and patterns in recent Ukrainian migration to the EU. We also considered the humanitarian, social and economic situation of internally displaced persons in Ukraine and possible linkages to international migration.

The publication focuses on the presentation of the results of our empirical research compared against available statistical data. It also reflects on broader migration-related theoretical considerations and concepts such as nuanced links between forced and economic migration, selectivity of migration processes and the effects of internal displacement, trajectories of migration developments in the destination countries or finally concepts explaining short-term versus long-term migration. However theoretical considerations were not the aim of our research. Our goal was to study, possibly for the first time in a comprehensive way, the impact of the eruption of armed conflict and the destabilization of the security situation in Ukraine on migration patterns of Ukrainians arriving in the Visegrad states. Our research is therefore a case study. Resulting conclusions and related hypotheses reached would need more long-term investigation and comparison with other studies and data when they appear.
The Security situation in Ukraine

In November 2013 thousands of Ukrainian residents gathered in the main streets of Kyiv to display their pro-European views in protest against President Yanukovych's refusal to sign the EU-Ukrainian Association Agreement. The number of protesters increased to a hundred thousand after the government's attempts to forcefully disperse the peaceful demonstration. The most tragic day fell on February 20, 2014, when 88 demonstrators were killed by government security forces and uniformed snipers shot at protesters from rooftops.

On February 22, Yanukovych fled the country and went to Russia to seek protection. Also at the end of February 2014 pro-Russian separatists seized the government buildings in Crimea and a new pro-Russian government was created. The Russian army entered the peninsula. Finally, on March 16 the new pro-Russian government conducted a referendum on Crimea's secession from Ukraine and reunification with Russia. The vote was condemned as illegal by the European Union and sanctions against Russia were launched. The Russian annexation of Crimea forced many people to leave peninsula, mainly Ukrainian military personnel and their families, pro-Ukrainian social activists and journalists and representatives of the Tatar minority who actively opposed Russian intervention.

Inspired by Russia, separatist tendencies have spread further in the eastern parts of Ukraine, leading to back-and-forth fighting, killing thousands and leaving a growing number of people homeless. At the beginning of April 2014 pro-Russian separatists seized government buildings in Luhansk and Donetsk, two main cities in the Ukrainian Donbas region neighbouring Russia. Ukraine's army and volunteer brigades offered resistance, which resulted in bloody protracted conflict. The most violent outbreaks took place in summer 2014 and in winter 2015, however the ceasefire signed in Minsk in September 2014 and later reformulated in February 2015 (the so-called Minsk 2 agreement) was never implemented. As this introduction was being written, the next escalation in a conflict zone was taking place. The number of victims of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine in June 2016 was the highest for the last ten months. Amid renewed serious clashes, 12 people were killed and 57 were wounded, according to UN sources.

In a result of the war, the Ukrainian economy has been seriously affected, shrinking by 6.8% in 2014 and by 10.4% in 2015. According to the World Bank, in 2014 Ukraine's annual GDP per capita was US$ 3,000 (at the current exchange rate), whereas in 2013 it stood at US$ 4,000. According to June 2016 United Nations data, 9,449 persons were killed and 21,843 injured during the conflict in Donbas. Moreover more than 1.7 million people were displaced inside Ukraine.

The current research will attempt to answer whether all those factors have also stimulated Ukrainian migration into the EU, particularly neighbouring Central European states. So far a clear increase has only been seen in case of Poland.
Migration trends in Ukraine before conflict eruption

A large scale of external migration was typical of Ukrainian society for a long time following the collapse of the USSR. However, in 2008–2009 the dynamics of migration became weaker. According to all-Ukrainian research on labour emigration in 2005–2008 1.5 million Ukrainians worked abroad, and in 2010–2012 the figure was 1.2 million. The decrease was mainly due to the global economic crisis and reduced demand for Ukrainian workers in the EU and in Russia. Back in 2005–2008, the most popular countries included Russia, Italy and Czechia, whereas in 2010–2012 the top two destinations were Russia and Poland. ‘Pre-war’ migration was characterised by more rational migration choices inspired by experiences of migration gained over many years and by extensive migration networks in destination countries. Before 2014 the majority of Ukrainian labour migrants came from the western part of the country, in which migration had become a widespread method of coping with poverty and low salaries.

In the period under discussion, migration by Ukrainians was purely economic in nature. This was in contrast to, for example, Georgians or inhabitants of North Caucasus, who had to flee war or persecution. Until the outbreak of the conflict, Ukrainians had submitted virtually no applications for refugee status in EU countries.

EU migration crisis

In the context of the current migration crisis in the EU, migrants are increasingly being treated by EU societies as a burden, and anti-immigration political movements have been gaining ground. Moreover, countries such as Italy and Germany, which are popular with Ukrainians as migration destinations, have to cope with the challenge of integrating hundreds of thousands of refugees from the Middle East and are unlikely to be interested in a greater opening of their job markets to citizens of Ukraine. It is not known, however, in which direction the migration policy of the Visegrad Group countries will evolve and whether Ukrainian migrants in the EU may not fall victims to anti-immigrant sentiments in the host societies as well. One cannot compare the mass phenomenon of asylum seekers arriving through the Balkan migration route (with around 1.2 million asylum claims in 2015) with the inflow of Ukrainian asylum seekers. However, we should also remember that this inflow is also growing (from 14,000 asylum seekers in 2014 to 22,000 in 2015).

Conflict and migration. Nuanced links

Migration is not an automatic human response to occurrences of violence and armed conflict. In deciding whether to flee, civilians usually assess what kind of risk certain violence presents to their own safety, that of their family and their assets. Then they may
make a decision to emigrate, but different persons in the same threat situation may react differently. Some would leave immediately, some would assess that they have no possibility of escaping or that the assets of their family in a conflict area are more important than possible physical threats. Therefore, people make trade-offs between opportunities, assets and short-term physical risk. Surprisingly, poverty and its indirect determinants push people to migrate in normal circumstances but they tend to rather hinder movement in high-risk situations. Conflict, vulnerability, poverty, unemployment and human rights abuses are interlinked closely and in a very nuanced way.

There are several important country-level and regional-level studies investigating the impact of conflict on migration, however they were usually conducted outside Europe. In general, studies in Africa, Asia and Southern America have confirmed that severe political instability – civil wars, genocides and external interventions – leads to increases in international migration and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Those studies have also concluded that economic and social vulnerabilities can be equally critical factors in shaping movements from conflict zones. It has also been established that civil war has the largest impact on migration, followed by genocide/politicide, while ‘ethnic’ conflicts or human rights abuses did not result in large scale movements (Davenport et al., 2003; Zolberg et al., 1989; Moore, Shellman, 2004).

When we look at the studies conducted from the local or migrants’ perspective we may find a slightly different picture. First of all, they indicate that the migration path is usually chosen by people with higher human capital, more universal skills and some material assets. The response of certain communities to a conflict situation may also be different depending on the political and ethnic circumstances, cultural factors, poverty level and on the opportunities to migrate that people in danger may have. The reaction to conflict may also change over time and space, contingent on the conflict dynamics and personal acceptance of threats to security. The availability of social networks as an opportunity to migrate from a conflict zone is under researched (Williams et al., 2009; Clark, 1989; Melander, Oberg, 2006).

The links and patterns presented above could, in general, also reflect Ukraine’s situation when it comes to internal migration and displacement in conflict-affected areas. So far around 1.7 million people from Crimea and Donbas have been internally displaced in Ukraine; however no exact numbers are available. When it comes to international migration trends, however, results from conflict-migration studies in undeveloped states have only a limited resemblance to the current situation in Ukraine.

First of all, the nature of conflict in Ukraine is much more complex. It covers only a limited part of the country. It is a long-term but low-intensity conflict with a variety of ‘psychological war instruments’ applied, and was inflicted by external forces (Russia), not internal ones. Secondly, despite the difficult security situation, the Ukrainian government maintains control over security and social situations in other areas. Moreover, Ukrainian authorities are carrying out an ambitious reform plan, although it has been challenged by a high level of corruption and the excessive political influence of so-called
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

oligarchs. Thirdly, Ukrainians have relatively high human capital and are very ‘experienced’ migrants involved in migration patterns for many decades. The Ukrainian population has also traditionally been involved in trade-related activities in the borderlands with Poland, Slovakia and Hungary. Distinctive Polish, Hungarian and Slovak minorities live in Ukraine, while there is a sizable Russian minority in the Donbas region. Fourthly, alongside the eruption of the conflict Ukraine experienced severe economic decline in 2014–2015 which stimulated migration aspirations in the population. Finally, there are actually no in-depth studies that analyse the level of acceptance to psychological threats in the current conflict situation, meaning that we know very little about the Crimean and Donbas populations’ reactions to the conflict situation.

Research methodology

The book presents migration data and policies analysis as well as results of qualitative interviews (making use of semi-structured interviews and focus groups with experts and migrants) conducted in Ukraine, Poland, Czechia, and Slovakia in November 2015–April 2016. The quantitative overview of migration-related data (visas, residence permits, labour permits, asylum statistics, IDP statistics) and some analyses of the politics/policies of each respective country was conducted via 10 monthly reports (September 2015–June 2016) monitoring migration trends among Ukrainian nationals in both sending and destination states.

Qualitative field research, which of course cannot be regarded as representative, has been constructed in such a way that both country-wide and individual perspectives could be grasped. We have interviewed experts and migrants (as well as IDPs to talk about their migration aspirations). The first group of informants consisted of reputable experts in the field of migration. The second group was made up of Ukrainian migrants who agreed to share their migration experience with the interviewers. In the interviews with migrants and in focus groups with IDPs we attempted to comprehend the substance and quality of the phenomenon, by which we mean the individual experience and perceptions of the migrant. The semi-structured interviews with experts were also qualitative, however here we also asked for some statistical data and, looked to identify qualitative country-wide features using our previous experience with the Delphi method. In the Delphi method expert knowledge is gathered through the distribution of series of questionnaires to reach an ‘objectivised’ subjectivity (Drbohlav, Jaroszewicz, 2015). In the current research we stuck to looser semi-structured interviews, but a certain ‘collective’ vision was grasped as well.

In the first stage, we interviewed a total of 61 migration experts (15 experts in each of Ukraine, Poland and Czechia and 16 in Slovakia) representing different professional backgrounds: government, academia, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and business representatives. In the second stage, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 55 Ukrainian migrants in Poland (20), Czechia (20), and Slovakia (15), who came to those
states after spring 2014. By applying that time limit we sought to find those migrants who may have left Ukraine because of conflict-related factors, and looked at what other reasons they had for emigration if not the conflict. We sought to interview people originating from different geographical areas in Ukraine, to see whether a link between migration and conflict was limited to Crimea and Donbas. We managed to interview several migrants originating from conflict-affected areas in Donbas, but no migrants from Crimea were identified. In Ukraine we conducted 62 interviews with former migrants who recently returned after migration to Visegrad states or other EU countries. Only those returned migrants who left Ukraine after April 2014 were interviewed, again to focus on possible links between conflict, situations of violence and migration decisions.

In all the interviews with migrants, selection of the informants was done via the snowball method. Although gender parity was not a primary aim, we tried to maintain a balance between female and male informants, while also trying to include representatives of different age groups, family statuses and professions. As far as the educational level of the informants is concerned, those with a university education are generally overrepresented in our samples.

Finally, in Ukraine, we conducted three focus group interviews with internally displaced persons in three geographical locations: Kyiv, Kharkiv and Lviv. In each city 12 IDPs were selected to participate in group interviews. The informants were selected among those IDPs who intended to go abroad, with a view to gender parity and geographic origin¹. The technique for the focus group interviews was chosen to reconstruct possible migration aspirations, imaginations and perceptions of international migration among the Ukrainian IDP population.

In all the interviews we respected the anonymity of the informants. When talking with the informants, particularly migrants and IDPs, we made sure that interviews avoided harming their speakers by taking into consideration their needs and interests (e.g. respecting their privacy and not deceiving them with respect to the aims of the research).

The publication starts with an introduction. Then, a chapter giving the results of our research in Ukraine is presented, followed by three country chapters representing the perspective of destination states: Poland, Czechia, and Slovakia. The Ukrainian chapter discusses available statistical sources and the results of interviews with IDPs, migration experts, and migrants who recently came back to Ukraine from Visegrad states. In the following chapters we present the perspective of each of the respective destination states: Poland, Czechia and Slovakia, that were included into our research. Hungary was omitted on purpose since the current migration patterns in this country differ considerably due to Hungary’s location on the Balkan migration route. Finally, some critical observations on the achieved results are given in the concluding section.

¹ It was originally assumed that two people in each group would come from Crimea, the rest from Donbas. However this proportion was only met in Kyiv. In the other two locations it was not possible to find required number of Crimean IDPs.
The text is accompanied with selected graphics (maps and photos). Whereas some of them are freely available on the Internet several others were borrowed from the following two sources: Karácsonyi et al. (2014) and Chreneková et al. (2016).

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Last but not least, we would like to express our gratitude to the International Visegrad Fund, whose grant has enabled us to conduct research on such a significant contemporary topic as recent patterns of Ukrainian migration to the EU and links between migration and conflict in Eastern Europe.

*Dušan Drbohlav, Marta Jaroszewicz, Prague/Warsaw, August 2016*
REFERENCES

Chapter 1

UKRAINIAN MIGRATION ABROAD DURING THE CONTEMPORARY CRISIS: ECONOMIC REASONS STILL PREVAIL

Iryna Sushko, Kateryna Kulchytska, Daryna Koriagina ("Europe without Barriers")
Oleksiy Pozniak (The Ptukha Institute of Demography and Social Studies,
National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine)
1.1 INTRODUCTION

Until recently Ukraine was a country serving mainly as a source of cheap labour or a transfer hub for foreign nationals, thus contributing to international migration flows itself and serving as an intermediary point for others. Contemporary political and security developments in Ukraine and the region have both contributed to the drastic change in migration flows and the reasons behind it since 2013–2014. Currently the following migratory patterns are typical of Ukraine:

- High levels of outgoing labour migration;
- An increasing tendency of temporary labour migration to transform into permanent;
- The appearance of new forms of displacement in Ukraine – the movement of internally displaced persons (IDPs); problems related to their adjustment and adaptation to new places of residence;
- A decrease in the number of people arriving in Ukraine – both reverse migration of Ukrainian citizens and foreign immigration;
- A low integration level of foreigners, residing in Ukraine.

Before 2014, labour migration was the most common pattern of all migration flows in Ukraine. Today, migration is related to the situation in the Donbas area (and in Crimea) and has reached a level that is comparable to, and perhaps even larger than, the level of labour migration. However, events in Eastern Ukraine have also affected the outgoing labour migration.

According to monthly reports of Europe without Barriers (September 2015 – April 2016), the number of IDPs saw a steady increase of 3–5% monthly (from 1,505,570 officially registered IDPs from the start of the conflict and up to September 2015 to 1,783,361 in April 2016) (Europe without Barriers, 2015 and 2016), as well as flow of asylum seekers and labour migrants. The Russian Federation remains the main destination country for the two latter categories with 459,500 asylum seekers (according to the data from UNHCR, referred to in the reports) (Europe without Barriers, 2015 and 2016), while in the four Visegrad group countries there were registered smaller number of asylum seekers. As for the IDPs, the amount of social support is gradually increasing, although it is still insufficient. However since February 2016 some social benefits have been suspended. All in all, the situation calls for in-depth research into the reasons for these phenomena.

1.1.1 Migration patterns of Ukrainian citizens prior to 2014

Ukraine is one of the largest suppliers of a labour force in Europe. Unfortunately, statistical data and systematic interviews, conducted in Ukraine do not provide accurate information on foreign labour migration. Only two nationwide interviews on this issue have been held in Ukraine (in 2008 and 2012). The first national interview on labour
migration was conducted by the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine (now – State Statistics Service of Ukraine), together with specialists of the Ptoukha Institute for Demography and Social Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (PIDSS of NASU) in mid-2008. According to the data, 1.5 million Ukrainian citizens were working abroad during the period from 2005 to the first half of 2008, which is 5.1% of Ukraine’s working age population (men 16–59 years, women 16–54 years) (State Statistical Committee of Ukraine, 2009). The second national interview on labour migration was conducted by the State Statistics Service together with PIDSS of NASU in April–June 2012 at the request of International Labour Organization. According to its results, the number of Ukrainian citizens aged 15–70 years who were working or looking for a job abroad was about 1.2 million or 3.4% of the population of relevant age during the period from 1 January 2010 to 17 June 2012 (International Labour Organization, 2013). Both interviews have not included those households where all family members had migrated and have been living abroad for many years. Nor did they include persons, who went abroad for work before 2005 (for the interview conducted in 2008) or 2010 (for the interview conducted in 2012) and have not come back to Ukraine. This means that the actual number of Ukrainians working abroad is higher.

Labour migration is more common among men, according to a national interview conducted in 2012; they make up two-thirds of the total number of labour migrants. The largest number of labour migrants is aged 25–49 (International Labour Organization, 2013). Those are people who already possess some experience and skills and maintain a high level of efficiency at the same time. It is worth noting that men start to engage in labour migration around the age of 25, while women start at 30. To some extent, this is caused by the risk of becoming a victim of human trafficking. However, while migration activity among men at the age of 50+ years old is reducing quickly, there is quite a high rate of labour migration among women of pre-retirement and early retirement age. Moreover, after reaching retirement age, Ukrainian women have an opportunity to receive a pension in Ukraine and work abroad at the same time, which has led to these changes in the labour migration intensity of older women.

Village residents make up 54.3% of labour migrants. The level of the rural population involved in labour migration between the ages of 15 and 70 is 2.9 times higher than that of the urban population: 6.3% vs. 2.2%. A higher rate of international labour migration is observed in the western regions of Ukraine. According to the second national interview conducted in 2012, the residents of seven western Ukrainian regions (Volyns’ka, Lvivs’ka, Rivnens’ka, Zakarpats’ka, Ternopils’ka, Ivano-Frankivs’ka, Chernivets’ka oblast’s) make up more than two thirds of all labour migrants, although they represent less than 20% of the economically active population.

² Definitions of “rural”, “urban” and “urban-type settlement” as described in an Official Decree of the President of Verkhovna Rada from March 12, 1981. Available at: http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1654-10 (Accessed 21 July 2016).
National interviews on labour migration in Ukraine have not been conducted since 2012 and consequently we can only judge the latest changes in migration process based on data from sociological interviews conducted by various institutions and expert assessments. The Yaremenko Ukrainian Institute for Social Research conducted an interview ‘Public opinion on social and economic orientations of the economically active population of Ukraine’ in 24 regions of Ukraine and in the city of Kyiv in August 2015. According to the results, 4.3% of the economically active population of Ukraine had worked abroad for 30 days or more in the period of 12 months before the interview was conducted. Almost three times more informants (12.4%) said that family members had worked or still work abroad.

The rate of migration of family members with regard to different regions and settlement types generally corresponds to the results of national interviews of 2008 and 2012. At the same time, the percentage of people who had themselves worked abroad was higher in cities. Regional differences in personal involvement are marginal when compared to that of family member participation. Moreover, the highest rate of personal involvement is observed in Kyiv (the Western region is second) (Fig. 1). Evidently the responses to questions about family members working abroad show stable and usually long or circular external labour migration: family members of informants who have been

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\[\text{Fig. 1} \text{ The percentage of informants who were working abroad and the informants whose family members have worked or still work abroad, arranged by regions (%)}\]

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig1}
\caption{The percentage of informants who were working abroad and the informants whose family members have worked or still work abroad, arranged by regions ( ).}
\end{figure}

\textbf{Source:} Interview ‘Public opinion on social and economic orientations of the economically active population of Ukraine’, 2015.

\[\text{2,200 informants from among the economically active population were interviewed.}\]
working abroad for many years theoretically could not have been included in the sample of the interview and this is also true for those who often work abroad for short periods of time. However, individuals who themselves worked abroad and were included in the sample were predominantly abroad only for a short period of time. Thus today there is a growth in the intensity of labour migration in Ukraine, including individuals living outside the Western region. This is especially valid for city residents, particularly for Kyiv. This may be in part due to the recent decline in living standards.

According to 2012 results, the major recipient countries of Ukrainian labour force are the Russian Federation (43.2%), Poland (14.3%), Italy (13.2%) and Czechia (12.9%). Flows of labour migration are also directed to Spain (4.5%), Germany (2.4%), Hungary (1.9%), Portugal and Belarus (both 1.8%) (International Labour Organization, 2013).

Comparison of the results of national interviews of 2008 and 2012 shows a decrease in the proportion of migrant workers in the Russian Federation while the rate of labour migration to EU countries is increasing, including to the Visegrad Group countries. In contrast to the interview of 2008, Russia's share has decreased by almost 5%, while in 2012 that of EU countries (especially Poland) had increased (Fig. 2).

**Fig. 2** Division of labour migrants by country of destination (based on the last trip), 2008 and 2012

Source: National interview on labour migration of 2008 and 2012.
The main factors that contribute to this process are: the lower economic benefits of migrating to Russia when compared to those when migrating to the EU; the creation of Ukrainian migration networks and NGOs in the European Union (which makes migration to these countries less risky); and generally favourable attitudes towards those coming from Ukraine. At the present time the tendency for the decrease in the Russian share and the increase in migration to EU among Ukrainian labour migration is further enhanced by the deterioration of Ukrainian-Russian relations as well as the rapid devaluation of the Russian rouble, thus the loss of economic appeal.

1.1.2 Emergence of IDPs since 2014

A new type of migration appeared in Ukraine as a result of the Crimean annexation and the armed conflict in the Donbas area – internally displaced persons (IDPs) resulting in a redistribution of the population among the regions. The total number of Ukrainian citizens, who left Crimea and the area of anti-terrorist operations (ATO) and moved to other regions has reached 1,025,100 people as of 17.05.2016, according to available information from the inter-agency coordination body of the social security service (ICB) for citizens of Ukraine displaced from temporary occupied territories and areas of anti-terrorist operation (State Emergency Service of Ukraine, 2016). In addition, several hundred thousand IDPs remain unregistered. Among the registered persons, 22,300 people come from Crimea, while 1,002,800 people (almost 98% of the total number) – are from Donbas area. The number of IDPs from the peninsula stabilised a few months after the annexation of Crimea, but the number of migrants from the Donbas area during 2014–2015 was steadily increasing and this trend came to a halt only in 2016. People representing vulnerable groups are dominant among IDPs. Almost half of them are disabled or elderly persons and the proportion of working age women is much higher than the proportion of working age men (22.4% versus 12.7% as of 15.04.2016).

In addition to the ICB, the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine also keeps track of IDPs. The ICB fixes the number of people who asked for help with resettlement and placement, while the Ministry of Social Policy keeps account of people who applied for payment of their pensions or social assistance at their new place of residence. In reality, the statistics of the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine include not only internal migrants, but also those people who actually live in the occupied territory and occasionally come to the areas controlled by the central government to receive a pension or social assistance. That means ICB has more accurate statistics as to the actual migration of IDPs. The largest number of immigrants (according to ICB) are located: in areas of the Luhansk region that are controlled by the central government – 263,500; Kharkiv region – 198,800; areas of the Donetsk region controlled by the central government – 120,000; Dnipropetrovsk region – 81,900; Zaporizhia region – 67,900; Kyiv region – 49,800; and the city of Kyiv – 39,000. In general, the share of IDPs in the regions is relative to the distance from the ATO area (Fig. 3).
In 2015–2016, the Ukrainian Centre for Social Reforms conducted an interview of IDPs on the request of International Organization for Migration.⁴ The results show that IDPs are more or less successfully integrated into the host communities, but at the same time, they have significant problems in adjusting and adapting to a new place of residence. The attitude of the local population to IDPs was mainly described as friendly, rarely as neutral, and only a few of them noted open hostility. Local residents often define their own attitude to the immigrants as neutral.

At least some percentage of IDPs wish to stay permanently in the regions of their current residence and will not go back home if the anti-terrorist operation ends. According to the interviews mentioned above, most of the displaced people want to remain in their current place of residence for at least another 12 months.

⁴ In the framework of research ‘Assessment of local markets of Vinnytsia, Cherkasy, Zhytomyr, Poltava, Sumy, Chernihiv, Odessa, Mykolaiv, Kherson regions’ under the IOM Humanitarian Program in Ukraine ‘Humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons in Ukraine through remittances’ 1,350 people were interviewed among IDPs and the local population in nine regions. In the framework of research ‘Assessment of local markets of Kharkiv region’ under the IOM Humanitarian Program in Ukraine ‘Humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons in Ukraine through remittances’ 1,000 people were interviewed among IDPs and the local population in the Kharkiv region.
Some people from the conflict regions also seek asylum abroad. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees information, as of May 2016 388,800 Ukrainian citizens requested refugee status in the neighbouring countries (primarily Russia, Belarus and Poland). There are also 732,000 (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2016) people who live in those countries for other reasons. Additionally Russian officials cite a much higher number of Ukrainians there, although this data is not confirmed.
1.2 OWN RESEARCH

1.2.1 Research methodology

In this sub-chapter we will present the result of our qualitative research on effects of the Crimean annexation and the Donbas conflict on migration that was conducted within the framework of IVF-funded project ‘Monitoring Ukraine’s migration: forced and labour mobility’. The interview was handled by the NGO “Europe without Barriers”, involving analysts of the Ptoukha Institute for Demography and Social Studies (PIDSS) of National Academy of Science. The field work was conducted by the experts of the ‘Social Monitoring’ Centre and PIDSS.

The research aim was to identify the newest trends of migration from Ukraine and to research the possible impact of Euro-Maydan followed by the Russian annexation of Crimea and eruption of armed conflict in Donbas on Ukrainian migration patterns and aspirations. The object of the research is the migration behaviour of Ukrainian citizens.

Initial information was sourced from state statistics, statistical data of relevant ministries and agencies, available materials of sampling research and interviews. The research methods included: analysis of documents, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, logic synthesis, comparative analysis, graphic and cartographic outputs.

The field work was conducted in February – March 2016. It included an interview of three target groups:

1. Experts
2. Labour migrants
3. IDPs

1.2.2 Experts

The purpose of interviewing experts was to determine their opinions on the latest trends in international migration of the Ukrainian population. Semi-structured interviews were used. In total, 15 experts were interviewed. Scientists working in the area of migration, representatives of central executive bodies involved in resolving migration issues, representatives of international and non-governmental organizations specializing in migration issues were included in the list of the experts. More details on the experts’ interviews are presented in annex of this chapter.

All interviews were recorded with prior consent. The information from interviews was transferred to an electronic format (Excel).
1.2.3 Labour migrants

In turn, the purpose of interviewing labour migrants was to identify possible changes in migration patterns in new more violate political situation in Ukraine. Here too, semi-structured interviews were used as an instrument of data collection. The interviewees were 62 adult migrants (only one member of a family), who were employed abroad for a short period and had recently returned from the Visegrad countries (Czechia, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary) or other EU member states. Only those migrants who left Ukraine after April 2014 were considered for the interview. Their demographic characteristics are presented in annex of this chapter. The interview was conducted by “face to face” in the informants’ place of residence.

The interviews were conducted by 20 trained interviewers from the permanent network of the ‘Social Monitoring’ Centre. The interview met all the requirements related to the technology of interviewing, thus maintaining anonymity and confidentiality of the responses of all informants. All the interviews were recorded with prior consent.

The following recruiting channels were used in search of the informants via the snowball method:
- Friends/acquaintance of the interviewers;
- Interviewer’s personal contacts;
- Volunteers.

The informants come from the nine regions of Ukraine, including the seven Western regions where the intensity of labour migration is the highest (Volyn, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, Chernivtsi regions), Kyiv region (including the city of Kyiv) and Kharkiv region (including the city of Kharkiv). In total, the interviewers got in touch with 94 potential informants. As a result, they successfully interviewed 62 informants.

Interviewers reported a significant problem in finding informants who moved from Donetsk and Luhansk regions to other Ukrainian regions and who later went abroad to work temporarily, then returning to Ukraine. The vast majority of people who moved from conflict areas did not travel abroad. The interviewers also reported cases of people going abroad and not returning to the interviewed regions. In general, among all the informants only 8 persons were from the Donbas area and of those 7 were from the occupied territories and 1 from the government-controlled territory.

The interview sample was selected with the intention of maintaining age and gender parity. As a result an equal number of men and women (31 persons of each gender) were interviewed, while also covering five main age groups: 19–27 years, 28–31 years (range of maximum migration activity), 32–38 years, 39–49 and 50 years and older (maximum – 64 years). However, the task of achieving gender parity in each age group was never a priority (Fig. 4).

More than half of the informants were married and marital status prevails across both genders. Still, almost one third of the men interviewed have never married, and among
the interviewed women there were only a few unmarried ones, while more than a quarter of them were divorced. This could mean that women have decided to migrate in order to support their children, while men decide to migrate because of a desire to increase their own standard of living.

It is characteristic of those informants who were interviewed to have a higher level of education in comparison to the general group of migrant workers identified during the national interview on labour migration. Half of the informants had university education. More than two thirds of informants moved abroad by themselves, while a few people moved with relatives. Nearly a quarter of the informants moved with friends or colleagues.

Out of the total number of interviewed migrants 49 people worked in the countries of the Visegrad Group, including Poland – 23 people. Other typical EU countries for Ukrainian labour migration (Spain, Italy, Portugal, Germany) or countries where Ukrainians travel rarely (Sweden, Norway, Estonia) were also represented in the sample.

At the stage of processing the data a model for the achieved array of data was developed and tested, the responses were also coded⁵.

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⁵ Information from the questionnaires was transferred to an electronic format (using SPSS software). The gathered data consisted of audio recordings of 62 in-depth interviews in MP3 or WMA formats without transcription. Transcriptions of audio recordings were made by PIDSS.
1.2.4 Internally Displaced Persons

The purpose of the focus group discussions with IDPs was to determine the possible migration aspirations of IDPs to participate in international migration and their assessment of their living conditions in the new places of residence. Focus groups were selected as the research method for the IDP study with the aim of stimulating discussion about sensitive issues. In each of three cities (Kyiv, Kharkiv, Lviv) 12 people were selected from among internally displaced persons who intended to travel abroad (to the Visegrad countries or other EU member states) to participate in the focus group discussions (FGD). Focus group discussions were held in February 2016. In total, 36 persons participated in FGD.

FGD participants in each city were selected in compliance quotas for geographical origin. It was assumed that out of 12 members two people should come from Crimea (Crimea and the city of Sevastopol) and 5 persons from both Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Unfortunately, this goal was only achieved in Kyiv. While in Kharkiv the gender parity among the informants was achieved, the regional representation there was higher for the Donetsk oblast and thus lowers for Luhansk oblast (by 1 person). Nor was it possible to ensure gender parity in Lviv (we managed to attract only 3 men), because of the small number of IDPs and a significant prevalence of women. Moreover, one more person from the Donetsk region was engaged in the focus group at the expense of a person from Crimea.

For some of interviewed IDPs current location this is not the first place of stay after leaving the ATO zone. Even though the informants had settled in different regions of Ukraine, there was no significant difference in the results of the focus-groups across the IDPs’ geographical position. The pooling of IDPs at the end of the focus groups showed that informants are characterised by a relatively high level of education. About 3/4 of the informants had higher education. The spread of age groups of informants is quite equal; the youngest participant was 21 years old, the oldest one 73 years old. About 2/3 of the informants were married.

Each FGD was recorded, and then transcribed. After the FGDs were concluded the participants were further interviewed via using the questionnaire. The gathered data consists of the answers from 36 informants.
1.3 MAIN RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

1.3.1 New migration patterns and models

The experts interviewed noted the intensification of migratory movements from Ukraine in the past two years and the re-orientation of migratory flows towards the EU due to the decrease of migration to the Russian Federation. There are also new trends in Ukrainian migration abroad which were not observed earlier: a growth in migration of young professionals, of small and medium entrepreneurs, and an increase in the proportion of female migrants. Some experts noted an increase in irregular migration.

The experts proposed the following reasons for the migration of young people: growing popularity in receiving education abroad, in part due to the creation of new training programmes for Ukrainians by EU countries, especially Poland; intensification of family reunification processes – young people who obtained a degree in Ukraine move to their parents, who have been living and working abroad for many years and do not have plans to return to Ukraine; young men move abroad in order to avoid military service.

Experts agree that the annexation of Crimea by Russia and the emergence of the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine radically changed the dynamics and nature of migration from Ukraine. In recent years not only international migration from Ukraine intensified, but also internal migration. Internally displaced persons from the Donbas area and Crimea as well as asylum seekers coming from Ukraine started to appear. This means that growth in economic and educational migration is accompanied by forced migration. Instead, reverse migration to Ukraine has decreased.

At the same time, economic factors remain decisive in shaping the migrations flows. Military conflict in Eastern Ukraine and the break-up in relations with Russia exacerbated the economic crisis and it is the economic effect of the conflict, not the conflict itself that shapes people’s behaviour. A number of enterprises were closed down, there were partial lay-offs at others, and opportunities for doing business started to worsen. As a result, unemployment and poverty levels increased. The pressure on regional labour markets increased as a result of the appearance of IDPs; the burden on state and local budgets has increased as well due to the growth in the number of the social benefits to be distributed.

Experts noted the rise in the intentions of Ukrainians to find work abroad, mainly due to the inability to find work and falling living standards back home. People who have never thought about working abroad started to think about such an idea. As was noted

6 A1, A2, A3, A7, A8, A12, A13, A14, A15.
7 A4, A8, A13.
8 A1, A6, A8, A10, A13.
9 A6, A9, A10.
10 A2, A7, A8, A13.
11 A1, A3, A10, A12, A15.
before, this is especially popular among young people. Previously, a typical situation was
that young people were obtaining degrees and buying houses in Ukraine with the money
earned by their parents abroad. After the beginning of the conflict there was a wave of
migration, when children started moving abroad to their parents.

At the same time, the experts note that labour migration requires some investment
funds to organise the actual departure, which appears to be problematic due to the eco-


What is the difference between pre- and post-2014 migration
and who was affected?

The vast majority of experts do not believe that the Ukrainians who began to move
abroad starting in 2014 with the purpose of working abroad are significantly different
in characteristics from the Ukrainians who moved abroad before. According to socio-

economic characteristics, only forced migrants who moved from the conflict zone in
the Donbas to Russia are very different from other categories of migrants. In contrast,
voluntary migration is much more selective. At the same time, conditions and factors
shaping labour migration have changed. Despite the dominance of economic factors,
the security component (the war) appeared. Moreover, migrants were preparing to move
abroad under relatively favourable conditions in previous years, but those who left in
2014 were making decisions under stressful circumstances.

Experts believe that Ukrainian labour migration abroad is mostly temporary and
circular. However this is not unequivocal, as it depends on personal plans, destination
country, circumstances emerging during their stay abroad, etc. Moreover, several experts
noted that during the initial flows of labour migration from Ukraine (in the mid-1990s)
the vast majority of migrants moved with the aim of temporary employment. But over
time, their intentions had changed: more and more people began to think about how to
stay in the host country permanently. Some of them have de facto become permanent
migrants. In general, the longer a person stays and works abroad, the lower the probability
of his/her return is and this also applies to the new wave of migration. Therefore the rate
of Ukrainian migrants who want to stay abroad depends on what is happening in Ukraine
and their ability to adjust in the host countries.

While speaking about the changes related to the nature of the migration of ethnic
Poles, Czechs and Slovaks living in Ukraine, experts reported that Poland as well as
Germany, Turkey, Greece and Israel evacuated the representatives of their diasporas
from the conflict zone. It was also noted that the relevant ethnic groups in Ukraine are
low in number, as many of the ethnic minorities left the Ukraine in the late twentieth

\[12\] A1, A3, A9.
\[13\] A2, A3, A15.
century. Moreover, the vast majority of Ukrainian Poles and almost all Ukrainian Czechs and Slovaks live far away from the conflict zone. Migration to Poland from western regions of Ukraine is easier in part due to the introduction of a Card of a Pole by the Polish government¹⁴.

There are cases of Ukrainians moving to the EU from the regions affected by war, but these cases are rather rare, especially in comparison to the massive internal migration from the Donbas. Immigrants move mainly inside Ukraine and going abroad is seen as a “last resort” measure. Instead, a large number of residents of the Donbas moved to Russia. Moreover, the experts note the possibility of activation of the migration potential of IDPs in the future. One expert noted the presence of women among IDPs who do not report where their husbands are at the moment. It was assumed that some of these men could have gone abroad to work.

Since the beginning of the events in Crimea, the Crimean Tatars began to move abroad as well. Moreover, using the fact that they usually have larger extended families in comparison to ethnic Ukrainian families, they use a specific model of migration behaviour. The following scenario was described: “A family sends one of its members to one country (usually Turkey), he gets a job and accommodation and later the whole family with brothers and sisters move to this country too.”¹⁵ This model is less common among ethnic Ukrainians due to the smaller family size, which makes it more difficult for 3–4 persons to collect money for one of their family members to go abroad. Therefore, potential migrants of Ukrainian ethnicity are more dependent on the pre-departure availability of a job offer.

Experts’ opinions were divided on the issue of whether the number of asylum seekers from Ukraine increased. A third of the experts noticed an increase in their number¹⁶. However, they emphasised their small number in comparison to Syrian refugees and mentioned the low percentage of those who actually receive the refugee status. Also, the procedure of seeking asylum is sometimes used as a channel for migration to the EU. Among the main destinations where refugees seek asylum are Poland and Germany. In comparison to previous years, there was an increase in the number of applications for refugee status by Ukrainians in Poland in 2014.

The reasons for the increasing number of asylum seekers from Ukraine, according to experts, are mostly the same as the reasons for the increase in labour migration: war, economic crisis, decline in living standards and a desire to avoid military service. However it was also noted that even so: “There are various reasons. For example, some people are persecuted for their national, ethnic, religious beliefs.”¹⁷

¹⁴ Karta Polaka – a document proving that a foreigner is of Polish origin and grants a number of privileges to its holder while not granting a citizenship.
¹⁵ A6.
¹⁶ A1, A2, A3, A9, A10.
¹⁷ A2.
What are the main problems that migrants are facing?

When asked about the challenges for Ukraine related to the emerging phenomenon of asylum seekers, almost half of the experts left this question unanswered. The experts who did respond to the question stressed that with the emergence of asylum seekers Ukraine is losing its economically active population¹⁸.

Another problem is that Ukrainian citizens who moved to Russia in search of asylum had a negative experience there, as they were employed in the development of sparsely populated areas: “Asylum seekers in the Russian Federation passed through refugee camps with all the negative consequences, plus Russia placed them in the areas that were in need of development (e.g., the Khabarovsk region).”¹⁹

Describing present migration trends in Ukraine, the informants noted the lack of reliable information that could be used for such an assessment. Experts tried to elaborate upon those sparse sources that were available – official statistics of Ukraine and destination countries, sociological monitoring and interviews, studies of international organisations, including IOM and UNHCR, information from Ukrainian NGOs in foreign countries and even using fragmentary data from the Internet.

Experts noted the need to simplify the mechanism for transferring funds to Ukraine: the removal of exchange restrictions, reducing control on remittances. The lack of available information about the destination countries and particularly employment possibilities were also indicated, especially in terms of human trafficking and irregular migration²⁰.

Most experts emphasized the need to guarantee the rights of labour migrants. They agreed that the state should pay greater attention to migration overall and better pursue migration policy, implementing provisions of the new law “On labour migration”. According to experts, the most acute problem is ensuring the participation of the migrants in elections, as the political interests of the migrants should be represented in the Ukrainian parliament. The prospect of such development was described as a need for “… the creation of an effective mechanism of labour migration management and use of its capacity (skills, investment potential of labour migrants). It is necessary to develop a policy on labour migration, which would include the economic aspect, an aspect of the labour market development, skills development and proof of formal education.”²¹

Experts also emphasised the importance of maintaining ties with the migrants and the visibility of Ukrainian culture abroad through the creation of cultural centres and schools of Ukrainian studies at universities abroad. The problem indicated was the need to increase the efficiency of consular work as migrants usually complain about that. It is also important to improve border crossing procedures, in particular to increase the capacity of

¹⁸ A1, A3
¹⁹ A6.
²⁰ A10, A13.
²¹ A12.
border crossing points. High expectations of improving the situation of Ukrainian citizens abroad rely on the implementation of the expected visa-free regime for Ukrainians to enter the Schengen area.

According to experts, the governments of the Visegrad Group and other EU countries must ensure the legality of migration of Ukrainian citizens and mutually beneficial conditions for Ukraine and for destination countries for labour migration, thereby opening the European labour market to Ukrainians. The recognition of Ukrainian diplomas and scientific degrees in the EU is also important as well as the issue of recognizing foreign education documents by Ukraine. Moreover, the governments of the EU, according to experts, should promote joint research on Ukrainian labour migration and the regular organization of international forums and conferences on labour migration issues.

While discussing solutions to the problems of IDPs in Ukraine, the experts emphasized the need to ensure adequate funding in order to support programmes of social integration of IDPs (currently only NGOs are effective in dealing with these issues), the problems of registration and provision of voting rights and the need to develop programmes for the resettlement of IDPs.

1.3.2 Migrants’ assessment of the migration situation

What are the reasons for leaving?

Most of the migrants said that they moved to a certain country because of their relatives or friends who were already there and who helped them to find a job. Moreover, a lot of informants said they migrated to foreign country because of close proximity to Ukraine, similarity of language or mentality etc. A woman, employed in Poland, commented on this situation: “Since my friend was working there, she was able to find a job for me, which meant I was going to a particular place. Poland is closer to Ukraine geographically, culturally and linguistically.”

Events in Crimea and Donbas have influenced Ukrainian migration patterns, but did not become a major factor. Among the reasons for moving abroad economic ones dominate: big number of informants named a lack of work to be the main reason for leaving and even more informants cited lower earnings at their primary place of residence. A few people complained about the inability to make use of their knowledge and skills in their own country. Military actions and the occupation of Ukrainian territory became the main reason for departure for smaller number of informants. Anxiety due to military conscription as the main reason for leaving Ukraine was mentioned only by two persons,
despite the fact that men of conscription age constituted at least a third of informants. For some informants the major reasons were education or a desire to reunite with family.

A man working in Poland described this situation in following manner: “Since the beginning of war we were forced to leave our home, then we stopped receiving welfare payments, while my wife was pregnant and the baby was small ... we were told that you can go to Poland and get social status and find a job there.”²⁵ Informants often mentioned the lack of prospects in Ukraine, the inability to find satisfying and appropriate work, and low monthly wages, among the other things.

A different informant, a man working in Sweden, expressed his opinion thus: “Life has become more difficult in economic terms, if there was an opportunity to get a job according to [my] area of expertise within Ukraine and to receive money which would allow us to live normally, we would not have moved to another country.”²⁶

Less than a third of informants said that events in Crimea and Donbas influenced their decision to move abroad. Even among those informants who indicated the impact of the conflict on the decision to migrate, many of them focused not on the conflict itself, but on the resulting deterioration of the economic situation. Many informants said that before the beginning of the anti-terrorist operation in Eastern Ukraine they had no thoughts of migrating, but as a result of the hostilities the deteriorating economic situation of their households became so bad that the only way was to move abroad and to find for work. When asked whether the conflict had any impact on her decision to leave, a woman now working in Poland gave the following response: “Yes, it had a direct impact because the problems in the business began along the anti-terrorist operation in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. I am a private entrepreneur and there were months when I could not even make enough money to pay the taxes. I am initially from Kharkiv. There are a lot of refugees there right now. The work has been devalued, salaries are very low, the prices are very high and it was almost impossible to make money.”²⁷

All informants evaluated the economic situation in Ukraine as negative. In answering this question migrants often used the following expressions “the economy is on the brink of collapse”, “it can’t be worse”, “difficult and tense”, “horrible”, “difficult, and it is getting more and more difficult”, “unstable” etc. The main signs of the poor economic situation according to informants are increases in prices for goods and services that do not correspond to salaries and pensions, inflation, low living standards, a high level of unemployment, inadequate working conditions, businesses going bankrupt, etc. Moreover, most informants expressed pessimistic forecasts for the country’s economic situation and do not see any prospects for its future development.

The possibility to get a well-paid job, an increase in monthly wages, an improvement of their economic and political situation, higher living standards, stability in the country,
betterment of social standards, financial improvements, the cessation of hostilities, and the ability to afford a flat are factors that would have kept Ukrainians from moving abroad.

According to the selection criteria of the informants, the interview mainly covered short-term migration (less than 1 year); long-term workers were relatively unlikely to be interviewed. Most of the informants were living and working abroad up to 6 months during the last trip, including about one third of the informants who were abroad for only up to 3 months, the number of informants who stayed abroad for more than one year was low.

Only a few people pointed out that the conflict had directly affected the duration of their stay abroad. Among other reasons was mentioned financial help for those friends who wanted to take part in the ATO. Informants who reported that their period of stay abroad increased as a result of the conflict did not explain the reason for their actions. For almost three quarters of migrants, the leaving process was organised and planned in advance, meaning it was not a spontaneous decision. Persons with better education were more likely than others to report that their trips were planned while spontaneous migration was characteristic of young men. Moreover, Western regions have a higher rate of pre-planned trips, where labour migration is considered more common among the population. At the same time in Kyiv and Kharkiv region, where a surge in migration activity began only recently, almost half of informants said it was spontaneous.

What are the conditions abroad and the reasons for a return to Ukraine?

Among the reasons for informants’ return to Ukraine the following ones were mentioned: a family at home; expiration of a work contract; expiration of a visa; continuation of study in Ukraine; ownership of a business and real estate at home. Only some individuals were not able to achieve any of the goals for which they had moved abroad, while two thirds of informants said that they had partly achieved their goals. Only one third had achieved their goals completely.

The informants included almost none of those who went to another country as a refugee or an irregular migrant. More than half of the migrants were working abroad on long-term visas and another third of the informants had short-term visas. Only few persons changed their residence status while working abroad, one person who had a long-term visa received a residence permit, 2 overstayed their visas (1 short-term visa and one long-term visa) and went home as irregular migrants, while one man who had migrated to Poland as an irregular immigrant, later received a short-term visa.

Predominantly, informants found jobs abroad through family, friends or acquaintances. Most migrants moved abroad knowing that relatives, friends or compatriots were waiting for them. Only a quarter of informants said that at the time going abroad no one was waiting for them there. That means that the formed migration networks are quite effective. Quarter of informants reported that they did not look for a job before moving abroad, almost a quarter of informants were searching for a job for about a week, a quarter were looking for a job from a week to one month, nearly a quarter from one to three
months, and only a few individuals were looking for a job for longer periods of time before migrating. While living abroad, almost all the informants were not looking for a job or it took them about a week to find one.

Although only some individuals defined the conditions of their work abroad as dangerous or harmful to health, around half of the informants complained that their work was physically hard. The majority of informants worked in the service sector or agriculture, minority worked in construction and industry, and this is despite the fact that before leaving Ukraine nearly one fifth of the informants had worked in education, science, medicine or finance. After coming back to Ukraine almost half of the migrants were not working, meaning that they may potentially move abroad again in the future.

Only small part of informants has used the skills acquired during training while working in other countries. More informants have used the skills acquired during previous work experience (including those who have used these skills constantly). Most migrants used their computer skills (primarily from time to time) and the ability to drive a car (saying they used this skill constantly or periodically). One of the informants stated that she occasionally used medical skills that she mastered on her own, apparently to provide occasional medical care to her colleagues.

A relative majority of the informants lived in apartments which were provided by the employer (a hostel, a hut or a house shared by 6–8 people), a few more people lived in their employer’s house. Some informants were residing with relatives or friends/acquaintances. The rest of the informants rented their accommodation (an apartment, a house or a room) alone or together with family members or other persons.

The attitude to Ukrainians in the destination countries was characterised by the informants in different ways: it differs depending on the country and on the people themselves. Informants complained that many EU citizens were hostile to the Ukrainians and some even try to humiliate them. However, a lot of local residents in the destination countries have treated Ukrainians in friendly and understanding way. More than two thirds of informants characterised the environment in which they lived while working abroad as mostly friendly, and only one migrant claimed that it was mostly hostile. The general attitude towards Ukrainians in the host country was identified by the majority of informants as “more good than bad”, around 20% considered it to be very good.

The very good attitude towards Ukrainian migrants was often reported by people who worked in Slovakia. Overall, the informants assessed the attitude to be better in Visegrad countries than in other EU countries.

Most informants believe that the attitude in the host countries has not changed in recent years. The number of those who believe that this attitude has improved is greater than that of those who believe that it has deteriorated (Fig. 5). The attitude in the host countries was mostly not affected by the migration crisis related to the arrival of a large number of refugees from the Middle East. Among the few informants of those who fled from the hostilities, almost all of them said that local people began to treat them better after finding out about this fact.
Almost all the informants described their relations with compatriots as friendly or mostly friendly; the majority of informants met with their compatriots abroad almost every day (almost half of them) or at least once a week (almost a quarter of the informants). Most of the informants spent their free time walking around the city, met with friends and acquaintances (60%) went to bars, cafes or restaurants, or went sightseeing. They rarely went to museums, theatres or movies, even more rarely went fishing or played sports. Instead, one in nine informants spent their free time making extra money, and every seventh informant reported being too tired from work to go out at all.

Most migrants while living abroad did not visit their families who remained in Ukraine, but were regularly in touch with them (on a daily basis or 2–3 times a week). Most often they used Skype and free mobile applications (Viber, WhatsApp) and only rarely phone and social networks.

More than one third of informants sent remittances to Ukraine, the rest of them apparently brought money to Ukraine themselves. Among those who sent money transfers to Ukraine, half of them did it once a month, the others every three months. Only some individuals spent money to start their own business. One of the informants said that he spends his earnings to pay for the education of his children in Poland.

Almost all the informants plan to go abroad again and the interview shows the fact that international labour migration in Ukraine is mostly circular in nature. About 11% of the informants said they planned to move to another place of residence within Ukraine, and none of them mentioned the capital city of Kyiv as a place they wanted to live, even though Kyiv has always been the main centre of attraction for internal migrants. Thus, internal migration is possibly not an alternative to external migration under current conditions.
Therefore, the main trends of labour migration in Ukraine characteristic until the late 2000s–early 2010s remain the same. Obviously, there have been some changes in the geography of labour migration of Ukrainian citizens since 2013, but in the course of the interview it was impossible to detect these. Events in Crimea and Donbas did not have a significant effect on the qualitative characteristics of the process.

The informants believe that migration policy in Ukraine requires no special measures except for a visa-free regime and the economic situation in the country to stabilise. According to the informants, if political and economic conditions in Ukraine were normal, Ukrainians would work there rather than moving to other countries. A man now working in Czechia said the following when asked about the role of the state in migration: “It is better if the state does not control it, as it will be even worse, no measures are needed.”

A man and a woman who currently live in Poland expressed similar opinions: “No actions are required. If there is no salary, then let people go abroad” and “The state should not stop its citizens from moving abroad if it cannot take care of them properly.”

Informants also expressed their opinion on the developments of migration policy of EU countries, mostly supporting the need to strengthen border control, to tighten checks on migrants from Northern Africa and Middle East and to implement better conditions of entry for workers from Slavic countries. In general, most informants believe that EU states do not have any problems in this regard and they have well-established migration control systems. Some informants felt that due to the crisis in Syria, Europeans should close all borders.

### 1.3.3 The situation of IDPs and their possible migration aspirations

All IDPs informants indicated a significant worsening of their standard of living after their forced relocation. Among the acute problems for the participants were the lack of their own home, the lack of a steady job commensurate with their education, no regular income and a break in social ties. This life situation primarily negatively affected women with small children, with a woman interviewed in Kharkiv FGD saying: “I have three children. The youngest one is only one year and six months old. It means I cannot work, because there is a very little chance that the child would be admitted to a nursery or wherever. And plus I have two more children – they go to school and kindergarten. Yes, I receive welfare and benefits for children. Still it is not enough to survive.”

During the interview, half of the IDPs said they had to reduce their expenditure on food, a quarter of the informants indicated that they have enough money for food, but they lack funds for other expenses. Minority of informants have enough food, necessary

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²⁸ B3.
²⁹ B22.
³⁰ B6.
clothing, footwear, overall basic needs, but cannot save some money, and only a few individuals reported that they have enough food, clothing, shoes, and other goods and are able to save for more expensive purchases.

Overall, the living standards of IDPs, according to informants, are much lower than the living standards of the local population, or a bit lower, but not by much (the first of these answers was chosen twice as often as the other one). Only a few individuals agree that the living standards of IDPs and the local population are roughly the same.

The role of the IDPs’ social networks is not as important as mutual support among Ukrainian labour migrants. In addition, IDPs’ social networks are just emerging with the support of international charitable organizations and NGOs.

**What problems are often encountered by IDPs?**

Informants complain that targeted assistance does not cover even the half of housing costs. They also noted that they need to solve their housing problems independently of state’s assistance, they rent apartments or rooms from local residents: “We run around, look for jobs or supplementary earnings in order to rent an apartment, find it somewhere” (a woman interviewed in Lviv FGD). All informants acknowledge that they do not feel any support from the state.

Most often the IDPs faced bureaucratic problems to get documents proving their IDPs status, or to obtain social benefits and this was especially hard for pensioners and single mothers. Many current IDPs worked as miners before the conflict, and they have problems finding a job which correlates with their education. The informants, who applied to employment centres while looking for a job, did not receive assistance and continued to look for a job by themselves. Some of them received unemployment benefits, while others attended courses to qualify for different jobs. It has been very difficult for the IDPs to deal with official unemployment agencies as the latter often offered them low paid jobs.

Most people describe the attitude towards them on the part of the other IDPs and the local population as neutral, rarely as sympathetic, and only some individuals complained about hostile treatment.

Informants faced discrimination at employment centres, while looking for an apartment to rent, communicating with the local population or placing children in preschool and educational institutions: “I faced it at the employment centre. I was talking to an inspector and we began to discuss what kind of job I was looking for, so he told me once on the first day: – ‘You, migrants, should work only as janitors.’ I could not stand it and answered: – ‘If you were in the same situation, would you go to work?’ It was very frustrating, especially to hear it from a civil servant” (a man interviewed in Kharkiv FGD). A similar explanation was given by another man interviewed in Kharkiv FGD: “A change of school is very stressful for children, because it is necessary to change from one school to another, due to discrimination: – ‘Oh, you’re a migrant! So, you’re a bum, a beggar.’ There were such moments.” The difficulty of obtaining a loan was recorded from a man living in
Kyiv (via FGD): “At the present time, no banks grant any loans to migrants from Donetsk, Luhansk and Crimea.” Men of military age face problems at the military recruitment centres because of their documents being lost, and it takes time to renew them but in general there is no great willingness to serve in the Ukraine’s army.

While choosing among the options for renting accommodation, IDPs are guided by their own financial capabilities and the needs of the family. Families with children need more space, singles and childless couples can choose to live in a hostel in order to save money. When seeking a shelter, informants usually choose from several options. The first method, which the majority of the focus groups in different cities had chosen, is to rent a room or apartment in a bigger city and work there as well. The disadvantage of this option is that the lease is not usually long term and there were cases when people were forced to leave the house at short notice, as reported by a man now working in Kyiv (via FGD): “The owner has changed. The owners of the apartment decided to sell it. The apartment was sold within a week. Fortunately, the new owner has agreed to extend the lease. But if he did not agree?”

The second method is to rent cheaper accommodation in a smaller town or rural area: “But I do not live in Lviv, I live in Mykolaiv, it is far away. And I rent an apartment there, of course, not for so much money as in Lviv. We decided to stay there because it is a little cheaper, apparently” (a woman interviewed in Lviv FGD). The disadvantage of this choice is the difficulty of finding job in comparison to the big cities, and in the case of employment in the regional centre, this means the daily cost and time to get to work and back. Therefore, the second option is more comfortable for pensioners. For a person who has lived for many years, for example, in Donetsk, it is difficult to get used to rural living conditions. However, some of the IDPs said they were willing to give up the delights of city life for an opportunity to get their own house in a village, as with a woman from Lviv (via FGD): “I wrote ... an application to the village administration in order to get a plot of land. First I applied for a flat ... They said that they did not have any housing available. I said, there is only one available solution to the problem and that is to start digging my own dugout, my own nook.”

The third option is a hostel, public or private. This option is quite economical in terms of the cost of living and transportation. However, the most acute problem for IDPs who chose this option was the bribes demanded by managers of such housing. A woman now working in Kyiv reported a case related to accommodation (via FGD): “We stalked; they tried to kick us out of this hostel by turning off the heating and by intimidation from ‘titushky’31. And I paid for utilities 300 hryvnias out of my pension of 1,250 hryvnias. There is no owner, but the state hostel has a balance holder. And this balance holder does not wish me to pay for utilities. He only wants to get the income of commercial housing to which they do not have any legal right.”

31 “Titushky” – the collective name of mercenaries usually underclass criminals, including athletes, who are used by officials as a physical force to put pressure on opponents, intimidate others.
IDPs noted that among their friends there were people who bought their own homes (an apartment, a house, or land with a small house). But in this case we are talking about people who had appropriate finances before the relocation and such cases were mostly mentioned by the participants of the focus groups in Kyiv. “My friends bought an apartment. But they lived there [back home] very well. They had opportunities” (a woman interviewed in Kharkiv FGD). Similarly a woman from Kyiv noted: “If we consider Donetsk, Luhansk, there still is a real opportunity to sell a house, at least for the minimum amount. But if we consider the small towns, I mean in Luhansk region: Bryanka, Pervomaisk, Stakhanov, Alchevsk, the prices for real estate there are so minimal that you cannot even buy a dilapidated house somewhere in the Kyiv region for this money.”

IDPs reported problems with obtaining humanitarian aid. A number of informants received household goods and food from the Red Cross immediately after moving. This assistance was of great importance to them, because, immigrants did not have an opportunity to bring a lot of things with them when they left the ATO territory. There are difficulties in obtaining food and non-food products. Material assistance is usually provided to pensioners and mothers, although not always in time, but other categories of the IDPs do not receive it at all.

The migrants would have loved to receive humanitarian aid in the future as well, but people who live in module towns in the Kharkiv region do not receive full humanitarian aid. In some humanitarian centres there is an unspoken rule that if people received social housing, they are treated as being provided with all basic necessities. The following are the explanations given by woman and a man from Kharkiv FGD respectively: “We are not entitled to any more humanitarian aid, but all the refugees have a right to it. They say, ‘You have everything.’ And what do we have? We pay less for rent” and “We went with my wife to the Red Cross. And there was the same situation. A few women came from the modular camp. We were told: ‘You are from the camp. Do not even stand here – go away! You have everything.’ There was a line – about 30 people. Two women stepped in and said: ‘You are from the camp. Go away!’”

IDPs are willing to change profession in order to achieve a wealthy life. The main criterion for them when looking for a job is the level of wages, not the sphere of employment.

Despite the difficulty of life situation in which they found themselves, at least four IDPs saw the positive effects of the relocation:
1. A feeling of security. "A peaceful sky over my head" (a woman interviewed in Lviv FGD).
2. The possible prospects for children. “My kids have more prospects here to learn, more possibilities; they are more involved in culture” (a woman interviewed in Kharkiv FGD). “Well, my child started to travel more. There are such funds which finance the recreation abroad for children” (a woman interviewed in Kyiv FGD).
3. The ability to change their lives “Finding a new profession is possible” (a woman interviewed in Lviv FGD). “Here you have to move faster. I am sure, there are more options for young, forward-looking working people, especially if you are a student or..."
“a young specialist. I think that it is not too tragic for them, and perhaps will provide new prospects” (woman interviewed in Lviv FGD).

4. The emergence of new social ties. “People, who do not know me, who I am. They just saw that I got sick. No money, I had nothing. And they took care of me for two months. Two weeks ago I got well. They are amazing people in terms of moral values” (a man interviewed in Kyiv FGD).

What are the future prospects for the IDPs in Ukraine and abroad?

Regarding their plans for the future, the informants’ opinions diverged. Some of them want to stay in the cities where they live now, but they need their own homes, a stable economic and political situation in the country as reported by a man working in Kharkiv (via FGD): “If I had my own apartment here, I would stay. To rent, to save money... I am renting a room in a hostel. The only good thing is that the room is normal. The hallway and a bathroom are in common, so it does not correspond [to a normal living standard]. And I get only 2,500 UAH per month. There is no money to save.”

Some informants are considering a return to their previous places of residence, but only once military operations in Eastern Ukraine are finished and the buildings and infrastructure are restored. However, most informants are not going to return to Donbas:

- “My daughter, for example, told me that she will not go back there in any case, she will not live there” (a man interviewed in Lviv FGD).
- “You arrive there and even from your position you’re like in the ghetto. It means, you are like a Jew in the ghetto. They will find out that you have been to Lviv, I just guess” (a man interviewed in Lviv FGD).
- “There are now different people over there. Their brains were rotated in the other direction. I just cannot go back there. Even if I decide to go back there, I will be kicked out – I cannot live there” (a man interviewed in Kyiv FGD).
- “There are so many weapons there. They will not be removed from there in one day, or in one year, or in two years, not even after ten years” (a man interviewed in Lviv FGD).

After all the events of the recent years, left assets or real estates do not attract these people anymore. Some immigrants are willing to go to Donbas only as guests: “To cry, to visit the grave” (a man interviewed in Lviv FGD).

Among the friends of the focus group informants there are quite common cases of changing a place of residence, depending on the availability of job offers. Also the discussion participants noted that IDPs, particularly builders, move to Kyiv, where the salaries are higher and working conditions are better. Moving to other regions of Ukraine, as well as consolidating in the present place of residence is not the limit of the informants’ expectations. Some informants are willing to relocate in future as stated by a woman from Kharkiv FGD: “My acquaintances want to move, either to the Lviv region, or to Uzhgorod. There, to Western Ukraine. But the problem is that there are no jobs there. It means they have been looking. In general, there are not a lot of displaced people [in those regions].”
Among the reasons that may force the IDPs to relocate, low income was cited most often, while other factors included the threat of mass demonstrations, the possibility of armed conflict, and the inability to make use of their professional skills and abilities. Economic factors were cited by the informants more often than security and social ones.

It has been suggested that some of the IDPs considered the option to go abroad with their family or sending a family member to work there. The idea of international labour migration is not new for IDPs, as almost all have friends who work abroad, and even some of them have family members there. Informants have a good opinion of the high social standards abroad and even slightly exaggerated the availability of social protection for Ukrainians in other countries:

- “Social protection which is offered abroad is of higher quality. In medical terms and in general it is better” (a woman interviewed in Lviv FGD).
- “And education and medical care will be provided and you will not live on the street in a dugout. People go abroad because they know for sure that everything will be fine. It will not be worse than in Ukraine” (a woman interviewed in Lviv FGD).

However, not all the informants view the prospects for employment abroad so positively: “A lot of people go abroad when they hear that the salary there is a couple of thousand zloty or euros. But the life there is such that the money you earned will immediately be spent on accommodation, transportation, food” (a woman interviewed in Lviv FGD).

When speaking about moving abroad, IDPs name the following countries: Montenegro, Poland, Russia, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Austria, USA, Spain, and Switzerland. When planning their relocation, informants rely only on themselves, without referring to any organisations. Potential migrants only rely on the assistance of their friends or relatives who are living abroad. In general, informants do not have any particular plans for the future, apart from the desire to improve the financial status of the family and to become socially secure. Some informants said that their willingness to move abroad was influenced by negative attitudes of local people and officials. Others, conversely, believe that the actual idea to move originated from locals.

A quarter of informants said that they knew of cases where their compatriots had received refugee status in the EU. Among these countries are Poland, Germany, Hungary, and Czechia.

Some of the informants already had experience abroad before the conflict in Eastern Ukraine. Informants appealed to Ukrainian NGOs during their stay abroad. One third of the interviewed IDPs know about the existence of such organisations.

When considering a move to find a permanent place to live, the ideas of the informants differ. For example, a man who works as a driver and who worked in various EU countries so has experience of living abroad, has no desire to move to any of the countries he has visited. Among the constraint factors the informants often pointed out the following:

1. The difficulty of psychological adjustment to the new country. "Another mentality, other holidays, other traditions. Well, actually temperament” (a woman interviewed in Lviv FGD).
2. Financial problems in the future. “My friends moved to Israel, a couple. ... prices are very high there and there is a very high rent for the apartment. So when both of them retire (they are of the same age), they will not be able afford to pay rent. It means even their children will not be able to buy them a house – not to buy but to pay rent – and for their separate apartment as well” (a woman interviewed in Kharkiv FGD).

Other informants said that some of their friends or relatives went abroad due to the unstable economic and political situation in Ukraine, unemployment, corruption, unconstitutional (in their opinion) policy of Ukrainian government, good opportunities to earn money and study abroad:

“I have three working children. They work and study. They applied for different programmes abroad. They do not plan to come back. Despite the fact that it is expensive there, as long as the situation here is bad, they do not plan to return” (a man interviewed in Kharkiv FGD).

Informants noted that if there was stability, economic growth, a lack of corruption, rising social standards, decent pay, preferential loans for housing, education of European standards in Ukraine then there would be no need to go abroad. Overall results and accounts from focus group discussions did not differ substantially between the three cities.

According to IDPs, the Ukrainian government should introduce a visa-free regime with the EU, ensure citizens’ right to move freely within the country, and strengthen border controls to improve migration control. Some of them even suggested the introduction of a visa regime with Russia and closure of border with the ATO zone. EU countries, according to informants, should have a ‘soft’ migration policy for migrants from the former Soviet Union, help Ukrainian immigrants financially and provide information support when searching for jobs.
1.4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The question of migration, both internal and external, plays an important role in Ukraine today. In our research we have shown that there are numerous challenges in tackling the problems of migrants, as well as differences in the dynamics of the migration itself.

We can see a certain increase in international labour migration from Ukraine today, in particular by young educated people. The consequence of this situation is a rise in the overall level of education among labour migrants (based on this interview vis-a-vis interviews carried out in 2008 and 2012) and certain changes in their age structure. It means that socio-demographic characteristics of Ukrainian labour migrants are changing and there are also changes in the geographical focus of migration flows. Some migrants, who were previously working in Russia, now move to the EU countries.

Economic factors are still the dominant force determining migration. The annexation of Crimea and the conflict in Donbas have also played a role in the increase in international migration. However, this factor by itself does not significantly influence the migration dynamics; migration stimulus comes first of all from the impact of conflict on economy. The escape of IDPs from their previous places of residence is the result of military actions. However, when IDPs are choosing a new place to live and making a decision about migrating abroad, they are still guided by economic motives.

Despite the fact that most of the migrants do not or only partly achieve their desired migration goal, they intend to go abroad again, which means that the migration potential of Ukrainians is quite significant. New migrants usually retrace the behavioural patterns of people who migrated from Ukraine in the 1990s, depending on periodic short trips. ‘Chain’ migration is more prevalent among the Crimean Tatars. Despite financial difficulties and a lack of social protection in the new places of residence, IDPs do not usually show any major willingness to travel abroad. The number of Ukrainian asylum seekers in EU countries remains low. This fact gives Ukrainian migrants (including potential ones) hope that EU countries will treat them favourably even in the midst of the EU migration crisis.

Due to the significant deterioration of employment opportunities in Ukraine, we can hardly expect a decrease in the rate of international labour migration in the nearest future. In these circumstances, the Ukrainian state should try to benefit from labour migration and minimise its possible negative consequences.

Based on the results of the qualitative data we have collected, we would like to suggest some recommendations for the Ukrainian government. In our opinion, the goals of the state migration policy in Ukraine should be the following: to actively facilitate the return of the migrants who travelled abroad to work, to strengthen social protection of Ukrainian workers abroad; and finally to improve the economic situation of Ukraine.

Demographic forecasts show that a further reduction of people of working age is inevitable. Ukrainian government should develop a state programme which would deal
with the return and reintegration of long-term migrants. The key element of such programmes would be to promote business start-ups as the most promising way of investing money earned by migrants into the Ukrainian economy. The programmes should provide migrants with information and advice on starting and maintaining their businesses or employment, as well recognition of skills which the migrants acquired abroad and psychological assistance for people in need. Tax and customs exemptions should be set for labour migrants who have worked outside of Ukraine for at least two years and are planning to return to Ukraine. It however appears that the policy of active facilitation of migrants return to Ukraine can only be fully implemented after the resolution of the armed conflict.

Considering the areas in which the majority of Ukrainian labour migrants are occupied, there is little chance that they will come back to Ukraine with modern innovations and technologies or business management skills. However, migrants returning from the EU share the European values and standards of behaviour typical of societies with developed market economies. Additionally, these are the people who before migrating were rather self-sufficient. This means that in terms of improving the business climate in Ukraine, the migrants who return and their family members will demonstrate a greater willingness to engage in entrepreneurial activity. Within the framework of the research commissioned by IOM in 2010 (Pozniak, 2013), children of labour workers, who have reached the age of 18 and who have the right to financial entrepreneurship, showed that even in unfavourable conditions in Ukraine, are willing to engage in business. Most of the migrants’ children save money on a more or less regular basis, nearly a third of them have (along with their parents) the money needed to start a business (Pozniak, 2013).

It is important to intensify the efforts to enact bilateral agreements with the destination countries of Ukrainian migrants concerning social security, recognition of educational and professional qualifications, driving licenses, etc. Moreover, there should be an active discussion about pensions’ recognition. Another essential area of international cooperation is the development and implementation of programmes of circular migration: it is beneficial not only for Ukraine, but also for the recipient countries. It means that Ukraine has real opportunities to negotiate with the EU on the involvement of relevant countries in financing these programmes.

In order to strengthen the ties between Ukrainian labour migrants and homeland, to increase the level of returns of labour migrants, Ukraine should expand opportunities for distance education for children of labour migrants, who are currently living with their parents outside the state boundaries. Additionally, Ukrainian secondary schools abroad could be created with the involvement of local funds and recruitment of teaching staff from among labour migrants.

In order to minimise the loss of intellectual potential and to prevent the outflow of young people, the Ukrainian state should, firstly, extend the system of grants for gifted young people (including the possible involvement of European donors). Secondly, the government should introduce procedures for arranging contracts with graduates of
certain professions, whose education has been sponsored by the state, to regulate the temporary and permanent emigration of these specialists.

The EU countries would be advised to continue their practice of creating favourable legal opportunities for Ukrainian migrants, maintaining programmes of circular migration and promoting tolerance to Ukrainian migrants among the local population.

The strategy of the state policy on IDPs should be based on a differential approach to different categories of internal migrants. Implementation of this approach requires constant monitoring of the opinions of IDPs and their future plans. It is necessary to introduce a systematic interview of IDPs on these issues. Integration of IDPs who do not wish to return should include assistance in arranging a new housing and the promotion of tolerance between migrants and local inhabitants. Families who plan to stay should be guaranteed housing, a means of providing financial support for the purchase or repair of their own homes; repair of centres for collective accommodation and transfers of ownership in housing; construction of housing with further transfer of ownership. It also makes sense to use social criteria for providing housing (families with many children, single parent families, etc.).

At the same time it is important to conduct an information campaign among the population of Ukraine to encourage an unprejudiced and tolerant attitude to IDPs from the Eastern part of Ukraine. There were several mentions in the media about conflicts between IDPs and the local population during 2014 and some cases still happen today. However, there are no reasonable grounds to speak about massive social conflicts – it is more likely that some individual cases gained publicity. The impact of such events on public opinion should be minimised. In addition, government agencies and international organisations should work with local authorities (especially with the employees involved in the arrangement of pensions and social assistance) to raise awareness of the needs of IDPs and to avoid prejudice against migrants.

REFERENCES

ANNEX

1) Experts interviewed in the interview: Group A – experts (N = 15)

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Source: Own research, 2016.

2) Migrants interviewed within the interview: Group B – migrants (N = 62)

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Source: Own research, 2016.
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Chapter 2

UKRAINIAN MIGRATION TO POLAND AFTER THE ‘REVOLUTION OF DIGNITY’: OLD TRENDS OR NEW EXODUS?

Marta Jaroszewicz, Tomasz Piechal
(Centre for Eastern Studies – OSW)
2.1 INTRODUCTION

In terms of its migration profile, Poland still remains a country of emigration; however it has been progressing towards an emigration-immigration profile. Since 2014 Poland has been observing a striking increase in the number of Ukrainians applying for different forms of short-term residence status. However due to shortcomings in the available statistical instruments and a still prevailing temporary character of Ukrainian migration, it is very difficult to separate tourists from migrants. Thus it cannot be confirmed statistically that the current migration situation in Poland can be regarded as a slow acceleration of previous migration trends with prevailing circular migration and a still limited (albeit growing) number of Ukrainians who decide to settle down in Poland, or whether new mass migration has actually been occurring. The qualitative research pursued in the framework of the current project “Ukraine’s migration monitoring: forced and labour mobility” encourages the formulation of a hypothesis about a new mass wave of Ukrainian immigration to Poland and a clear shift in migration patterns in Poland, but it is not obvious whether this immigration will turn into a long-term pattern.

Migration of Ukrainians to Poland has been a rather popular subject for research. However since comprehensive statistical data is limited to migrants with valid residence permits and there are no instruments for systemic monitoring of the place of Ukrainians on the Polish labour market, the majority of the studies either analyse residence statistics for those leaving the country or apply a qualitative approach. There is however a huge need for systemic comprehensive research on the role of Ukrainian nationals on the Polish labour market. Certainly links between migration and conflict have not been studied and the inflow of Ukrainians affected by conflict is a recent phenomenon.

The Centre for Migration Research of Warsaw University and the Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW) are the main institutions in Poland that conduct relevant studies. The most prominent and recent projects/studies on Ukrainian migration include studies on the integration of Ukrainians, mixed marriages, the role of migrant integration networks, links between immigration policy of a destination country and migration patterns including the role of the migration policy on the prevalence of a model of circular migration (Duszczyk, 2015, Lesińska, 2015, Kindler, 2013, Grzymała-Kozłowska; Kępińska, Górny, 2002). There were also a few studies investigating the impact of visa restrictions on Polish-Ukrainian mobility and possible future visa liberalisation (Jaroszewicz, Lesińska, 2015; Jaroszewicz, 2008, Fomina, 2012). Quite recently a few valuable studies investigating the phenomenon of Ukrainian educational migration in Poland have been carried out (Siwińska, 2016; Konieczna-Salamantin, 2015). Macro-economic studies analysing the impact of Ukrainian immigration on the Polish economy are less common, however one recent study (Kaczmarczyk, 2015) is worth noting, as well as a more strategic study on the economic costs of Eastern European migration to the EU (Barbone, 2015).
2.2 THE MIGRATORY SITUATION IN POLAND

2.2.1 Available data

This sub-chapter will mainly focus on immigration patterns in Poland to give a general overview to supplement the results of the qualitative research on Ukrainians in Poland presented in the following sections. It should however be emphasised that the main trait of contemporary migration in Poland was the post-EU-accession movement of more than one million Poles (with all related social, demographics and economic consequences) who left for other EU states, mainly the UK (Lesińska, Okólski, Slany and Solga, 2014; Glorius, Grabowska-Lusińska and Kuvik, 2013). In this sense, the immigration numbers that were observed so far may be considered as moderate (Brunarska, Lesińska, 2014; Jaroszewicz, 2015; Kaczmarczyk, 2015). One should however very carefully observe the evaluation of current growth in migration from Ukraine to comprehend whether it may transform into a ground-breaking moment for Poland’s immigration profile.

The data of the 2011 national population census showed that the foreign population at that time constituted less than 1% of the total resident population. At the end of 2013, 121,000 foreigners with different kinds of residence permits were registered in Poland. Two years later, at the end of 2015 this number had reached 193,743 persons³². The majority of immigrants come from Ukraine (around 70–90% depending on the type of residence permit). Other countries of origin include Belarus, Russia, Armenia, China, and Vietnam. However, the available numbers do not illustrate the full picture of immigration to Poland. Most immigrants arriving in Poland reside there temporarily and do not obtain residence permits. Some undefined number of foreigners reside here irregularly and are not captured by any statistical data. According to Eurostat data, which recognises long-term national visas (D type) as residence permits, at the end of 2015 there were 501,241 different residence permits granted to foreign citizens (including 336,346 permits granted to Ukrainian nationals). In comparison, the number of permits granted to the Ukrainians in the whole EU reached 905,242 (see Tab. 1).

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Source: Eurostat 2016 (http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do)

³² Data of Polish Office ofForeigners.
Every year a few thousand people ask for international protection or other forms of complementary status in Poland. However, the recognition rates are not very high so the presence of those foreigners influences neither the situation on the labour market nor social policy. Moreover, many asylum seekers leave Poland illegally and head further towards the west. At the same time, this group has been widely described in terms of their statistical and demographic profile. A more massive inflow of asylum seekers usually happens after the eruption of armed conflict or other violent occurrences in the world, particularly in former post-communist countries. So far Poland has observed the rapid inflow of asylum seekers from Northern Caucasus, Georgia and Ukraine (in 2014–2015). In 2016 Poland has been observing a relatively large number of asylum applications. In January–July 2016, 7,303 foreigners asked for asylum in Poland (a 66% growth in comparison to last year). The major nationalities of applicants included Russia (73% of all applications), Ukraine (10%), and Tajikistan (9%). Up to July 2016 Poland had issued 7,412 asylum decisions, in most cases rejections. There were less than 100 positive decisions for Russian, Syrian, Iraqi, and Ukrainian nationals\(^\text{33}\). Altogether at the end of 2015 there were only around 5,500 people legally residing in Poland with valid refugee status or other forms of protection. Many refugees left Poland, many legalise their stay in other ways, including receiving citizenship.

Once again it should be emphasized that the data on residence permits, even with partial visa statistics included, is far from being able to capture the ‘real’ level of immigration to Poland. The majority of foreigners in Poland reside under a simplified employment scheme that does not require a work permit. It is based on an employer’s declaration of intent to employ a foreigner and allows citizens of six countries (initially Ukraine, Russia and Belarus, since 2009 Moldova and Georgia, and from 2014 Armenia) to work in Poland for up to six months within a period of twelve consecutive months without a work permit. The employer’s declaration scheme, implemented as a pilot project, has evolved into the most significant formula for the employment of foreigners in Poland. In January–December 2015 782,222 declarations allowing for short-term employment of foreigners were issued (a growth of more than 100% in comparison to data registered in the same period last year). Further growth can possibly be expected also in 2016. It is worth underlining that 98% of all declarations issued in 2015 fall to Ukrainian citizens\(^\text{34}\). Apart from the simplified scheme, 65,768 work permits were issued to foreign nationals in 2015, mostly in cases where long-term work has been envisaged. In this case visible albeit not radical growth has been also observed – around 50%\(^\text{35}\).

Such a significant growth when it comes to the employment of foreigners, accompanied by the absence of proper control mechanisms (only data on employer’s declarations have being gathered, not data on the actual employment of foreigners), led to recent

\(^{33}\) Ibidem.
\(^{34}\) Data of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy of Poland.
\(^{35}\) Ibidem.
### Tab. 2 Number of foreigners with valid residence permits (different types) in Poland as of 1 January 2016 (stock data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of the document</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent residence permit</td>
<td>47,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU resident status</td>
<td>9,469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary residence permit</td>
<td>77,623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU citizen’s permit</td>
<td>63,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU citizen’s permanent permit</td>
<td>7,098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence permit for EU citizen’s family member</td>
<td>596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent residence permit for EU citizen’s family member</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee status</td>
<td>1,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complementary (subsidiary) protection</td>
<td>2,058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian status</td>
<td>1,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerated status</td>
<td>533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altogether</td>
<td>211,869</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Tab. 3 Number of employer’s declaration issued to foreigners in Poland in 2014–2016 (first half of the year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First half 2014</th>
<th>Second half 2014</th>
<th>First half 2015</th>
<th>Second half 2015</th>
<th>First half 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of declarations</td>
<td>190,977</td>
<td>196,421</td>
<td>410,808</td>
<td>371,414</td>
<td>634,321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declarations for foreigners with residence permit/visa</td>
<td>29,104</td>
<td>51,458</td>
<td>87,351</td>
<td>129,736</td>
<td>176,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of women</td>
<td>81,153</td>
<td>67,428</td>
<td>141,326</td>
<td>122,071</td>
<td>218,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issued to Ukrainian citizens</td>
<td>182,896</td>
<td>190,050</td>
<td>402,674</td>
<td>360,026</td>
<td>614,196</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy of Poland 2016.

### Tab. 4 Number of work permits issued to foreigners in Poland in 2010–2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Growth (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>36,622</td>
<td>24.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>40,808</td>
<td>11.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>39,144</td>
<td>−4.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>39,078</td>
<td>−0.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>43,663</td>
<td>11.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>65,786</td>
<td>50.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

changes in Polish migration policy. Poland has recently adopted a draft law that would
most probably abolish the declaration mechanism and instead introduce special work
permits for seasonal work and for short-term work³⁶.

One should also remember that the number of declarations issued is certainly higher
than the real number of Ukrainian nationals actually working based on them. Many
Ukrainians ask their potential employer for the declaration, but they never turn up in the
Polish consulate to request the relevant visa and many do not show up at the employer.
Nevertheless, as tourist visa, refusal and return data demonstrate, irregular migration,
mainly under the legal stay/illegal work model, has also been growing. There are no
estimations related to the possible stock of irregular migrants and no special studies have
been carried out to at least estimate the scale of the phenomenon. In 2013–2014 under
an IVF-financed project ‘Forecasting migration between the EU, V4 and Eastern Europe:
impact of visa abolition’ the expert estimates for the number of Ukrainian migrants
residing in Poland (also irregularly) oscillated around 240,000 (Brunarska, Lesińska,
2014). However the project ended before the current significant growth in the number
of Ukrainian migrants coming to Poland. A possible tool to more precisely measure that
inflow would be the introduction of a comprehensive labour market monitoring system,
which Poland currently still lacks.

2.2.2 Roots of migration and policy evolution

The answer to the question about the growing attractiveness of Poland in the eyes of
migrants, particularly those from Ukraine, is unequivocal. Certainly, a major role is played
by the economic and social situation in the two countries with stable economic growth in
Poland, decreasing unemployment and shrinking demographic reserves able to fill avail-
able places on the labour market, accompanied by the drastic decline of the Ukrainian
economy in 2014–2015. The Delphi interview of migration trends between the EU/V4
and Eastern Europe conducted in Poland in November 2013 – April 20014 (Brunarska,
Lesińska, 2014) revealed that when it comes to ‘push’ factors attracting migrants from
Eastern Europe to Poland, the most prominent ones were geographic proximity between
Poland and Ukraine and low travel costs, growing migration networks (the presence of
relatives or close friends already staying and working in Poland) and relatively liberal
visa and migration policy in Poland. At the moment the research was conducted, a mi-
nor role was assigned to the differences in salaries between Poland and Eastern Europe,
since wages offered to migrants in Czechia or Germany were much higher. However that

³⁶ Please see: Projekt ustawy o zmianie ustawy o promocji zatrudnienia i o instytucjach rynku pracy oraz
nietkórych innych ustaw z dnia 1 lipca 2016 (https://www.mpips.gov.pl/bip/projekty-aktow-prawnych/
projekty-ustaw/rynek-pracy/projekt-ustawy-o-zmianie-ustawy-o-promocji-zatrudnienia-i-instytucjach-
rynku-pracy-i-niektorych-innych-ustaw/#akapit3).
ratio drastically changed in 2014–2015 when the Ukrainian hryvnia went through severe devaluation. In mid-2015 the US dollar equivalent (calculated according to the current exchange rate) of an average salary in Ukraine was a mere US$130, which ranked the country in last position in the list of former USSR countries (Jaroszewicz, 2015).

Migration dynamics have of course been influenced by relevant policy developments. The migration situation and related policy evolution in Poland since its independence can be divided into three main stages (Lesińska 2010; Stefańska, Szulecka, 2014). However, one should consider whether Poland is currently experiencing the fourth stage of its migration situation and related migration policy which emerged as a reaction to the European migration crisis and growing xenophobia and anti-immigration sentiments across Europe (Łodziński, Szonert, 2016).

The first, earliest, stage can be described as a mass mobility rather than migration phase. Since the early 1990s, due to its geographic location, Poland has become a transit country for people originating from Eastern Europe and Asia heading for Western Europe. After decades of administratively limited mobility inside the “Eastern” bloc, Poland had experienced very intensive short-term trans-border commerce-related movements, a so-called shuttle trade. Moreover, the intensity of border traffic was intensified by existing family and ethnic ties (Jaroszewicz, 2008). It should be recalled that for many centuries until 1945 current western Ukraine and Poland had been in one state and there were no obstacles to the mobility of the population. As a result, after WWII, a mass diaspora of ethnic Poles remained in Soviet Ukraine and the reverse. The forced re-settlement actions conducted after the war did not stimulate closer commutation of divided ethnic groups, but artificially split multi-ethnic societies. This stage was also characterized by the willingness of Polish authorities to establish rules for the admission and residence of foreigners in Poland after the collapse of the Soviet regime and to sustain the new mobility patterns at the same time (Łodziński, Szonert, 2016).

The second stage usually referers to as “Europeisation”, related to the fundamental changes in the rudiments of Polish migration policy due to the upcoming EU accession (Weinar 2006). There was a serious drop in the number of arrivals of Eastern European citizens to Poland after Warsaw introduced a visa-free regime and later joined the Schengen area. The legal restrictions on mobility were so severe in comparison to the pre-Schengen situation that a return to previous mobility dynamics was possible only in 2011–2012. (Lesińska, 2015; Jaroszewicz, 2008).

The third stage of the development of Polish migration policy, which started in 2008–2009, was related to the growing needs of the labour market to gradually open towards foreigners and look for other ‘controlled’ possibilities to attract foreigners, for instance students and highly qualified specialists (Stefańska, Szulecka 2014). Poland has moved rather smoothly through the reefs of the global economic crisis, displaying steady economic growth since 2004. Unlike many EU states like Italy or Czechia which were the main destination for Ukrainian migrants before the crisis, not only did Poland not restrict its migration policy, but it actually liberalised it. However the situation on
the labour market, including high unemployment rates, still remained a drawback to the Polish economy, including labour force shortages in certain sectors, such as agriculture, construction and household services (Kaczmarczyk, 2015).

The question remains open whether this phase is still ongoing or whether Poland has entered a new fourth stage of its migration policy where, as never before, immigration has developed into a hot political topic and political and ethnic motivations are placed before the economic and administrative logic that has prevailed so far. On the wave of the current European migration crisis and the perceived links between terrorism and migration and rising resentment between Poland and Ukraine over the vision of their common history, Polish society has become more anti-immigrant. The same applies to the political class.
2.3 ROLE OF UKRAINIAN MIGRATION IN POLAND

Ukrainians have always been a prevailing immigrant group in Poland, but in the last two years that domination has become particularly visible. Contingent on the type of status (greater demand has been observed when it comes to different types of short-term stay), in 2014–2015 Poland saw a several-fold increase in the number of residence/work applications requested by Ukrainian citizens. Depending on the source of statistical data we use, Ukrainian nationals obtain from 60 to 97% of different types of permissions allowing them to enter, stay and/or work in Poland. According to Office for Foreigners data, as of July 2016 there were around 84,000 Ukrainians legally residing in Poland based on different kind of long-term residence permits. According to Eurostat methodology, which also takes into consideration valid long-term national visas, 336,346 residence permits granted by Poland to Ukrainian nationals were valid at the end of 2015. For comparison, that number for 2008 totalled 22,000 permits.

**Tab. 5** All valid permits issued to Ukrainian nationals in Poland by 31 December of each year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22,801</td>
<td>26,571</td>
<td>37,921</td>
<td>76,162</td>
<td>122,274</td>
<td>175,656</td>
<td>210,402</td>
<td>336,346</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurostat 2016 (http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do)

When it comes to short-term migration, these numbers are much higher. As already stated, the main instrument used by Ukrainian nationals willing to come to work in Poland is applying for a so-called employer’s declaration and relevant visa. In January-December 2015, altogether 762,700 declarations were issued to Ukrainian citizens³⁷. In the first six months of 2016 this number reached 614,196 (see Tab. 6).

The events of the Ukrainian ‘Revolution of Dignity’, the subsequent annexation of Crimea by Russia and the eruption of the Donbas conflict stimulated an increase in the number of Ukrainian nationals requesting asylum in Poland. The growth reached a peak in 2014 and steadily decreased in 2015 and possibly in 2016. In 2015, 1594 Ukrainians asked for asylum in Poland for the first time. As of 24.07.2016 the Office for Foreigners was dealing with 570 asylum cases of Ukrainian citizens. Social assistance has been provided to 1,573 Ukrainian citizens. Out of a few thousand Ukrainian applicants that asked for asylum in Poland in 2014–2016 only several applications received a positive response. In 2015 six Ukrainians received so-called “tolerated stay” status, 24 temporary protection

³⁷ Data of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy of Poland.
and only two were granted asylum status (after appeal). In 2016 (until July) as many as 17 Ukrainians received subsidiary protection status. Altogether, as of 24.07.2016 around 300 Ukrainian nationals reside in Poland on the basis of different forms of protection (asylum status, subsidiary protection, tolerated status, humanitarian status). This number includes Ukrainians injured during Euro-Maidan events and receiving long-term medical treatment in Poland. Moreover, in 2015 the Polish government organized two campaigns for the relocation of Ukrainian citizens of Polish origin. The members of families of those relocated people who did not have a Polish Card asked for political asylum in Poland. Altogether 119 persons requested political asylum, out of whom 56 persons received the status³⁸.

Visa statistics have also been growing, albeit not so drastically. This may indicate saturation of ‘entry’ demand to the EU within the Ukrainian population, who after decades of various mobility experiences, are looking for legal employment or residence options. In 2015 Polish consulates issued 922,240 visas to Ukrainian citizens (a 10% increase in comparison to the previous year). Of that number, 55,255 were short-term visas allowing for a stay in the EU for 90 days in a 3-month period (so-called Schengen visas) and 276,298 so-called national visas allowing for a longer stay in a certain member country. Polish authorities have also published data on visas issued in the first three months (up to 29th February) of 2016. Altogether 154,515 visas were issued (64,885 Schengen visas and 89,930 long-term visas). This indicates huge growth (by 40%) but most probably related to still rising demand for long-term national visas required under the simplified labour scheme³⁹.

Tab. 6 Number of visas issued by Poland in Ukraine in 2013–2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>General number of visas issued</th>
<th>Schengen visas issued</th>
<th>National visas issued</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>720,125</td>
<td>527,706</td>
<td>192,419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>827,771</td>
<td>554,255</td>
<td>276,298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>922,240</td>
<td>456,085</td>
<td>466,155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016.

The previously quoted Delphi interview on migration trends between the EU/V4 and Eastern Europe conducted in Poland in November 2013 – April 2014 revealed that, according to expert knowledge, the number of migrants from Ukraine to Poland oscillated around the figure of 240,000. Experts estimated that irregular migrants account for about

³⁸ Data of the Office of Foreigners.
³⁹ To make use of the simplified labour scheme (6 months during a year period) a foreigner still needs to obtain a long-term visa, unless he/she has another form of permit allowing them to stay in Poland.
45% of all Ukrainian migrants; their irregular status lies mainly in undertaking work without registration while legally staying in Poland.

Available statistical data allows for a relatively detailed demographic and social analysis of the Ukrainian migrants legally residing and working in Poland. The dominant group are skilled and unskilled workers in agriculture, domestic care, construction, transportation and food processing with services such as administration slowly gaining traction. For many years, women predominated in migration flows to Poland, with around 60/40 ratio of women to men. In the last two years, however, men applying for an employer’s declaration of different kinds of status outnumber women. The majority of foreigners resides and works in the Warsaw district. There is no predominant age structure of Ukrainian migrants in Poland. Around 25% are young people (up to 25 years), another 25% people between 25 and 34 ears, around 25% are aged 35–55 and around 15% are in the 45–54 age bracket. There are only a few children; families coming with children are still a rare phenomenon, not visible in the statistics⁴⁰.

What is really significant in terms of changes in migration patterns of the Ukrainian inflow to Poland is the swiftly growing number of students. According to the Polish Ministry of Science data, in the 2015/16 academic year there were as many as 30,589 Ukrainian citizens studying in Poland. In 2014/2015 this number totaled 23,392 persons. Such an increase can be explained by both push factors like the already mentioned

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⁴⁰ Data of the Office of Foreigners.
economic destabilisation and war-like internal situation, but also by advantageous legal solutions allowing foreign students to study and work in Poland simultaneously, as well as very active campaigns by Polish universities attempting to attract Ukrainian citizens. At some universities in the cities bordering Ukraine, Ukrainians have become such an overwhelming majority that it has caused some intra-ethnic disputes with the Polish minority. All this has forced Polish universities to start thinking more thoroughly about special integration programmes for both foreigners studying in Poland and for the host student society (Siwińska, 2016).
2.4 OWN RESEARCH

2.4.1 Methodology

In this subchapter results of the empirical research for Poland will be presented. First of all, the project was aimed to grasp the role that ‘war’, ‘armed conflict’ in a wider sense, has in influencing Ukrainian migration to Poland. We were looking for changes in mobility patterns of Ukrainians after Russia attacked Ukraine and conflict erupted in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. Spring 2014 was assumed as a reference point, meaning that we have not interviewed migrants who came to Poland earlier. More specifically, if changes are identified, we asked what they look like. How much did migration increase? What are the main motives, routes, migratory strategies and mechanisms through which migrants move? Can we see the difference between war-related migration and purely economic migration? Which legal instruments are migrants using? From which parts of Ukraine are migrants coming and what are their demographic characteristics? And, consequently, what does their stay and work in Poland look like? Last but not least, we inquired about possible recommendations that could help to better address the issue of Ukrainian migration in Poland.

Our research is based on qualitative methods – semi-structured interviews mostly through face-to-face contact with two groups of informants⁴¹. The first group consisted of reputable experts in the migration field. The second group was composed of Ukrainian migrants who agreed to share their migration experience with the interviewers. It is worth noting that in the interviews with migrants we tried to comprehend the substance/quality of the phenomenon, by which we mean the individual experience and perceptions of the migrant. The semi-structured interviews with experts were also qualitative, however here we also asked for some numbers and other qualitative features using our previous experience with the so-called Delphi method. In the Delphi method expert knowledge is gathered through the distribution of a series of questionnaires to receive an ‘objectivised’ subjectivity (Drbohlav, Jaroszewicz, 2015). In the current research we stuck to looser semi-structured interviews, but some ‘collective’ vision was still grasped as well.

Firstly, we conducted semi-structured interviews with a total of 15 Polish experts, representing Government organisations (7), NGOs (4), the academic sphere (3) and business (1) (see the annex at the end of the chapter). In the interviews, which lasted from 30 minutes to two hours and were conducted in December 2015 – February 2016, we asked experts about their opinions on the following sub-topics: current Ukrainian migration to Poland, availability of migration data, personal assessments of the situation, changes in trends (structure of inflows, reasons, migrants’ strategies, etc.), types of migration,

⁴¹ However two exceptions were made and internet contact was allowed when there was no possibility to personally interview an informant.
refugee situation, any new occurrences related to Ukrainian migration, and possible recommendations.

Secondly, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 20 Ukrainian migrants. The definition of the target subject was as follows: adult migrants with legal or irregular status, those who migrated abroad after March/April 2014, coming from the whole of Ukraine (not just the conflict-affected regions or Crimea). The informants’ demographic characteristics are summarised in the annex at the end of the chapter. Selection of the informants was done via a snow-ball method. Our motivation was not to pursue a demographically representative sample, but to intentionally find migrants with recent migration experience to investigate whether conflict-related factors influenced their decision to migrate and the migration strategy they adopted.

In the interviews with migrants, which were held between January and April 2016, we asked the informants about their opinions on the following sub-topics: Did the eruption of armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine and the Russian influence their migration decision? What is their demographic and professional background? What are their plans with regard to Poland? What is the role of the migration network? How did they find their job and what job do they do? Which legal instruments do they use? Is their stay in Poland transnational, do they maintain regular contacts with the hosting society? How do they perceive the host society? How do they perceive their national identity and whether it played any role in their migration decision? What policy changes could be implemented in the field of governing migration within Ukraine and possibly, abroad?

Our group of informant-migrants had an average age of 36.2 years (the youngest person was 18 and the oldest 49). Males were predominant: 13 in comparison to 7 females. Half of the informants were single and half married. Few were divorced. The average length of stay in Poland was 11.5 months, while the longest period was 22 months and the shortest three months. The majority of our informants had a university degree (17 persons), two were high school students and only one person had vocational education. Geographically, informants represented almost all Ukraine with the majority representing central Ukraine, one quarter Western Ukraine and another quarter the Donbas region.

2.4.2 Results of the empirical research

Acceleration of the trend or mass immigration?

As was already clearly indicated, in the last two years all the immigration-related statistics have been demonstrating a huge growth in the number of Ukrainians applying for residence/work/asylum permissions in Poland. The greatest growth has been observed in the case of employers’ declarations permitting short-term work. At the same time, that instrument offers the most limited statistical possibilities for measuring migration and does not track whether the migrant really came to Poland and commenced work there.
Therefore without comprehensive labour market monitoring or conducting a representative quantitative interviews among immigrants it will not be possible to answer the question whether the phenomenon we currently observe is a trend change. We cannot answer the question of whether we are only experiencing a temporary growth in short-term migration induced by the unfavourable economic situation and the military conflict and whether a decreasing trend is likely to come soon.

For obvious reasons our qualitative research cannot answer that question either. What became clear in the interviews however is that the visible growth in the number of Ukrainian nationals in Poland was the main observation by our informants, regardless of whether they represent an expert group or a migrant group. All experts agreed that the growth is considerable. As one of the experts has argued: “It is really a new quality. We have not experienced such a growth since the 1990s... There is no sense in looking for detailed data, you can see it with the naked eye.” Another expert pointed out that “Ukrainians have practically dominated ‘migrant sections’ on the Polish labour market.”

What is equally important is that these are not only migrants from Western Ukraine as before, but also persons from other parts of the country. Most probably the number of migrants from Eastern Ukraine has also increased, albeit not drastically. Increased interest also touches upon Ukrainians from the most economically developed central regions, even Kyiv, which as both Polish and Ukrainian statistics show was previously less mobile.

To prove their theses, most governmental experts have referred to the several-fold growth in the number of both temporary and permanent residence permits issued to Ukrainians. The growth in asylum applications (“practically from zero”), not so large in objective terms but considerable in relative terms, has been also mentioned by many experts. Non-governmental experts have focused on the informal market, the more visible presence of Ukrainians at informal labour exchanges, the growing number of Ukrainians employed without permission and social protection that come for advice to NGOs and diaspora organisations. One expert stated that “I have an impression that currently in each Polish municipality you can easily reach different municipalities in Ukraine, so vastly have the communication channels developed. It means that there are Ukrainians in many Polish localities.”

Interviews with migrants were more focused on their personal migration stories. Here too, however, informants usually noticed the growing number of Ukrainian nationals

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42 A12.
43 A5.
44 A10, A11, A13.
45 A2, A5.
47 A13.
49 A1, A6, A7, A9.
50 A9.
coming to Poland, which created some problems with finding jobs and stimulated conflicts between ‘first wave’ (pre-conflict one) and ‘second wave’ migration, as well as some minor conflicts with the host population.

The role of conflict

Our investigation did not lead to the conclusion that the widely understood conflict and instability related to the Russian aggression on Ukraine was a main driving force of the current wave of immigration. On the contrary, both experts and migrants, when first asked that question, usually referred to the bad economic situation, devaluation of the hryvnia, a large fall in average incomes and growing poverty as the main motivations for migration⁵¹. However when the interview continued and the conflict issue was considered in detail, the vital and complex role of the conflict emerged. One expert mentioned that ‘the eruption of armed conflict has had some impacts on the migration decision, but rather indirect ones. It increased the level of insecurity felt by Ukrainian citizens and somehow determined their final migration decision.’⁵² Two experts told that the eruption of conflict and previous events of the ‘Revolution of Dignity’ actually triggered the whole immigration wave. However first they resulted in economic breakdown in Ukraine which finally led to migration⁵³. Finally, one expert was of the opinion that “Both economic and social situation were so bad that even people who would be willing to wait it out finally decided to migrate, particularly if they had any assets that they could invest in Poland”⁵⁴.

Another expert pointed out the political dimension of current immigration wave ‘Apart from the necessity to feed their children, people came here in search of political stability (...) Political stability is very important for people who originate from a state that constantly reminds the possibility of introducing martial law and conducting mass mobilisation.’⁵⁵ This last statement may lead to a hypothesis about the fear of mobilisation as a motivation for immigration of young men. This hypothesis was acknowledged as probable by a few experts, but it seems that this type of immigration as such is not very great or highly visible⁵⁶. One expert indicated that ‘The inflow of young men probably fearing the mobilisation is certainly a new occurrence’⁵⁷. Another expert mentioned ‘What is a novelty is the growth in the number of men coming to Poland and asking for different types of permits.’⁵⁸

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⁵¹ A1, A2, A3, A5, A6, A8, A12, A14, A15.
⁵² A2.
⁵³ A10, A11.
⁵⁴ A5.
⁵⁵ A6.
⁵⁶ A1, A2, A4, A10, A12.
⁵⁷ A3.
⁵⁸ A15.
Many more subtle and more biased narratives related to the role of conflict have also appeared in the experts’ interviews. Some pointed to the ‘mixed migration flows’ made up of both economic migrants and asylum seekers as what is currently happening⁵⁹. Others pointed out the already mentioned lack of stability, deterioration of human rights standards and disillusionment with regard to the political elite ruling in Ukraine as not the direct causes of migration, but rather a facilitating factor⁶⁰. We can certainly state that there is an indirect ‘creeping influence of the conflict in Ukraine’ on immigration. If the destabilisation lasts longer and the ‘hybrid’ war with Russia turns into a long-term protracted conflict, that will certainly facilitate immigration, particularly of young people or more well-off families wishing to offer stable living conditions to their children.

Migrants, when first asked, usually indicated economic factors as the main influence on their migration decision. At the same time they added that the events of the ‘Revolution of Dignity,’ subsequent Russian aggression and the eruption of conflict were factors that outweighed their assessment of the Ukrainian state and their own future prospects in the country. Here are some quotations from relevant migrants’ stories: ‘There were no prospects of finding a job in Ukraine.’⁶¹ ‘After Maidan our company was closed; there were no orders. I was doing some part-time jobs but when the chance to migrate appeared, I went.’⁶² ‘There was Euro-Maidan and I was an activist. Then I had legal problems with the previous regime… Then I was offered a job with the government and all that disappointed me so much that I decided to leave.’⁶³ ‘I’m a pensioner. I did not see any prospects in Ukraine. My daughter had finished high school, and with the whole family we decided to leave.’⁶⁴ ‘When the war started I was about to open a shop, but had to give up that idea’⁶⁵. ‘I didn’t see the war, but in financial terms it affected me a lot.’⁶⁶ ‘In my soul I supported Maidan and I was hoping for the best but the final result was always bad.’⁶⁷

Many migrant informants were indirectly affected by the war in a more individualised way. They knew people who had died as a result of the conflict, their friends and family members went to the front line. Apart from relations telling about the everyday cruelty of war, they heard stories from the front line describing the decomposition of the Ukrainian state, including the low quality of commanders, corruption, the high level of crime and other abuses. ‘I support our boys who left for the front. But other people in Western Ukraine fear mobilisation and think this war is not theirs.’⁶⁸ ‘I have colleagues who went to the ATO zone (frontline) and those who died there. It is not that I’m not a patriot, I just

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⁵⁹ A2, A3.
⁶⁰ A3, A6, A9, A14.
⁶¹ B18.
⁶² B17.
⁶³ B19.
⁶⁴ B10.
⁶⁵ B13.
⁶⁶ B1.
⁶⁷ B11.
⁶⁸ B5.
think I can do more for my family here abroad. I saw people returning from war with severe psychological trauma.'

Finally, migrants who came from the Donbas area were directly affected by the military conflict. Unfortunately we did not manage to interview any migrants from Crimea. Migrant informants usually decided to leave because of the danger to their own security and that of their family, the risk of being killed or wounded, and the danger of being prosecuted by pro-Russian separatists ruling in the region, as well as by the absence of jobs or any other possibilities to financially ensure their existence. One migrant coming from the Luhansk region relates ‘I was pro-Ukrainian. My brother publicly supported Ukraine when separatists entered our city. He was severely beaten… we left.’ The story of a man from Donetsk region: ‘I came to Poland because of the war. I come from a frontline city which is under Ukrainian control, but it is still a war… Almost all my friends left the city, either within Ukraine or abroad (…). When the separatists entered our city we left for relatives in Volyn then we went back. Then my parents stayed. I went to Poland.’ Another statement: ‘I did not have a choice. I needed to leave. I managed to leave, first to Dnipropetrovsk and then to Poland.’ And the final two: ‘I’m from Donetsk. When the war erupted, together with my husband we fled to the Dnipropetrovsk oblast. Then to Poland.’ ‘We lived in the centre of Donetsk. We saw everything with our own eyes.’

War-affected regions. Crimea and Donbas

The presence of migrants from Crimea in Poland was only recognized in the experts’ interviews since no migrants from Crimea were interviewed. There is also statistical evidence of the presence of people who fled Crimea in spring 2014 (mainly Crimean Tatars) and asked for asylum in Poland. According to information from the Office for Foreigners who identified a so-called ‘Crimean profile’ among people asking for protection in Poland, asylum seekers from Crimea total around 20% of all asylum applications from Ukrainian citizens. These people are usually of Tatar ethnicity and explain their arrival to Poland by the fear of religious or ethnic persecution by the Russian authorities controlling the peninsula. This group seems fairly small (a few thousand people or less) and is rather closed to contacts with other Ukrainians in Poland. They mainly operate inside their own migration network and in contacts with the Polish Tatar minority. They regularise their status but usually do not seek any additional social assistance.

69 B6.
70 B3.
71 B12.
72 B16.
73 B20b.
74 B20a.
76 A2, A3.
These are possibly the reasons why not too many experts mentioned that migration flow in the interviews.

The migrant group coming from Donbas is more visible. ‘Before, people from Donbas virtually didn’t migrate to Poland, therefore this is a new phenomenon.’\textsuperscript{77} However there are no statistical possibilities to specify their exact number in the general population of Ukrainians asking for residence or work permits. ‘We don’t have data about the last place of residence in Ukraine of migrants asking for an employer’s declaration or permits in Poland.’\textsuperscript{78} According to the Office of Foreigners’ statistics, the so-called ‘Eastern Ukrainian’ profile can be observed in more than 70% of all asylum claims from Ukrainian citizens. Asylum seekers from Donbas refer to the bad security situation and war-related factors as their motivation to leave Ukraine. Some indicate their pro-Ukrainian political orientation and religious persecution, fears of being conscripted into the army\textsuperscript{79}. Similar reasons were identified in our research. Altogether we interviewed four informants coming from the conflict-affected area. In general, they cited danger to their own safety or that of their family and the inability to live ‘normal life’ in Donbas area as the main determinants of their migration decision. Some informants were initially displaced inside Ukraine before coming to Poland. Some have previous migration experience in Russia.

**Why Poland?**

Of equal importance is the question whether Ukrainian citizens’ amplified interest in migration is aimed only at Poland or whether it will affect other EU countries as well, e.g. whether after receiving legal status in Poland, migrants will wish to migrate to other EU locations. Also in this case it is worth distinguishing between ‘old’ circular migration from Western Ukraine, mainly from rural areas and small cities, and the ‘new’ migration patterns from all across the Ukraine aimed at more long-term residence. In our interviews we focused more on the second pattern to capture war-stimulated behaviours. Certainly people in that second category are thinking more about long-term migration and their final place of destination.

Experts’ interviews offered a more or less coherent picture when it comes to the migrants’ motivations for choosing Poland. First of all, liberal migration policy was mentioned including various legal possibilities to obtain a work or a job permit. Special attention was paid to the simplified labour scheme. ‘I think that the relatively low number of Ukrainians asking for asylum in Poland showed how liberal an admission policy we have, migrants don’t need to ask for asylum to come to Poland... In a sense Poland is a buffer that mitigates migration pressure from Ukraine towards other EU member states.’\textsuperscript{80} “A Ukrai-
nian citizen on average does not encounter any serious problems if they wish to obtain an employer’s declaration.” Secondly, the geographical proximity of Poland, which makes circular or temporary migration more possible, was mentioned. Thirdly, differences in the salary rates, particularly after the devaluation of the hryvnia: ‘Ukrainian migrants even with a small salary may pay the rent for an apartment and still have resources to have a ‘normal’ social life and buy things which would not be possible in Ukraine.’ Experts representing academia and NGOs stressed the role of very active migration networks; the rapidly growing efforts of migrants settled in Poland to bring their family and friends. ‘A Ukrainian migrant I met today said that next week she is bringing her husband’s father, mother and sister, and in a second round her own parents. Another Ukrainian colleague during his stay in Poland, brought his school friends and brothers and is now considering bringing his parents.’ Language vicinity and ethnic ties were also underlined, however here experts underlined the trap that Polish authorities may get into when considering that Ukrainians do not need any integration assistance, including language courses.

As far as the results of the migrants’ interviews are concerned, around half of the informants declared that Poland is their final place of destination. ‘I would like to stay in Warsaw, there are many prospects.’ ‘We want to stay in Poland, learn the language. Our child goes to a Polish kindergarten. He already speaks Polish. ’ ‘I don’t have plans to migrate further to another country. I think in Poland it is better than elsewhere, easier for the language, closer to home.’ ‘My plans are to ‘strengthen’ our stay in Poland, educate our daughter.’ At the same time, quite a number of informants, particularly the younger and more educated ones, mentioned that they would consider further emigration inside the EU. ‘If my company opened a branch in Germany, I would go.’ ‘I would not like to stay in one place. I would like to see more of Europe.’ ‘Fate brought us to Poland, however I was thinking of going somewhere further away.’ ‘I wanted to go to France, I already had some contacts there, but the facilitator cheated on me and left me at the train station. That’s how I stayed in Poland.’

The majority of the interviewed migrants in Poland were abroad for the first time. Some of them had been in Russia before, however they had often not perceived it as a foreign trip. The main motivation for choosing Poland was indicated as available legal

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81 A6, A15.
82 A10.
83 A9.
84 A3, A4.
85 B14.
86 B13.
87 B18.
88 B15a.
89 B7.
90 B6.
91 B20a.
92 B16.
entry/stay channels, exiting migration networks and channels of informal facilitators, geographical proximity of Poland and possibility to regularly visit relatives in the home country. They also pointed out the language and cultural proximity as well as some ethnic ties (some migrants had Polish roots). They also indicated that Poland is the most ‘secure country’ to leave for, the closest one, with various legal opportunities for migrants, attainable legalisation procedures. Few migrants mentioned further education opportunities for Ukrainian students. ‘I came to Poland because the language is similar, it’s near home, the way of thinking is similar.’

‘We came here because education is cheap. One semester of higher education costs around 250 euros.’

‘Poland is the easiest country to get into in the EU.’

‘I chose Poland because many people came there, my colleague from Donetsk was working here, and he gave us a phone number where we could find a job.’

‘Poland was practically the only country that accepts migrants. It was the easiest possibility to emigrate.’

‘I came to Poland because it is close to home, the language and traditions are similar, many colleagues went to Poland to look for a job and Polish people have a positive attitude towards Ukrainians.’

What is also interesting is that job-related factors were not usually referred to. However when the migrants were asked about their employment status, most said that they are employed, they had no difficulties in finding their first job in Poland and that the labour market is rather open, unlike the Czech or German ones. A few interviewed migrants have moved or are in the process of moving their companies/opening branches in Poland.

**Pre-conflict versus post-conflict migration?**

**Temporary versus permanent migration?**

Our research has confirmed the thesis that there are two different types of migration patterns represented by Ukrainian citizens in Poland. The first one is short-term circular labour migration governed by the liberal rules of short-term access to the Polish labour market. The bulk of the Ukrainian migrants who arrive in Poland fall into that group and usually have no intention to stay permanently in Poland. Constant circular migration has become their living strategy. The other group, smaller but constantly growing, are long-term migrants who look for permanent work in Poland, are studying or are married to Polish citizens. There were also clear indications that while circular migration will probably remain a main migration strategy preferred by inhabitants of Western Ukraine traditionally involved in circular mobility with the EU neighbours, more long-term migration from Central and Eastern Ukraine may become a new pattern of post-conflict
migration to Poland. Therefore we cannot speak about novelties in circular migration pursued by the Ukrainians after the eruption of conflict situation although the migrants’ inclinations to long-term migration patterns are probably growing.

The first pattern, more likely for migrants from Western Ukraine who have contacts with Poland on a daily basis, has been characterized by regular circular migration with more independent endeavours to find a job, and only very loose links to the conflict in eastern Ukraine (understood as a general feeling – a decreased level of security and stability). However this pattern has also many nuances. As one expert stated ‘We cannot state anymore, like in the 1990s, that Ukrainian migration is about agriculture and shuttle-trade. There are many more patterns and models also within Western Ukrainian migration. There are children of immigrants who come to Poland with different status, often as IT experts, people working in the medical sector. Migration networks are getting mixed. Often children of first generation immigration with higher human capital move further to the West.’

Another expert mentioned: ‘There are many Ukraines, not two, and even those most visible Western and Eastern ones are diversified. And migration patterns inside Western Ukrainian migration are also more diversified.’

The second pattern is more specific for recent migrants from Eastern Ukraine, who come to Poland with the intention of staying for a few years. They usually rely on migration networks, do not use job advertisements available in Polish and their link to the conflict in Eastern Ukraine is more straightforward – they are not usually direct victims of armed conflict but have social contacts with those openly affected. Geographical distance and vicinity to the war-affected zone make it impossible for those people to be involved in circular migration. Most of the migrants interviewed coming from that group declared they would like to spend around five years in Poland, hoping that after that period they will be able to return to Ukraine if the economic situation improves. Obviously these people only recently became migrants and their initial inclinations may change over time depending on their economic and social performance in Poland.

No interviewed migrant declared that they would definitely stay in Poland forever. They mentioned that in the medium-term they will either return to Ukraine or decide to migrate to other destinations.

It is worth stressing that the eruption of conflict and the general worsening of the political and economic situation has certainly increased the number of those migrating for educational reasons, which is a clearly visible pattern. Ukrainian students are coming from different parts of the country, however Western Ukrainian residents more often use fee-free education offers, also available for the Polish minority. They appear to have a better understanding of the Polish education market and future labour possibilities.
Legal channels used, labour situation, relationship with the host society and other migrants

Our experts’ interviews proved that the simplified legal migration scheme remains the main legal channel used by Ukrainian labour migrants. However many experts were cautious when assessing the quality of statistics in this regard, emphasising that the number of employer’s declarations issued is probably inflated since many Ukrainians migrants used it as way to enter Poland without really planning to appear at the indicated working place. Therefore stricter control/monitoring mechanisms of that system should be introduced. ‘It would be interesting to prepare a proper methodology to monitor whether migrants with declarations come to Poland in relation to a concrete job or whether they use it as a way to obtain a national visa allowing them to work and look for job only after they arrive in Poland... if migrants do not have a concrete job offer, how do they obtain a false employer’s declaration, whether a facilitator or job agencies are involved: this needs to be investigated.’¹⁰³ ‘The employer’s declaration system is leaky. It is not likely that currently there are 800,000 Ukrainians working in Poland based on that mechanism. There are less of them. Some migrants of course misuse the system, but some collect those declarations for the future, to be sure that if something happens, they will be able to go to Poland quickly. Sometimes they never use them.’¹⁰⁴

Most of the experts emphasized the several-fold growth in the number of applications for permanent residence and the impressive growth, even by a dozen at a time, in the number of applications for temporary residence¹⁰⁵. Most experts agreed that it clearly indicates the increased interest of Ukrainian citizens in more long-term migration, but are still not clear whether this will be permanent migration. Some have some doubts when it comes to the long-term continuation of that pattern. ‘Most migrants asking for permanent residence do this on the basis of a Polish Card or other forms of legalisation based on Polish origin. That stream may dry up quickly.’¹⁰⁶ Others thought the opposite: ‘Certainly more Ukrainians are applying for temporary residence permits, but it may not mean they do not want to settle down in Poland. It is just that Polish migration policy means that you need to meet strict conditions to receive permanent residence.’¹⁰⁷ ‘Many small and medium-range businessmen from Ukraine, particularly the Eastern and Central areas, came to Poland and would like to start a business here and gain permanent residence. But there is no easy legal path for that, so what they do at the beginning is they try to obtain temporary residence permits and work permits.’¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ A15.
¹⁰⁴ A12.
¹⁰⁶ A3.
¹⁰⁷ A13.
¹⁰⁸ A7.
In general, experts also agreed that there is a huge growth in education migration, mainly thanks to very liberal admission rules aimed at attracting foreign students. They were also of the opinion that asylum or other forms of protection are a rare form for Ukrainians to legalise their stay in Poland. ‘I do many interviews among Ukrainian migrants. I’ve never met a Ukrainian citizen who would ask for asylum in Poland.’\textsuperscript{109} ‘At the beginning after Maidan and the eruption of the conflict, Ukrainians started to ask for asylum in Poland. But as it is obvious to everybody, Polish authorities have decided to not take a positive view of those applications. Then Ukrainians saw no point in asking for asylum.’\textsuperscript{110}

Interviewed migrants did not reveal the exact legal title enabling them to stay in Poland, however in most of the cases they stated that they either have or are waiting for a ‘karta pobytu’ (residence card), which is called the same whether it is for temporary or permanent residence. Many informants came on short-term or national visas and are waiting for more long-term status. However Poland was usually referred to as the most open country. At the same time their migration decision was related to certain financial and logistic costs. They often fall victim to swindlers, particularly at the initial stage of their migration preparations. In general, migrants from Eastern Ukraine more often used the assistance of facilitators, work agencies. Western Ukrainian migrants already have contacts here.

Our interviews with experts did not focus on the situation of Ukrainian migrants on the Polish labour market, nor did we ask many questions about that in the interviews with migrants. However it was a subject that affected them and they spoke a lot about it. In general, our research has shown that Ukrainian migrants do not encounter problems with finding a job, although it is very often not ‘a dream’ job, but is way below their skills and qualifications. Only a few migrants that we interviewed have been working in their profession; usually they have worked in jobs below the level of their qualifications and education. That confirms previous research acknowledging the prevalent ‘brain-waste’, ‘qualification-waste’ character of Ukrainian nationals’ employment on the Polish labour market. The pre-2014 wave of Ukrainian migration to Poland mainly consisted of people with vocational or secondary education from small cities or rural areas in Western Ukraine, who did not perform jobs requiring higher qualifications in their home country either. The new wave however, particularly that from Eastern Ukraine, is composed of more people in middle life with higher levels of education and greater working experience. As one expert said ‘People looking for employment-related advice include more middle-aged Ukrainians from Eastern Ukraine with higher education, managerial experience in Donbas industry or administrative institutions. It is not so easy for such people to find a job.’\textsuperscript{111} Because the increase in the number of Ukrainian migrants arriving is so

\textsuperscript{109} A14.
\textsuperscript{110} A6.
\textsuperscript{111} A7.
huge, it also became more difficult to find any employment at all. ‘Ukrainian migrants claim that the Polish labour market is an employer’s market, where employers can dictate all the conditions.’

Many informants we spoke to decide to study in Poland, even if they had previously finished university in Ukraine, to increase their chances to get a more qualified job after graduation. This may indicate problems with recognition of Ukrainian diplomas and qualifications in the EU, as well as the lower and less modern level of the Ukrainian educational system. It also shows some structural mismatching between the education and working profile of the migrants and the needs of the Polish labour market, which currently requires either low-skilled workers (agriculture, construction, cleaning sectors) rather than qualified workers, or high level specialists with modern technical education. ‘The new phenomenon is however a growing trend when small and medium entrepreneurs move to Poland with their business and try to register it here.’ Certainly a huge challenge for migrants is to learn Polish to the extent that would allow them to work in most qualified jobs.

Most of the interviewed migrants feel well in Poland and express a fairly positive attitude towards Poles. Many of them however had encountered at least one unpleasant situation at their place of work, when Polish co-workers openly expressed xenophobic attitudes. In general, informants mentioned that they speak Polish well enough to perform simpler, lower-skilled jobs but they would need to improve their Polish to get a better job. Many said that they were taking Polish classes or were learning the language independently. Possibly due to the insufficient language skills and still basic level of socialisation with Polish society, they do not have deeper social interactions with local people. However those contacts informants have had so far (schools, neighbours, colleagues at the work place) are generally positive. A few of our informants were Protestant and they said they maintain close contact with the Polish community at church and it was the community that helped them to come to Poland. ‘I don’t have too many contacts with Poles. But the people I meet, usually neighbours, are polite, we say hello to each other.’ ‘Soon after Maidan Polish people were more cheerful, they asked whether I need any assistance. Before I started going to Nowy Swiat (the main Ukrainian club in Warsaw) most of my colleagues were Polish.’ ‘I interact with Poles almost every day. I’ve had only one unpleasant situation.’ ‘Polish people are nice to Ukrainians, apart from the fans of football teams or other nationalist people.’

A relatively complicated picture of relationships inside the Ukrainian migrant diaspora appears in the interviews. It appears that soon after Maidan and the growth of so-called

\[^{112}\] A1.  
\[^{113}\] A3.  
\[^{114}\] B2.  
\[^{115}\] B3.  
\[^{116}\] B4.  
\[^{117}\] B9.
voluntary movements inside Ukraine, Ukrainian migrants in Poland also felt more united and helped each other (apart from those strongly pro-Russian ones). However, over time, particularly as the demand for jobs has increased, some conflicts have appeared. In the interviews we could observe some tensions between Western and Eastern Ukrainian migration based on aspects of identity like language, attitude towards Ukraine’s independence and to Russia. At the same time new tensions more related to access to the labour market appeared between ‘pre-conflict’ and ‘post-conflict’ migrants. More settled migrants are usually afraid of the excess inflow of ‘new’ migrants who would work for lower rates. ‘Post-conflict’ migrants are claiming the old diaspora is cheating on them with illegal work. Currently it seems that the Ukrainian community in Poland still helps each other particularly through common organisations, clubs, websites, etc. However on a daily basis the majority of our informants rely on the assistance of migration networks in the narrow circle of family, university colleagues or people originating from the same region/village/city. They are also more focused on earning money, working long hours and having no time for social contacts. ‘Yes, there are Ukrainians here. But we have little contact, everybody has their own affairs.’¹¹⁸ ‘Mostly I meet with my Ukrainian colleagues from university. I’m not saying that all Ukrainians are bad, but there are some weird ones among them.’¹¹⁹ ‘Ukrainian students stick together, they often go out together.’¹²⁰ ‘There are sometimes tensions with Ukrainians from the western area. We speak and think in Russian and they do not appreciate it.’¹²¹ ‘I’m afraid relationships among Ukrainians in Poland could be better. Everyone thinks about themselves. Two years ago it was different. During Maidan and after Maidan, Ukrainians in Poland showed excellent self-organisation and solidarity.’¹²²

**Policy recommendations**

This sub-chapter will be based on the results of experts’ interviews. Two main groups of views can be distinguished here. The first, usually expressed by NGOs and academia, calls for a more liberal policy towards Ukrainian migrants at all levels – national, V4, EU. Experts representing that view also call for more positive migration policy, less ‘ politicisation’ of the current European migration crisis and the introduction of systemic integration programmes for migrants. Experts also affirmed that Poland should not lower standards when it comes to asylum seekers, vulnerable groups and other people looking for protection. More political arguments related to common geopolitical interests, the need to seek a long-term strategic partnership with Ukrainian society by constructing a liberal and fair migration policy for Ukrainians were also presented. ‘We should legalise

¹¹⁸ B20b.
¹¹⁹ B6.
¹²⁰ B14.
¹²¹ B13.
¹²² B16.
all Ukrainians in Poland. Opinion polls show that Polish society favours Ukrainians over other migrants.‘¹²³ ‘We are in the same boat as Ukrainians. We should provide them with medical assistance, language courses. We should do more so that Ukrainian migrants come out from their migrant ‘underground’ to see what kind of integration policy to pursue.’¹²⁴ ‘Poland lacks an integration policy for migrants. Most Ukrainians who come to Poland because of the war but who could not receive asylum status have no right to ask for integration assistance... Integration programmes are conducted by NGOs. It is not enough. Polish authorities should be actively involved.’¹²⁵ ‘Many Ukrainians have recently come to Poland, many for the first time with a rather limited understanding of Polish realities. They need assistance: employment advice, legal assistance, language courses.’¹²⁶ ‘Managing migration needs to involve a wide spectrum of partners: NGOs, central authorities in the destination and origin countries. Local authorities should also be involved, which is not happening currently.’¹²⁷

The opposite point of view focuses on the need to introduce more monitoring and control mechanisms. Experts in that group are also rather sceptical when it comes to the future prospects of Ukrainian migration. They suspect that when migrants learn foreign languages and get acquainted with EU residence rules and see what the ‘western’ style of life looks like, they will go further West. That group also emphasised the need to introduce a more comprehensive integration policy for Ukrainian migrants and fight against their possible mistreatment on the labour market. They also referred to the possibility of visa abolition for Ukrainian migrants, showing both positive and negative aspects of that possible EU decision. They mentioned growing anti-immigrant sentiments in Polish society related to current large migration movements from the South and the growing terrorism threat, wondering whether in that situation Polish society will be ready to accept even Ukrainian migrants, who are in general closer in terms of culture and language. Experts have also referred to the current tendencies to sharpen migration policies in other EU countries in reaction to the migration crisis as possibly influencing future decisions of a Polish government. ‘Yes indeed the Polish labour market currently needs Ukrainian migrants and they need jobs, so it is mutually beneficial. But there is a huge grey zone in that. We must start regulating it better. Besides, one could not consider Ukrainian migration as a long-term demographic surplus. In five years Ukrainian society will encounter a major demographic challenge.’¹²⁸ ‘What most plagues us is the grey zone. We should increase our administrative capacities to fight against that phenomenon. Apart from that, if more foreigners worked legally on better employment contracts, we would have less problems with the exploitation of migrants, cheating, not paying salaries, etc. ... So far Polish authorities

give preference to migrants of Polish origin, they support a visa-free regime for Ukraine
but there are many questions. Many EU countries oppose it openly, like Czechia.’¹²⁹ ‘One
should realistically look at the current migration crisis in Europe. Migration policies are
getting stricter. EU member states are afraid of any larger migration movements. Maybe
at some time in the future migrants from Ukraine will be treated in other EU states as a
preferred migrant flow easy to integrate, but not yet. We must wait… In Poland we cannot
expect that so many Ukrainians will decide to settle down. They will study more, travel
across Europe, learn new traditions and will go to seek their fortunes there.’¹³⁰
2.5 CONCLUSIONS

Both the analysis of available statistical data and the results of semi-structured interviews with experts and migrants clearly demonstrate that we are witnessing a new migration phenomenon in Poland. Since 2014 Poland has been experiencing a huge inflow of Ukrainian migrants not witnessed since the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Due to statistical shortcomings we cannot assess the exact number of Ukrainian citizens living in Poland but the upwards trend is highly visible. According to data from the Office for Foreigners, as of July 2016 there were around 84,000 Ukrainians legally residing in Poland based on different kind of residence permits. According to Eurostat methodology that also takes into consideration valid long-term national visas, 336,346 residence permits granted by Poland to Ukrainian nationals were valid at the end of 2015. For comparison, the corresponding number for 2008 was 22,000 permits. When it comes to the statistics for short-term employment, the scale is much higher. In January-December 2015, a total of 762,700 employers’ declarations were issued to Ukrainian citizens. In the first six months of 2016 this number reached 614,196.

Undoubtedly, a growth in temporary, circular migration to Poland is becoming an increasingly popular method of coping with poverty and instability in Ukraine. It is also evident that, unlike in previous years, Ukrainians are increasingly choosing settlement migration to Poland. It is unclear whether the current increase is merely a temporary reaction of Ukrainian society to the unfavourable economic situation and to the military conflict. At the same time, it is likely that the upward trend will continue for several more years, as there are no prospects for a rapid improvement in the economic performance of Ukraine. There are no doubts that Poland is becoming a more popular host country for immigrants and is reinforcing its status as the most popular EU destination country for Ukrainian migrants.

Our research has shown that the poor economic situation, the devaluation of the hryvnia, the sharp fall in average incomes and growing poverty were the main factors pulling migrants out of the country. The impact of Euro-Maidan events and further Russian inroads, and the eruption of armed conflict in Donbas turned out to be more nuanced. Most interviewed migrants were not running away from the armed conflict, the possibility of being killed or injured, or the inability to live a ‘normal’ life in a conflict zone. What they were running from was rather a general feeling of insecurity, the inability to clearly plan their future, and pessimism related to future political and security developments in Ukraine.

Poland was chosen as a destination country first of all due to its liberal migration policy, while other EU countries are constantly limiting legal possibilities available for Ukrainian migrants. Although many migrants we interviewed had moved for the first time, it is clear that Ukrainian immigration has entered a more mature phase where the main aim of migrants is more long-term migration and the possibility of legalising their
stay in the EU. Circular migrants may still wish to use less regular channels, but the growing grey zone and cases of mistreatment by travel/job facilitators encourage Ukrainian migrants to legalise their status as much as possible.

There are two different types of migration patterns represented by Ukrainian citizens in Poland. The first one, which has been visible for a few decades already, is short-term circular labour migration governed by the liberal rules for short-term access to the Polish labour market. The bulk of Ukrainian migrants who arrive in Poland come from that group and usually have no intention of staying permanently in Poland and come from Western Ukraine. The other group, smaller but constantly growing, are long-term migrants who look for a permanent job in Poland or wish to study here. This is a new phenomenon that requires further research. Most of the people representing that group have arrived in Poland recently. Their migration decisions were mainly related to the significant deterioration of the economic situation and the eruption of conflict (as a factor undermining their hopes for quick recovery of economic and political situation in Ukraine). Thus it is difficult to predict what their future plans will be, whether they would like to settle down in Poland permanently or whether they will decide to emigrate further. Some of them may also go back to Ukraine when the economic and security situation stabilises.
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ANNEX

1) Main characteristics of our informants: Group A – experts (N = 15)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Informant No.</th>
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<td>A 14</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 15</td>
<td>Government</td>
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</table>

Source: Own research, 2016.

2) Main characteristics of our informants: Group B – migrants (N = 20 including three interviews with married couples B4a, B4b; B15a and B15b, B20 a and B20b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informant No.</th>
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<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Vocational education (welder)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Divorced</td>
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<tr>
<td>B 4a</td>
<td>~30</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 4b</td>
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<td>University</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 5</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>University</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>B 8</td>
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<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 9</td>
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<td>Man</td>
<td>University in Ukraine (still studying in Poland)</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 10</td>
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<td>High school (student)</td>
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<td>University</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 12</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>High school (student)</td>
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<td>B 13</td>
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<td>University</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 14</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>University in Ukraine (still studying in Poland)</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 15a</td>
<td>47</td>
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<td>University</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of origin in Ukraine</td>
<td>Length of stay in Poland (in months, as of 1st March 2016)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Terebovlya (Ternopilska Oblast')</td>
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<td>Kyiv</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kryvyi Rih</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Informant No.</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Level of education</td>
<td>Marital status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
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<td>B 15b</td>
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<td>Married</td>
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<tr>
<td>B 16</td>
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<td>High school</td>
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<td>B 18</td>
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<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 19</td>
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<td>Woman</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Married</td>
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<td>B 20a</td>
<td>42</td>
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<td>University</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 20b</td>
<td>~35</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own research, 2016.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of origin in Ukraine</th>
<th>Length of stay in Poland (in months, as of 1st March 2016)</th>
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<td>Poltava</td>
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Chapter 3

CURRENT UKRAINIAN MIGRATION TO CZECHIA – REFUGE FOR ECONOMIC MIGRANTS RATHER THAN FOR REFUGEES

Dušan Drbohlav, Markéta Seidlová
(Geomigrace, Department of Social Geography and Regional Development, Faculty of Science, Charles University)
3.1 INTRODUCTION

Czechia, traditionally a country of emigration rather than immigration and with almost no foreign population over the decades (since the end of the World War II till the beginning of the 1990s), is currently by far the most attractive country for long-term and permanent immigrants within the Central European post-communist region.

Immigrants make up about 4.5% of the population of Czechia (based on citizenship), with Ukrainians as the most numerous group, followed by Slovaks, Vietnamese and Russians.

The main goal of this chapter is to map how the conflict which started in spring 2014 between Ukraine and Russia over the Crimea and Donbas actually and potentially influences migration from Ukraine to Czechia. The chapter starts by looking at some basic data documenting Ukrainian migration (or travelling) to Czechia through various migration “modes/channels” (residence permits, asylum, or visas). The second part of the chapter introduces the results of our own interviews. The analysis is primarily based on semi-structured interviews with both Ukrainian migrants and Czech migration experts. We will present selected important views on the current situation in Ukraine as a real and potential migratory source country, reasons for migration and current migratory patterns of Ukrainians heading for Czechia and, subsequently, the role which is played by Ukrainians in Czech society. The chapter ends by summarizing some recommended measures for improving migratory policies and practices.
3.2 MIGRATION IN CZECHIA IN BRIEF

3.2.1 Economic and political context

The main factor in the radical change – as far as (not only) migration patterns in Czechia are concerned – was the “Velvet Revolution” in 1989 which brought in its wake a new political, economic and societal regime based on a free democratic society and a free-market economy. Since the very beginning of the 1990s, the deep-reaching transformation of society and its globalization (along with the milestones of the establishment of an independent Czechia by separation from Slovakia in 1993, entering NATO in 1999, joining the European Union in 2004 and the Schengen area in 2007) has gone hand in hand with changes in migration flows. Hence, in the course of time, Czechia became first a transit country for Western Europe and then an immigration country (with positive net migration). A unique combination of factors such as the speed of economic and political transformation, particular migration policies (or non-policies) along with good economic performance and demand in the labour market (especially between 1993 and 1997 and then 2004 and 2008), has made the most of the pull factor of this country for immigrants (Drbohlav et al., 2010; Drbohlav, Dzúrová, 2015; Seidlová, 2015). Ukrainians alone contributed to the Czech immigration boom – at the right time “their pushes” matched “Czech pulls”.

3.2.2 Migration policy

The evolution of Czech migration (and also integration) policy and the various phases of its development follow to some extent the evolution in the number of foreigners in the country. Based on a universally recognized division made by Barša and Baršová (2006), which was further developed (e.g. by Drbohlav et al., 2010; Kušníráková, Čižinský, 2011; Seidlová, 2012) we can distinguish several major periods in the attitude of the state towards foreigners: 1) Between 1990 and 1995, the Czech approach was a kind of “laissez-faire” attitude as the number of foreigners arriving into the country was not regulated. 2) Between 1996 and 1999, immigration law and practice were tightened for the first time for both internal (e.g. rising unemployment¹³¹) and external reasons (the effort to harmonize national legislation with EU regulations); in 1999, a new Aliens and Asylum Act was adopted and came into force on 1st January 2000. 3) The following period, i.e. between 2000 and 2004 (or even till 2006), was marked by efforts to formulate a more comprehensive migration and integration policy. At this time the first government project in the field of migration was launched: called “Selection of Qualified Foreign Workers” it

¹³¹ From 3.9% in 1996 to 8.7% in 1999 (ČSÚ, 2011).
made the route towards permanent residency easier for foreigners from selected countries or for foreign students of Czech high schools and universities¹³²). The favourable economic situation in the years 2005 to 2007 (or even to 2008) with low unemployment rates and economic growth attracted a number of foreigners to the country while the state supported rather than restricted labour migration. These migrants worked mainly in less skilled positions in industry or construction. 5) From 2008 till about 2014, on the other hand, in the context of the global economic crisis, there was an apparent effort of the Government to reduce the number of foreigners living in Czechia (e.g. through imposing limitations on possibilities to get a Czech visa or via the Ministry of Interior’s “Voluntary Returns” project) and a clear preference for the domestic labour force (including EU/EEA citizens). The current era (since 2014) is preoccupied with dealing with the refugee crisis (mainly linked to “safety measures”), while, on the other hand, in the newly booming Czech economy there are calls, mainly from some industrial companies, for new recruitment of foreign labour (namely, from Ukraine).

3.2.3 Composition of the migrant population

The above-mentioned turns in migration flows and dependence on adopted policy is clear if we look at the simple number of immigrants. In 1993 only 78,000 foreigners lived in Czechia and they represented 0.8% of population. One year later, in 1994, there were already about 104,343 foreigners living in Czechia, coming mainly from Poland (20,021 persons; 19.2% of foreigners), Slovakia (16,778 persons; 16.1%), Ukraine (14,230 persons; 13.6%), Vietnam (9,633 persons; 9.2%) and Germany (4,195 persons; 4.0%) (ČSÚ, 2016a; MV CR, 2016a). At the end of March 2016, a total of 473,516 foreigners lived in Czechia representing 4.5% of inhabitants (based on citizenship). More than two thirds of them (68.3%) came from 5 countries (when comparing 1994 to 2016, only Russia replaced Poland among the top 5), whilst almost one quarter came from just one country – Ukraine (106,788 persons; 22.6%).

So Ukrainians are currently the most numerous group of immigrants, well established in Czechia for more than 20 years. The second biggest group are Slovaks (103,072 persons; 21.8%), the third Vietnamese (57,389 persons; 12.1%), the fourth Russians (35,214 persons; 7.4%) and the fifth Germans (20,632 persons; 4.4%) (MV ČR, 2016a). In other words, nearly half of all foreigners (42.1%) are citizens of three countries outside the EU (Ukraine, Vietnam and Russia), one quarter (26.2%) are citizens of two neighbouring EU member states (Slovakia and Germany) and about a third (31.7%) is made up of citizens of all other countries in the world.

¹³² The project ran from 2003 to 2010 and brought 3,500 persons to Czechia.
3.3 UKRAINIANS IN CZECHIA

3.3.1 History

In the 19th century both the western part of Ukraine and the current Czechia belonged to the Austria-Hungarian Monarchy. It is obvious that the relationship between these two countries has remained very close for a long time and in fact the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine was part of the independent Czechoslovakia between WWI and WWII. Mostly political but to some extent also economic reasons lay behind Ukrainian emigration during the first part of the 20th century. Czechoslovakia soon became an important destination for Ukrainians. Around 6,000 Ukrainian emigrants lived in pre-war Czechoslovakia, many of whom were granted asylum. It was very diverse group in terms of occupation: army staff and politicians, representatives of the intelligentsia, officers, students and poor people, mostly peasants. The Ukrainians in Czechoslovakia established many Ukrainian institutions and associations in the political, cultural, educational, and scientific fields. Their integration was supported by the Czechoslovakian government. As many Ukrainians in Czechoslovakia were opposed to the continuation of the Soviet regime in Ukraine after the end of World War II, they emigrated from Czechoslovakia mostly to Germany. After the war, many of those who stayed were detained and sent to prison in the Soviet Union. Also, by 1948 all Ukrainian institutions and associations in Czechoslovakia were closed (Drbohlav, Dzúrová, 2007). In fact, also, as already stated above, due to the generally predominant closure of the country to immigrants during the socialist/communist era, there was almost no immigration from Ukraine (as well as from other countries) to Czechoslovakia.

3.3.2 After 1993

The change in the number of foreigners in Czechia between 1994 and 2015 is presented in Fig. 7. The number of Ukrainians reached its peak on 30th June 2009, when 134,456 Ukrainian citizens lived in Czechia. Since then, due mainly to the economic crisis which hit Europe – including the Czech economy – the number of Ukrainian immigrants in Czechia has slowly but continuously decreased. During the last two years, it has oscillated around 105,000.

Most Ukrainian migrants came primarily for economic, work-related reasons. They are mostly employed in construction, some industrial sectors, services or agriculture, taking chiefly unskilled, manual, low paid, so-called “3D” (demanding, dirty and dangerous) jobs (Drbohlav, Dzúrová, 2015).
Among Ukrainians, the percentage of persons with long-term residence permits is slowly decreasing in favour of persons with permanent residence. In January 2014, 33.8% had long-term residence permits (i.e. 66.2% had permanent residence) out of the total number of 105,104 persons. Nowadays, at the end of March 2016, the 106,788 Ukrainians are divided into those with long-term residence permits (26.3%) and those with permanent residence (73.7%). Among all Ukrainians, 47.2% are women (48.9% among those with permanent residence, 42.3% among those with long-term residence permit).

As far as the spatial distribution of Ukrainians is concerned (see Fig. 8), they are distributed more or less evenly throughout Czechia, as their distribution is determined chiefly by the concentration of economic opportunities/jobs (which are obviously more

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**Fig. 7** Foreigners living in Czechia, Ukrainians versus others (1994–2015)

![Graph showing the number of foreigners living in Czechia, Ukrainians versus others (1994–2015)]

Source: ČSÚ, 2016a

### 3.3.3 After 2014

Among Ukrainians, the percentage of persons with long-term residence permits is slowly decreasing in favour of persons with permanent residence. In January 2014, 33.8% had long-term residence permits (i.e. 66.2% had permanent residence) out of the total number of 105,104 persons. Nowadays, at the end of March 2016, the 106,788 Ukrainians are divided into those with long-term residence permits (26.3%) and those with permanent residence (73.7%). Among all Ukrainians, 47.2% are women (48.9% among those with permanent residence, 42.3% among those with long-term residence permit).

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A long-term residence permit is a permit issued following a long-term visa, or a foreigner may apply for this permit at an embassy of the Czech Republic abroad without previously being here based on a long-term visa for over 90 days; this permit can also be granted for a period longer than 1 year and it can be extended. A permanent residence permit is a much “safer status” that is generally granted after 5 years of continuous residence in the country – for more detailed information please see ČSÚ (2016b).

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133 A long-term residence permit is a permit issued following a long-term visa, or a foreigner may apply for this permit at an embassy of the Czech Republic abroad without previously being here based on a long-term visa for over 90 days; this permit can also be granted for a period longer than 1 year and it can be extended. A permanent residence permit is a much “safer status” that is generally granted after 5 years of continuous residence in the country – for more detailed information please see ČSÚ (2016b).

134 Last available data.
available in highly populated urban areas). More than half of all Ukrainians in Czechia live in the wider Prague metropolitan area – in the capital city of Prague (43.2%) and in its suburbs, in the region of Central Bohemia (15.3%). Other important urban concentrations follow: the Jihomoravský region (including Brno) – 9.1% of Ukrainians and the Plzeňský region – 5.6% of Ukrainians. In other regions, Ukrainians more commonly work in services (and rarely also in agriculture).

In addition to the group of economic immigrants, with permanent residence or long-term residence permit, there are those claiming international protection (asylum or subsidiary protection)¹³⁵.

Czechia has traditionally applied rather a very restrictive policy in terms of granting asylum or international protection. Of 83,203 persons who applied for such status between 1997 and 2015, only 2,394 (i.e. 2.9%) received it (see Fig. 9). As stated above, the Acts newly adopted in 1999 and entering into force on 1st January 2000 changed the rules for foreigners living in the country and, at the same time, brought them considerable difficulties. As result of this tightening, applying for asylum became a very popular strategy as it allowed them to stay in the territory of Czechia until a decision about asylum is made (and for some short time, also the possibility to enter the Czech labour market immediately after the asylum application has been submitted). And it is this change in legislation, also supported by turmoil in Chechnya, that explains the considerable increase of demands for asylum in 2001.

¹³⁵ Persons seeking for international protection, asylum or subsidiary protection – in short, “asylum seekers”.

**Fig. 8** Share of Ukrainian migrants in the total population of foreigners living in the districts of Czechia (as of 31st March 2016)
Asylum seekers from Ukraine (within the last 10 years), the highest number applied for asylum in 2005 (987 persons) and then in 2015 (693). Obviously, the figures of applicants in 2014 and 2015 rose (but not really dramatically) vis-à-vis several previous years (see more below). The level of “success” is a little higher if compared with the overall success of all asylum seekers, but is still very low and does not exceed 10% for asylum and 26% for subsidiary protection. Czechia was most favourable to asylum seekers from Ukraine in 2010 (9.6% received asylum), while within the last two years subsidiary protection became the preferred positive decision (2015 – 25.1%, 2014 – 23.1%) (see Tab. 7).

In accordance with our principal research target, i.e. to see the changes in the migration behaviour of Ukrainians after the initiation of conflict in Ukraine in spring 2014, we are particularly interested in seeing changes in the number of asylum seekers within the last two years (i.e. between January 2014 and April 2016\textsuperscript{136}). Overall, the numbers were very low, with about 100–200 asylum seekers each month in Czechia in this period (see more in Fig. 10). Asylum seekers from Ukraine are the most numerous group within asylum seekers, as they make up on average 40% of all asylum seekers each month. The development over time (by individual months) in the overall number of asylum seekers as well as the proportion of Ukrainian citizens can be clearly seen from Fig. 10.

\textsuperscript{136} Last available data.
As for the granted applications, i.e. if applicants were successful in receiving any kind of protection, it is very difficult to determine in which month they were most successful since assessing the application usually takes at least a few months. The highest number of asylum and subsidiary protection consents were granted to Ukrainians in September 2014 (10 granted asylum status) and in October 2014 (38 granted subsidiary protection). As the current conflict began in spring 2014, we can presume that those granted status

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**Tab. 7** Asylum and subsidiary protection granted to Ukrainians in Czechia (2005–2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Demands for international protection</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>693</td>
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<tr>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Granted number subsidiary protection</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granted number asylum</td>
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<td>6.5</td>
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<td>4.0</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MV CR, 2016b

**Fig. 10** Asylum seekers (submitted asylum applications) in Czechia, Ukrainians versus others (January 2014 – April 2016)

Source: MV CR, 2016b

As for the granted applications, i.e. if applicants were successful in receiving any kind of protection, it is very difficult to determine in which month they were most successful since assessing the application usually takes at least a few months. The highest number of asylum and subsidiary protection consents were granted to Ukrainians in September 2014 (10 granted asylum status) and in October 2014 (38 granted subsidiary protection). As the current conflict began in spring 2014, we can presume that those granted status
were refugees escaping from Ukraine because of this conflict. The overall trend over the last two years can be seen from Fig. 11. Again, no dramatic changes occurred.

Third country nationals, including Ukrainians, who would like to stay on the territory of Czechia for more than 90 days have to apply for a long-term visa or a long-term residence permit (the permit is based on European directives and includes the purposes of study, research, family reunification and dual residence permits – Employee Card or Blue Card). This application has to be made outside the country, i.e. at a Czech embassy (MV CR, 2016c). Since 2009, this application process has included a meeting at the embassy which can be reserved only on-line through the system called “Visapoint¹³⁷” – and that causes significant difficulties for migrants: as soon as the appointments for meetings at the embassy become available, they are taken by mediators who sell them on (Trlifajová, 2012) – see also below. In 2007 and 2008, i.e. before the economic crisis, numbers of Visa applications submitted by Ukrainians oscillated around 20,000 each year. Then, in 2009, the number dropped to some 10,000, and the next year, in 2011, to only 3,000, i.e. to one sixth of the number before the economic crisis (see Tab. 8). This decline in the number of applications can be explained by both the economic crisis and by the implementation of the Visapoint system, thus leading Ukrainians willing to come to Czechia to use the routes

¹³⁷ Visapoint – online reservation system for all types of short-term and long-term visas and residence permits.

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**Fig. 11** Asylum and subsidiary protection granted to Ukrainians in Czechia (by individual months; 2014–2016)

Source: MV CR, 2016b
of more accessible, mainly Polish, visas. This strategy seems to be still valid today, even if the number of applications for Czech long-term visas or long-term residence permits is rising slightly and tends to be around 3,500 each year. The level of success in applying for a long-term visa or long-term residence permit has risen in the past two years: from 64.6% in 2014 to 78.2% in 2015. However, it still has not reached the level of 2007, when long-term visas or long-term residence permits were issued to almost everybody who applied (89.9%) (MV ČR, 2016c). Based on a previous study by Trlifajová (2012), we can suppose that most common reasons for rejecting applications for long-term visas or long-term residence permits are still security reasons.

The attractiveness of Czechia for citizens of other countries can be seen also through applications for short-term visas, i.e. for visas which allow them to visit the country for a period of up to 90 days. Until 2011, about 100,000 Ukrainians applied for such visas

### Tab. 8 Applications for long-term visas or long-term residence permits at the Czech embassy in Ukraine (2007–2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications</td>
<td>26,511</td>
<td>19,986</td>
<td>11,783</td>
<td>3,837</td>
<td>3,172</td>
<td>3,229</td>
<td>3,862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issued number</td>
<td>23,839</td>
<td>12,157</td>
<td>4,851</td>
<td>2,174</td>
<td>1,157</td>
<td>2,087</td>
<td>3,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share (%)</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Trlifajová, 2012; MV CR, 2016c

### Tab. 9 Applications for short-term visas to Czechia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications</td>
<td>103,542</td>
<td>91,175</td>
<td>113,830</td>
<td>104,708</td>
<td>74,742</td>
<td>79,426</td>
<td>59,886</td>
<td>67,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issued number</td>
<td>98,233</td>
<td>87,331</td>
<td>110,019</td>
<td>102,280</td>
<td>73,903</td>
<td>78,302</td>
<td>58,040</td>
<td>61,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share (%)</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>95.8</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>97.7</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td>98.6</td>
<td>96.9</td>
<td>91.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications</td>
<td>297,779</td>
<td>217,288</td>
<td>271,353</td>
<td>340,989</td>
<td>383,483</td>
<td>423,466</td>
<td>326,011</td>
<td>207,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issued number</td>
<td>294,171</td>
<td>214,469</td>
<td>267,344</td>
<td>338,120</td>
<td>380,903</td>
<td>422,415</td>
<td>325,805</td>
<td>205,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share (%)</td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>98.5</td>
<td>99.2</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td>99.8</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>99.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL (all the countries of the world)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications</td>
<td>568,111</td>
<td>457,261</td>
<td>533,687</td>
<td>570,449</td>
<td>592,202</td>
<td>639,579</td>
<td>519,825</td>
<td>423,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issued number</td>
<td>543,803</td>
<td>440,102</td>
<td>514,730</td>
<td>553,465</td>
<td>581,137</td>
<td>629,432</td>
<td>509,110</td>
<td>410,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share (%)</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>98.1</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>96.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: Short-term visas allow a maximum stay of 90 days on the territory. The data for 2015 are – at the moment – available only in “rough” format.

Source: MV CR, 2016a
each year, whilst since then the number has decreased to some 60,000–70,000 a year. The level of success when applying for these short tourist visas, is considerably higher if compared with applications for long-term visas: more than 90% of applicants are successful, which is about 20% more than those applying for a long-term visa or permit. To sum up, no increase was seen in short-term visa applications by Ukrainians in the wake of the conflict between Ukraine and Russia. On the other hand, a sharp decrease in visa applications among Russians has recently been detected, probably as a reaction to EU sanctions and the less than hospitable environment towards Russia and Russians in general (see Tab. 9).
3.4 OWN EMPIRICAL INTERVIEW

3.4.1 Research questions and methodology

In this subchapter presenting results of our empirical research in Czechia we concentrated on several key issues related to the main project goals. They included possible changes in mobility patterns of Ukrainians after the conflict between Ukraine and Russia started in the spring 2014 (with special regard to patterns related to international migration from Ukraine to Czechia)\textsuperscript{138}.

Our own research was based on qualitative methods – semi-structured interviews and face-to-face contacts with two groups of informants.

Firstly, we conducted semi-structured expert interviews with a total of 15 Czech experts, representing governmental organizations (GOs) (3), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (5), the academic sphere (4), intergovernmental/international organizations (1), trade unions (1) and small businessman (1) (see the annex at the of the chapter). Within the interviews, which took from 30 minutes to two hours, we asked them about their opinions on the following sub-topics: current Ukrainian migration to Czechia and its possible changes (new migratory patterns) due to the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine and the Russian annexation of Crimea – possible changes on the labour market, asylum seekers/refugees issues, changes in trends (structure of inflows – males versus females, temporary versus permanent, regular versus irregular movements; motivation, migrants’ strategies, etc.), integration modes, all in all any new factors related to Ukrainian migration to Czechia, and possible policy recommendations for better migration management (for individual countries of Czechia and Ukraine, for V4 countries and also for the whole EU). Last but not least, the main sources of experts’ information were researched and the possible impact of the current European refugee crisis on the perception of Ukrainian migrants and asylum seekers was considered.

Secondly, we conducted in the same way semi-structured interviews with 20 Ukrainian migrants. The definition of the target subject – the migrants was as follows: adult migrants (only one member per family) with legal or irregular status, who migrated abroad after the conflict started in March / April 2014, from the whole Ukraine (not just the Eastern part or Crimea). The details about the informants are summarised in the annex at the end of the chapter. Selection of the informants was done via a snow-ball method; primary contacts

\textsuperscript{138} More specifically, if changes are identified, what do they look like? What are the main motives, routes, migratory strategies and mechanisms through which migrants move? And, consequently, what does their stay and work in Czechia look like. How are Ukrainians integrated into the Czech labour market and Czech society? How do these “new realities” differ from what previously existed in this field? Last but not least, practical issues concerning recommendations as to what could be done to better address the needs of Ukrainian forced migrants and what particular policies or measures are recommended to better manage Ukrainian migration as such were also addressed.
with migrants were mediated through personal ties, several already settled Ukrainians in Prague and selected non-governmental organizations.

Within the interviews, which took part with members of the Geomigrace team and were held between January and February 2016, we asked the informants an array of various questions about their experience and opinions on sub-topics relevant to our research goals¹³⁹.

Our group of informants-migrants had an average age of 29.7 years (the youngest person was aged 19 and the oldest 50). Males were predominant: 13 in comparison with 7 females. Half of the informants were single (9) and half married (9) (only two persons divorced). The average length of stay in Czechia was 12 months, while the longest period was 19 months and the shortest less than one month. More than half of our informants had completed university education (12 persons), while a quarter (6 persons) had ended their education with a high school diploma (but of those, three were currently studying at university). More than half of informants came from Donetsk or the Donetsk province (12 persons), the second largest group was from Luhansk (3 persons) followed by Lviv (2 persons).

Below, we present what we see as the most important facts springing from the answers of the both groups of informants – migrants and experts. Whereas experts generally offer more systemized reactions and broad visions, migrants themselves typically offer “more subjective”, emotional, personal narratives.

¹³⁹ When and why did they come to Czechia? Did annexation of Crimea by Russians or the eruption of armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine have any influence on their decision to migrate? How long have they stayed in Czechia and whether it was their first time here? Had somebody from their close family already stayed in Czechia? Did they leave alone or with some of their family members, friends, compatriots? Were relatives/friends/compatriots waiting for them in Czechia to help them? Are they satisfied with their legal/working position in Czechia. Where and how did they get their job? Do they make use of their human capital when working? Where do they live and how do they spend their free time? What is their relationship to their compatriots? What is their relationship to the majority population? Is their stay here “transnational”? (Do they visit their family in Ukraine, do they maintain some other contacts with family friends via e-mail, phone calls, skype etc., do they send remittances back home?, do they invest in land or business at home, or here in the destination country, do they participate in Ukrainian elections, are they members of a political party in Ukraine?, etc ...). What is their assessment of the political and economic situation in Ukraine? Do they think that the conflict may break out again? What is their migration strategy – would they like to stay in Czechia only temporarily, for a long time, or, forever? If the conflict in Ukraine calms down, will they return or is their strategy to find a final destination country in another member state or on another continent? What is the attitude of Czech society towards them and to Ukrainian migrants as a whole? Is it generally positive or negative? Has it changed over time? Are people nicer if they find out that they fled because of the war? Do they think that current refugee crisis in Europe somehow influences the perception of Czechs? Finally, what policy changes could be implemented by the Ukrainian government, V4 governments and the EU in the field of managing migration within Ukraine and possibly, abroad?
3.4.2 Main results

How has the annexation of Crimea by the Russians and the conflict in Eastern Ukraine influenced mobility patterns of the Ukrainian population, Czechia, in particular? If yes, in what respect?

Migration routes and strategies

Official available data along with many informants’ comments say that migration from Ukraine to Czechia, be it asylum seeker/refugee movements or classical labour or family migration movements, have not changed greatly. After the conflict between Ukraine and Russia started in March 2014, the numbers did increase, but slightly rather than sharply. Although we cannot precisely measure irregular/undocumented migration (and related irregular economic activities) and its development over time, some of our informants¹⁴⁰ think that the same trend of some increase may be valid for this migration type¹⁴¹ too.

What was often mentioned, however, are important changes in migratory strategies and the structure of the flows. Though the overall increase has not been very significant, one of the informants¹⁴² added: “For sure, we have got more migrants coming from regions hit by the war conflict.” Moreover, in the same vein, another one¹⁴³ argued that “… previously mostly Ukrainians from Western parts of the country came to Czechia, today those from Eastern parts migrate too.”

Due to the very difficult process (if it is even possible) to get a confirmed registration for an interview at the Czech Embassy/Consulate via the Visapoint system in Ukraine, which has been burdened for a long time with high prices and corruption (it is possible to enter the system, however, for a very high fee which may be as much as between 800 and 1,000 Euros¹⁴⁴, many Ukrainians apply to the Polish Embassy/Consulate. It is much easier and cheaper and they are often successful. Once in Poland, they travel without any problems to Czechia to stay and work there (sometimes irregularly), or, ask for asylum here. “… They will come with a Polish visa – this way a person does not go through Czech statistics and then works here somehow, irregularly rather than legally”¹⁴⁵... This new “Polish pattern” was also very often mentioned by many informant-experts¹⁴⁶. This is really a new phenomenon that only confirms the high flexibility of migrants’ behaviour.

¹⁴⁰ A14, A11.
¹⁴¹ Official Police data indicate that the number of irregularly resident Ukrainians (detained on the territory of Czechia when breaking respective rules/legislation – often after their permit has elapsed) increased in 2015 vis-a-vis 2014 by 15% to 1,224 persons (MV CR (2016c)). Of course, this has nothing to do with the unknown number of those who are living in the country irregularly but have not been detained.
¹⁴² A15.
¹⁴³ A5.
¹⁴⁴ E.g. A5 and B14.
¹⁴⁵ A2.
It seems to be almost unbelievable that Czechia is not able to solve the problem of how to make the Visapoint work normally. Everybody knows about the problem – it has been dealt with at many levels including by the Czech Police, Ombudsman, or, even the EU since 2009, but the result is always the same... very costly, non-functional and “bribery-prone” system.

“You need to contact some middlemen who may use computer programs to register via Visapoint! It was really weird for me (5). I know, it is much easier to use the Polish consulate.”¹⁴⁷

“I came with a Polish visa, after waiting 3 months – I paid about 3,500 CZK for it whereas a Czech visa costs 25,000 CZK.”¹⁴⁸

The urgency of the Visapoint issue was further highlighted by informant-experts¹⁴⁹ while many stressed the existence of mafia-like structures that lie behind the problems.

Composition of flows, migration statuses

As for changes in the composition of migratory flows directed to Czechia, informant-migrants often mention that greater numbers mainly of young people, students and family members of those who have already lived in Czechia started coming from Ukraine. Moreover, these new patterns were mentioned and discussed also by informant-experts. More young people and students coming to Czechia were mentioned by 7 of them¹⁵⁰ while another 4¹⁵¹ commented on the intensifying trend of family reunion. Other factors may also have come into play too, or, rather, strengthened those already mentioned above:

“Studying in Czechia is free of charge for us and this was a strong pull too.”¹⁵²

In terms of migratory channels and statuses, in addition to work-related long-term residence visas and “employee’s cards”, short-term tourist visas and asylum seeker, or rather, international protection channels are also being used, the latter probably slightly more than in the past. (According to one of the informant-experts – “the change is that before the conflict, asylum seekers came as individual persons, now small groups are registered.”¹⁵³.) Based on informant-migrants’ answers, one can see how carefully migrants take into account conditions relating to different statuses, in other words – how and why they choose between “what is being offered”:

“I have ‘leave to remain’ status. I am absolutely satisfied with my legal and working position in Czechia. I have nothing to complain about.”¹⁵⁴
“We got a humanitarian ‘leave to remain’ visa – it was the only possibility to get our child to Czechia (I know that since 2016 ‘leave to remain’ has been cancelled – it is no longer granted)... With this visa I can work and study. I do not know what may happen after one year. My mother is Bulgarian by origin, so there is a possibility that I will apply for Bulgarian citizenship through the Bulgarian Embassy here in Prague. Of course, I do not want to live in Bulgaria, but this citizenship suits our stay here.”

“We asked for ‘subsidiary protection’ and got it. This is for two years. It is prohibited to travel to Ukraine.”

“I got a long-term residence permit – I have my wife in Czechia (she has been living here for about 20 years) – thus, the reason is family reunification.”

In addition to the informant-migrants the informant-experts also elaborated on this topic: One of the experts adds – “most migrants prefer to get ‘leave to remain’ status, since there are no limitations in terms of entering the Czech labour market”. When asking for asylum, asylum seekers have to wait 6 months before entering the labour market (a new regulation valid since December 2015) and they also have to go to a reception centre for asylum seekers. Asylum seekers cannot travel abroad. In contrast, travelling abroad is possible for those with “leave to remain” status, so they prefer this status since they have often parents in Ukraine and they want to see them from time to time. Moreover, “leave to remain” status is for 6 months and can be prolonged for another 6-month period and then changed to long-term residence for “leave to remain” purposes...

Two of the informant-experts summarize the issue in the following way:

“Big changes did not occur due to a design of the Czech migration policy ... new visas are not granted ... even before the crisis there was a new restrictive policy vis-a-vis all third-country nationals, ... what we have are new Ukranian migrants coming via Poland, they can stay for a limited time of about three months, although they are not allowed to work, but they do work here. Or, some of them ask here for ‘leave to remain’ status – those who come from regions hit by the conflict are successful – they are granted this status.”
What are the main motives behind the migration?

Destination countries and migration motivation

During the last 25 years, since the establishment of an independent state, many Ukrainians left the country for broadly defined economic, socio-psychological, administrative, and recently also political reasons (see Drbohlav, 2008; Malinovska, 2008; Mezentsev, Pidgrushnyi, 2014...). Though Czechia is not the most preferred destination country for Ukrainians (that was Russia, at least until several years ago), in relative terms it was the fifth most attractive one after Russia, Italy, Germany and Spain (see Malynovska, 2011 in Mezentsev, Pidgrushnyi, 2014; similar comments done by some of the informants¹⁶⁵). As for a specific refugee migratory channel – “… Ukrainian refugees go to Poland and Hungary too – to Hungary via a possibility to apply for Hungarian citizenship...”¹⁶⁶ Nevertheless, the immigration of Ukrainians to Czechia has its tradition and an already established diaspora.

Based on the information gained from our informants, it seems that there are several main reasons why Ukrainians currently leave their country – be it the gravity and danger of the war itself (which really threatens lives) or a bad and even (due also to the conflict) deteriorating socioeconomic situation leading to very poor living standards in Ukraine. “The average salary in Ukraine is between 130 and 160 euros, in some Western regions it is about 50 euros.”¹⁶⁷ It seems that very often these two circumstances work together as a strong push factor.

“I studied on an exchange program in Czechia in 2011–2012. Nevertheless, the main reason was the conflict. We lived next to Marijinka where heavy fighting was underway. Checkpoints existed on both sides. We did not know who controlled them. One day, when out for a ride we were stopped at one of these checkpoints. We had heard that separatists confiscated cars, mainly Jeeps and we had a car of this type. They stopped us, they were masked. My husband is a quite calm person but he responded rudely that we were not going to get out of the car and that the car was our private property and they should not touch us. Like magic we got away from this checkpoint but I was stressed by this experience. When we came home I told my husband – let us pack our things and disappear.”¹⁶⁸

“I am divorced and my girlfriend died in shooting in Luhansk region. I also lost my business there, the car repair shop where I worked was destroyed and, consequently, confiscated by separatists. I lost everything in the space of several months – car, house, land, business and girlfriend too.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ A12, A9.
¹⁶⁶ A9.
¹⁶⁷ A9.
¹⁶⁸ B10.
¹⁶⁹ B17.
“My safety and the safety of my child – my husband is an official in the Government of Donetsk People’s Republic (DPR) – he sent us to Europe ..., it was my husband’s decision.”¹⁷⁰

“I took part in the Maidan protests, then I fought while liberating the towns of Popasna, Artemivsk, Lysycansk etc. I was injured. I had to move the family to Kyiv since I got information that Russians knew about me and my parents were really threatened. I had some health problems (so-called Vietnamese syndrome). I found a job via a Czech recruitment company in a German start-up firm in Czechia.”¹⁷¹

“There are not enough jobs, mostly in the West, therefore people leave the country. The worst thing is corruption – it is everywhere. I also know many corrupt people. It will take a long time to change it. As long as we have got a pro-Russian government (in DPR), it will be bad. I was in Russia and life is poor there and it will be the same with us.”¹⁷²

“I came to Czechia since they paid me very low wages; as a nurse I got 1,000 hryvna a month. Moreover, my husband has been in Czechia for 5 years, I wanted to join him.”¹⁷³

Some of the informant-experts mention in this context:

“No revolution has occurred in Ukraine yet, just one nomenclature (oligarchic group) was replaced by another.”¹⁷⁴ “They (the Ukrainians) seem resigned, saying it is about us without us, the country has always been stolen from them, so, they are somehow passively waiting for it to happen again now.”¹⁷⁵

A new motive

There is one new particular motive that pushes people, mainly males, to escape from Ukraine and that is conscription (often parents support their sons to leave the country). Apparently, many Ukrainians do not want to lose their lives in this particular conflict, therefore to avoid this they migrate to other countries, including Czechia.

“Ukraine needs to conscript people ... I do not want to fight against my people. If you refuse to fight they may put you into a jail for 2 years, hence, I would rather leave the country.”¹⁷⁶

Conscription as an important motive behind the current Ukrainian migration to Czechia was also pinpointed by 9 informant-experts¹⁷⁷. This indicates how important this motive is. “There is no enthusiasm to fight for the nation or the state.”¹⁷⁸

As many informant-migrants again revealed, the war only accelerated their decision to migrate – this was the case especially of those who wanted to study abroad.

¹⁷⁰ B15.
¹⁷¹ B19.
¹⁷² B8.
¹⁷³ B20.
¹⁷⁴ A9.
¹⁷⁵ A11.
¹⁷⁶ B4.
¹⁷⁸ A11.
“When the conflict started I was sure that I had to leave, it convinced me.”¹⁷⁹

“I wanted to study anyway, therefore I went to Czechia.”¹⁸⁰

What seems to be very important too is that, as many informants indicate, the situation in Ukraine, even before the conflict with Russia, had been bad for a long time and people are losing any hope for better prospects, a better future life in their home country.

“I am happy in Czechia. It is better than in my Ukraine, currently there is a tense situation – since all people are mean there. I was there on holiday and I felt that evil there. Here (in Czechia) everybody is happy.”¹⁸¹

Pulls on the Czech side

On the other hand, there is an obvious strong pull factor attracting people to Czechia – social networks via already settled family members or close friends, or former employers, offer assistance and make the migration, at least at the very beginning, much easier, cheaper and not so stressful. Family members already settled in Czechia are instrumental in easing migration for many migrants – by providing useful information, assisting in getting documents etc. and/or arranging housing and a job ... However, as many informants mentioned too, Czechia is also attractive to Ukrainians for the language similarity, common Slavic culture and personal experience of visiting the country previously... In this perspective, Ukrainian migration to Czechia is not a matter of some chance at all.

“I have already been in Czechia (for almost 4 years) while working there, and I know the language. I do not want to go anywhere else, I know the language.”¹⁸²

“I had already worked in Czechia in 1999 and 2000 in agriculture and in construction. The main reason why I came were family reasons – my wife has been working in Czechia for 7 years, I came to Czechia to save our marriage, we were drifting apart.”¹⁸³

Step-by-step migration

Another issue – as to what the migration process from Ukraine to Czechia looks like – is also worth mentioning. Very often it is a sort of a “step-by-step” migration. The first stop after leaving the Donetsk area (where many informants originally lived) was another city or town in Ukraine – often Kyiv or Charkov, or smaller towns in Western Ukraine. Migrants drew breath there, they started organizing their foreign trip whilst sometimes the husband left for Czechia to arrange everything for the rest of the family. All this usually took several months.

¹⁷⁹ B1.
¹⁸⁰ B2.
¹⁸¹ B1.
¹⁸² B4.
¹⁸³ B9.
“I moved from Donetsk with my wife and child to Kyiv, where I kept working... I had a five-year Schengen visa and started searching for a job in Czechia or Germany. My English is perfect, therefore communication with my future employer was without any problems.”¹⁸⁴

Very often, the stay of those from the “East” was not warmly welcome in the “West” of Ukraine.

Two Ukraines

“Before receiving a Czech visa I stayed in Kyiv for about two months. There are, however, no work opportunities for people from Luhansk there and, on top of that, attitudes towards us are bad.”¹⁸⁵

This informant drives at the fact that there is a big difference between the West and the East of Ukraine¹⁸⁶.

“When I spoke with people in the Western part they mentioned: We are in the Western part, ... we are like this, we behave like this and ... they (those from the East) live there and their way of thinking is totally different.”¹⁸⁷

“Ukraine is quite an artificial formation ... it is the same as Yugoslavia, and it broke down. In Ukraine they sowed the seeds of many possible conflicts.”¹⁸⁸

How do Ukrainians live in Czechia? What is their position on the Czech labour market, in Czech society?

From circulation to settlement?

Since the beginning of the 1990s, Ukrainians have quickly found a niche on the Czech labour market, mostly as a low or semi-skilled labour force for construction, agriculture, and for some other industrial sectors and services (Drbohlav, 2008; Drbohlav et al., 2010). This booming labour migration was interrupted by the global economic crisis at the end of 1990s and, then, again in 2009, when Ukrainians (as third-country nationals) employed often through agencies were among the first who lost their jobs due to shrinking economic opportunities and, consequently, a more restrictive migration policy (see

¹⁸⁴ B16.
¹⁸⁵ B14.
¹⁸⁶ “... the current discord in Ukraine is rooted in the political divisions that have frequently characterised the post-communist countries. In Ukraine, owing to a history of divergent socio-economic development in the various regions, these divisions are strongly regional. The dichotomic socio-economic framework reflects not only ethnic and religious differences but also such factors as urbanisation, economic development, and even natural elements. The resulting political divide in Ukraine may be traced to the dichotomy of its national identity. The dividing line is between east and west, urban and rural, and Russian-speaking and Ukrainian-speaking Ukraine ....” (Karácsonyi et al. 2014, 99).
¹⁸⁷ A12.
¹⁸⁸ A9.
e.g. Drbohlav, Valenta, 2014). Since then, the situation has stabilized and labour force demand is again growing.

“Many employers are looking for labour and they are not able to harmonize their demands with local/regional/national supply ... thus, there is relatively intensive pressure to establish a corridor through which Ukrainians would have easier entrance to the Czech labour market.”¹⁸⁹

Accordingly, there are some attempts, promoted mainly by the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic, to open up channels for highly skilled and even low skilled Ukrainian labour to come to Czechia. On the other hand, the Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Union: “Is strongly against mainly letting low-skilled workers enter Czechia ... we do not want any "social dumping".”¹⁹⁰

The number of Ukrainians in Czechia has recently oscillated around 110,000 while, however, numbers of permanent residence permit holders vis-à-vis long-term residence permit holders among Ukrainians have increased significantly (see above). This may signal a shift from an originally almost exclusively temporary, transnational circulation mode of migration towards one in which migrants more often settle. It seems that the current conflict between Ukraine and Russia has also contributed to strengthening this tendency. Due to the escalation of the conflict but also mainly due to the long-term incompetence of governments to start a deep-reaching political and socioeconomic transition and transformation which would lead to an improving political and socioeconomic situation... (“scepticism, frustration, people do not see and do not believe in possible changes, bribes everywhere around you”¹⁹¹), many people have become resigned and decided to solve the problem by migration or settling abroad for a long time or forever. One of the informant-experts¹⁹² points out that the middle class in particular is on the move from Ukraine now. To sum up, as for the legal situation, besides a sort of higher fragmentation via making more use of various migratory channels (see above), more Ukrainians decided to apply for a permanent residence permit¹⁹³; this, however, is not only a matter of the last two years. It probably has to do with the already mentioned trend of family reunification, which has recently been also evident (see also text above).

“I have been staying here with my husband and sister-in-law – I joined them here.”¹⁹⁴

“I got a long-term residence permit – I have my wife in Czechia (she has been living here for about 20 years) – thus, the reason is family reunification.”¹⁹⁵

On the other hand, it has been shown that many of the informants left their old grandparents or parents who refused, or simply are not able, to move out of the region which was hit by the conflict.

¹⁸⁹ A13, similarly A8.
¹⁹⁰ A6.
¹⁹¹ A7.
¹⁹² A5.
¹⁹³ E.g. A3, A4.
¹⁹⁴ B20.
¹⁹⁵ B14.
“In Donetsk, we have an old grandmother who does not leave the city.”¹⁹⁶
“I cannot return, but my parents stay there, we all go there since we have old grandmothers and grandfathers there and they cannot travel any more.”¹⁹⁷
“My parents stay in Luhansk.”¹⁹⁸
“There is only the mother of my stepmother in Donetsk, she is old, all other family members left for Kyiv, where they live now.”¹⁹⁹
“My mother, grandparents and one of the cousins stayed at home in Ukraine.”²⁰⁰

Strengths of social networks

Migrants usually settle if they have at least some family members, stabilizing their position on the labour market of a host country and, at the same time, losing hope that they can expect a better future in their mother country. All this is happening with Ukrainians in Czechia.

With respect to migrants’ socioeconomic situation, social relations and living style (see the very detailed description and explanation in Drbohlav, ed., 2015), it seems that there may be no significant changes as compared to Ukrainian migratory stock – those who have been in Czechia for some time. Once again we have to stress the supportive role of already settled family members who often significantly assisted in our informants’ integration into Czech society. Most of our informants got good jobs, thereby successfully integrating into the Czech labour market. On the other hand, since the informants have only recently come to Czechia, their life is still more dependent on other more integrated family members or fellow workers or schoolmates (regarding students). Socializing with the majority population is still rather very limited.

The role of the internet, clients’ services and abilities to communicate in Czech

We can identify the following three patterns which accompany informants’ arrival and integration: First, in more than one case migrants used the internet when successfully searching for their job in Czechia:

“… I started to look for a job and I did it through the internet – I found five or six good web sites ‘prace.cz’, ‘job.cz’, … and I was told about one good web site for those who can speak English ‘expat.cz’ and I found a job there … they said OK, come … I came for an interview, I told them yes, I am from Ukraine, I got such a visa, it is for two years, they
said OK, it is not a problem for us if you have legal documents and you can work, it is OK with us, it is good..."²⁰¹

“I found my job via the internet – I study, I also work as a waiter and, also, I have a flower store with my friend.”²⁰²

Second, not all informants were involved in regular economic activities and some of them used client’s services²⁰³ too (see more on this phenomenon in Čermákova, Nekorjak, 2009; Čermáková, 2008).

“I work here irregularly, I make enough money and I got my job through a mediator (‘client’) who was recommended me by one of my friends.”²⁰⁴

“I work for a client (I found him in Ukraine), he also arranged my visa and now I pay him every month from my salary.”²⁰⁵

Third, some informants reminded us of the importance of having a good command of the language spoken in the destination country. Language abilities may play an important role in shaping the perceptions through which the majority approaches and treats individual Ukrainian migrants:

“In 2000, when I could not understand Czech well, it was bad, ... people complained ... now, I am OK, I know the language much better, I have got no problems ...”²⁰⁶

“... but over time when I went back (to the Job Centre) they saw that I try to speak Czech and that I try to be better, they changed their attitude and they tried to help me somehow.”²⁰⁷

What particular policies or measures are recommended to better manage Ukrainian migration?

Since the question about policy recommendations within the interview was formulated rather freely, it is no surprise that the answers of both groups – informant-experts and informant-migrants were fragmented into various topics and subtopics. Logically, the reactions of the former group were somewhat richer and coherent (see much more on this issue e.g. in Drbohlav, Jaroszewicz, 2014).

²⁰¹ B3.
²⁰² B8.
²⁰³ It is the system where migrants’ work is organized through middlemen ... “the relationship between middlemen and immigrant workers can be defined as an exchange of economic, cultural and social capital, namely, as an exchange of money for the provision of services, for whose procurement the middlemen have appropriate social capital (contacts) and incorporated cultural capital (knowledge)” (see Čermákova, Nekorjak, 2009, 36).
²⁰⁴ B9.
²⁰⁵ B17.
²⁰⁶ B4.
²⁰⁷ B3.
Informant-experts’ experience and opinions

Informant-experts expressed the following suggestions as to how to improve the given approach and situation in the current Ukrainian inflow of migrants/asylum seekers. In discussing the effectiveness of an attempt to regulate the migration, one of the informant-experts presented rather a pessimistic view:

“I am afraid that international migration cannot be organized. We can only watch it and set some safety measures in case it goes wrong, migration has a life of its own, it will not be changed...”

²⁰⁸

We structured the answers into the following thematic blocks:

- Lack of vision – some of the informant-experts mentioned that Czech migration policy is “unclear” in a horizon longer than 5 years, there are no transparent conceptual strategies²⁰⁹. There is also no vision as to how many migrants from Ukraine we need and why²¹⁰. Czech migration policy takes account only of security matters, there are no other important migratory aspects highlighted and taken sufficiently into account²¹¹.

- No functioning channel for labour and family migration – Visapoint is the main barrier²¹²; the so-called “fast track model” for highly-skilled Ukrainians is a nice project, but in my view “unsystematic”²¹³. “I would apply a ‘user-friendly’ regime in border-zone areas, to stimulate circular migration – not to push migrants into irregular activities.”²¹⁴ It is necessary to work on easier and quicker models to get Ukrainians into the Czech labour market – like the project developed and launched by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the CR (since November 2015) – for highly-skilled workers²¹⁵...

- Less bureaucracy – bureaucracy applied to migrants in Czechia is very expensive for them²¹⁶. In addition, there should be a sort of information centre where Ukrainians who have already come can get all the necessary and useful information²¹⁷.

- To help Ukraine support its development also but not exclusively via migration – to assist in modernizing its education and health services²¹⁸, to help combat problems of corruption and poverty and the impossibility of doing business there – no basic infrastructure and no financial sources are available, investment has not so far gone into development²¹⁹..., Ukrainians should work more with their diaspora – to get economic

²⁰⁸ A4.
²⁰⁹ A7.
²¹⁰ A9.
²¹¹ A8.
²¹² A3, A5.
²¹³ A3.
²¹⁴ A1.
²¹⁵ A13.
²¹⁶ A3.
²¹⁷ A5, A8.
²¹⁸ A1.
²¹⁹ A8.
and social capital back to Ukraine\textsuperscript{220}. V4 countries should advocate a visa-free regime between Ukraine and the EU\textsuperscript{221}. Czech asylum policy should be more sympathetic\textsuperscript{222}, more open to Ukrainians but, on the other hand, it should not initiate a “brain drain” and thereby paralyze the country\textsuperscript{223}.

- To intensively work on pressing migratory/integration problems – like combating discrimination against foreigners and often problematic activities of agencies mediating work for foreigners\textsuperscript{224}, making legislation simpler, resolving health insurance issues for immigrants\textsuperscript{225}, organizing more language courses, enabling easier recognition of diplomas for third-country nationals, offering more scholarships for foreign students, providing more assistants in schools\textsuperscript{226}, stopping offering refugees apartments and jobs in peripheral areas of Czechia\textsuperscript{227}.

- To improve communication between intelligence services of European countries\textsuperscript{228}.

- Migration and integration statistics should be much better. For example, there are no statistics about how successful would-be migrants are when applying for a visa\textsuperscript{229}. The statistical system of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on immigrant-employees collapsed whilst not providing respective data\textsuperscript{230}.

- There are not enough financial resources available for migration and integration research activities, and also very often research done by NGOs is lacking in quality\textsuperscript{231}… Moreover, NGOs active in the migration field suffer from financial problems – they can rely only on short term grants/projects, they need more stable, long-term financial support\textsuperscript{232}.

\textsuperscript{220} A1, A8.
\textsuperscript{221} A1, A8.
\textsuperscript{222} A15.
\textsuperscript{223} A15.
\textsuperscript{224} A9.
\textsuperscript{225} A8, A10.
\textsuperscript{226} A8.
\textsuperscript{227} A8.
\textsuperscript{228} A4.
\textsuperscript{229} A7.
\textsuperscript{230} A8, A13.
\textsuperscript{231} A8.
\textsuperscript{232} A8.
Informant-migrants’ experience and opinions

There were various suggestions coming also from informant-migrants as to how to better the overall situation in the field of managing migration/integration issues at different levels of the administration both in the country of origin and destination countries. Some of the recommendations were general, some of them more specific, some were formulated in line with what has been mentioned above:

The necessity of turning the whole of Ukraine more towards the EU was stressed²³³. Others spoke of a free-visa regime that is being prepared now in mutual cooperation between Ukraine and the EU²³⁴. The importance of combating corruption²³⁵ and establishing a new education system, as the Ukrainian one is very outdated were also mentioned²³⁶. Other informants criticized the issue of administrative burdens which is typical of some Czech institutions that manage migrant matters²³⁷. Another informant recommends the Czech administration to accept highly-skilled immigrants²³⁸.

More specifically, some spoke of the precarious situation of internally displaced people and of the urgency of integrating them in a particular city within Ukraine²³⁹ whereas another informant calls for “finishing our job and liberating Donbas from its occupiers”²⁴⁰. Others mentioned again and again problems related to Visapoint as the only path through which one can ask for a standard permit to get to Czechia. They argue that the system has to be totally changed²⁴¹. They also call for eliminating the role of Ukrainian mediators in finding a job in Czechia²⁴².

²³³ B8.
²³⁴ B8, B9, B16.
²³⁵ B18.
²³⁶ B2.
²³⁷ B5, B12.
²³⁸ B10.
²³⁹ B3, B15.
²⁴⁰ B18.
²⁴¹ B5, B13, B14.
²⁴² B14.
3.5 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

When summing up, based on all available data sources and informants’ information it seems clear that there was no significant increase in immigration of Ukrainians to Czechia after the conflict between Ukraine and Russia (over the Crimea and Donbas regions) escalated in the Spring 2014 and continued – be it forced migration as a direct impact of the war or economically driven migration as an indirect consequence of the events which further worsened the socioeconomic situation in the country. Some increase, but rather a stabilization of the trend has been recorded. In addition to legal migration there may have been a slight increase of irregular residence and irregular economic activities of Ukrainian migrants in Czechia, although we cannot prove this conclusion.

Ukrainians are the most numerous group of immigrants in Czechia during the last 20 years. They currently (as of 31st March 2016) represent one quarter of immigrants (106,788 persons; 22.6% of all immigrants) and they also represent the highest share among the asylum seekers. During the last two years, in 2014 and 2015, 1,208 Ukrainians sought asylum in Czechia. Asylum was nevertheless granted only to 32 of them (2.6%), but at the same time, another one quarter of the seekers (293 persons; i.e. 24.2%) were granted subsidiary protection status. However, this favourable trend, where Ukrainians were granted at least subsidiary protection, seems to be no longer valid: from January 2016 to May 2016 only 23 persons (i.e. 11.2%) of 206 applicants from Ukraine were awarded this. The “level of success” in obtaining asylum itself remains the same and at a very low level – only 2.4% of seekers (i.e. 5 persons) from Ukraine were granted asylum between January and May 2016.

Based on our empirical qualitative interviews, some new migratory patterns have been observed. Since it is normally impossible for Ukrainians to get a confirmed registration for an interview at the Czech Embassy/Consulate via the Visapoint system in Ukraine (as the first step for getting a visa) as the system is dysfunctional (a successful approach is possible only via mafia-like structures and bribes), many Ukrainians use the “Polish route” by getting a Polish visa (applying to the Polish Embassy/Consulate) and, then, they enter Czechia where they work irregularly or ask for international protection status (pragmatically, they look for the one which would suit best their “needs”). As for the structure of the inflow – it is mainly young people, students and family members of those who are already in Czechia, more of whom have started coming from Ukraine.

As far as motives for migration are concerned, the danger of the military conflict and the related dramatic atmosphere in the respective regions and the deteriorating socioeconomic situation are probably the two most important reasons for emigration. Avoiding conscription is another strong push factor among Ukrainian males. Informants’ stories prove that those who moved out of the East of Ukraine (its crisis regions) and temporarily settled in the West of Ukraine were not accepted well (or even faced with some animosity). This only confirms the division of the country into at least two quite different “Ukraines”
(see more e.g. Karácsonyi et al. 2014). On the other hand, there are some pulls that attract Ukrainians to Czechia – mainly family members who have often already been successfully integrated into Czech society and give migrants a helping hand. Moreover, the language similarity, a common Slavic culture and a personal experience of visiting the country previously also facilitate would-be migrants’ decision to head for Czechia.

The Ukrainian diaspora has already built a tradition in Czechia, while also mostly fulfilling a specific niche on the Czech labour market – in various sectors of the economy mostly in less-skilled professions and positions. One important trend is an increase of permanent residence permits holders at the expense of those with long-term residence ones. Hence, a sort of a shift from an originally almost exclusively temporary, transnational circulation mode of migration towards the mode within which migrants more often settle has recently been occurring. This fits the above mentioned trend of the growing role of family reunion process.

As for informant-experts’ suggestions (recommendations) as to how to improve the overall situation and possible management of the current Ukrainian inflow of migrants/asylum seekers to Czechia, the following aspects were highlighted above all – we cluster them into several groups:

- the lack of vision which the migration policy of Czechia suffers from an overestimation of security aspects of migration at the expense of other important features which are typical of migration: no intensive work on some pressing migratory/integration problems (like combating discrimination against foreigners and often problematic activities of agencies mediating work for foreigners ... for more see text above),
- no functioning channel for labour and family migration – informant-experts call for easier and quicker models of how to get Ukrainians into the Czech labour market;
- less bureaucracy which inhibits various procedures that migrants are involved in, and more information available for Ukrainians about their working opportunities and life in Czech society; and also to assist Ukraine in the complex development of its economy and society (not exclusively via migration).

Migration and integration statistics should be improved. Two aspects in particular are worth stressing – 1) there are no more detailed statistics about how successful would-be migrants are when applying for visas and 2) the statistical system of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on immigrant-employees collapsed, whilst not providing data for the last several years.

Last but not least, informant-experts spoke of the fact that there are not enough financial resources available for migration and integration research activities. Furthermore, many NGOs active in the migration field suffer from financial problems while relying only on short term grants/projects.

Obviously, there are two highly important strategic goals to fulfil in order to stabilize future migration outflows from Ukraine that follow from the results of the interviews – to end the military conflict with Russia and to start with a deep-reaching socioeconomic transition of the whole society that would enable one to believe in and reasonably hope for a better quality of life in a democratic, richer and “fair” new Ukraine.
REFERENCES


ANNEX

1) Main characteristics of our informants-experts: Group A – experts (N = 15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informant no.</th>
<th>Type of institution</th>
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<tr>
<td>A 2</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 3</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 4</td>
<td>Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 5</td>
<td>Small businessman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 6</td>
<td>Trade Unions</td>
</tr>
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<td>A 7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 8</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 10</td>
<td>NGO</td>
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<td>Government</td>
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<td>A 14</td>
<td>NGO</td>
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<td>A 15</td>
<td>Academic</td>
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Source: Own research, 2016
2) Main characteristics of our informants-migrants: Group B – migrants (N = 20)

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Source: Own research, 2016
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<td>(University in Lviv)</td>
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<tr>
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Chapter 4

GROWING MIGRATION OF UKRANIANS INTO SLOVAKIA: NEW MIGRATION PATTERNS AS A RESULT OF THE UNSTABLE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

Vladimír Benč (Research Centre of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association)
4.1 Introduction

Slovakia is not yet one of the traditional destination countries for migrants – it has one of the lowest proportions of migrants in the population among the EU Member States. However, since its EU accession in May 2004, Slovakia has experienced the second largest increase of migrant population among the European countries, especially in the Bratislava region (including the Capital city). The main reasons for that are sustainable economic growth in the last two decades, a rapid inflow of foreign direct investments and the close proximity of Bratislava to Vienna. Among the 3rd country national-migrants residing in Slovakia, Ukrainians dominate the statistics.

The crisis in Ukraine, caused also by the annexation of Crimea by Russia and the seizure of part of eastern Ukraine by pro-Russian separatists, has influenced mobility patterns of Ukrainians, increased numbers of whom are looking for shelter in Slovakia. Even though the absolute numbers of Ukrainians residing in Slovakia are not very high, we can see a rapid growth of their emigration to Slovakia in percentage terms.

In this chapter we analyse how Russia’s annexation of the Crimea and the conflict in Eastern Ukraine has influenced mobility patterns of Ukrainians coming to and living in Slovakia in recent years. We analyse their migration strategies, their working, legal and social situation, and what can be done to better address their needs. Finally we provide conclusions and some proposals for policy changes that could be implemented by Ukrainian, Slovak and other V4 governments as well as the EU to effectively manage Ukrainian migration to the V4 and EU.
4.2 MIGRATION IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

4.2.1 Regular migration to Slovakia

Migration to Slovakia has been gradually rising since Slovakia’s accession to the EU in 2004, although the growth has been slowed by the economic crisis in recent years. The total percentage of foreigners in the population as a whole reached 1.35% by the end of 2012. The number of registered immigrants reached 84,787 at the end of 2015, compared to 76,715 persons in 2014 and 22,251 persons in 2004.

Traditionally, the highest number of foreigners resorting in Slovakia are from neighbouring (EU) countries, namely Czechia (9,927 persons in December 2015), Hungary (7,593), Poland (5, 333), Germany (4,255), Italy (2,458) and Austria (2,257). Since Romania’s accession to the European Union in 2007, the number of Romanian citizens residing in Slovakia increased to 6,573 persons at the end of 2015 (whereas in 2007 it was just 3,005 persons).

In recent years, the share of migrants coming from non-EU countries on total population has increased slightly. Third-country nationals accounted for 35,261 persons at the end of 2015. The highest number of third country nationals came from Ukraine (10,706 persons), Serbia (5,528), Russian Federation (3,532), Vietnam (2,307), China (2,134), Korean Republic (1,590), United States of America (925). In 2015, there was a sharp increase in the number of Syrians and by the end of 2015, 942 Syrian migrants were registered in Slovakia.

Fig. 12 Percentage of foreigners in the total population of Slovakia (in %)

The number of residence permits issued to Ukrainians has grown in the last 2 years and this may be a consequence of the crisis in Ukraine. However, the highest percentage growth in residence permits is associated with migrants from Syria and Iran.

4.2.2 Labour migration

The highest concentration of migrants is in western Slovakia, mainly due to better employment possibilities in this region. Around two thirds of immigrants are male (59.8% of foreigners) and males dominate even more on the labour market, as almost 75% of registered migrants who are legally employed are male²⁴³. On average, migrants from third countries are in younger age groups (20–34 years) than those from the EU countries (mid-age: 35–64 years). A “typical” migrant living in Slovakia is a younger single man with higher education coming from within the EU²⁴⁴.


Labour migration policy in Slovakia is currently not regulated by quotas or similar restrictive measures. The number of employed migrants surged dynamically after the accession of Slovakia to the EU and continues to grow (from 2,761 in 2004 to 18,247 in 2010, 21,265 in 2012, while in 2015 the number of working permits for migrants reached 25,537). The largest group of registered employed migrants are Romanians, followed by citizens of neighbouring countries. Numbers of employed migrants from France and South Korea are also high due to considerable FDI into the car industry from both countries.

Generally, it can be concluded that so far migrants have not had a major effect on the labour force supply in Slovakia. Most of the migrants from Western European countries work in Slovakia as high-skilled employees in professions as managers of companies, experts in tertiary sector branches, lecturers at schools or universities, consultants, trade representatives and other similar positions. Their work requires skilled and experienced persons, is mostly temporary (e.g. for one year) and is concentrated into the largest Slovak cities (Bratislava, Košice) and places such as industrial parks where factories with significant FDI are located (Divinský, 2004).

Migrants coming from the countries of the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Asia are employed often as small entrepreneurs, retailers, vendors, construction or industrial workers (in low-paid sectors – textile and clothing industry, shoe industry, food industry), agricultural workers or auxiliary workers. There are variations within this group: Ukrainians and Poles prefer working in industry and construction, Asians prefer the retail and food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total number of permits</th>
<th>Temporary</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
<th>Tolerated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>6,898</td>
<td>4,021</td>
<td>2,838</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4,021</td>
<td>3,543</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,633</td>
<td>1,201</td>
<td>1,426</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,089</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>1,504</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,926</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>1,149</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,528</td>
<td>1,128</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>189</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>882</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>656</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>172</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>418</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>272</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26,157</td>
<td>14,561</td>
<td>11,342</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sectors while the Balkan nationalities usually opt for entrepreneurship. However, a lot of
Ukrainians (more than 38% of officially working Ukrainian migrants in Slovakia²⁴⁵)
are specialists, engineers, but also persons working also in IT sector and/or in hospitals
(doctors, nurses).

It is also believed that extent of irregular migrants’ work is not great. Their contribution
to national economy is difficult to estimate owing to the lack of any well-founded studies,
interviews or estimates and must thus remain on a narrative level (Divinský, 2004).

**Tab. 11** Employment of foreigners in Slovakia (at the end of a year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>10,536</td>
<td>15,324</td>
<td>21,265</td>
<td>25,537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— of which from:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>2,279</td>
<td>2,387</td>
<td>4,134</td>
<td>6,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechia</td>
<td>1,589</td>
<td>2,246</td>
<td>2,884</td>
<td>3,195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1,011</td>
<td>1,394</td>
<td>2,125</td>
<td>3,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>1,422</td>
<td>2,078</td>
<td>2,773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>929</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>1,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of South Korea</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— of which men (no. of persons)</td>
<td>8,420</td>
<td>12,303</td>
<td>16,853</td>
<td>19,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— of which men (in % of total)</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>74.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author, based on the data from the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (2016).

According to the statistics from the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family²⁴⁶, the number of Ukrainians working in Slovakia reached 1,462 persons at the end of 2015, three times the level of 2008. The percentage of “men” workers who were Ukrainian immigrants was 65.5% (958 men). However, Serbians dominated the last year’s labour statistics for migrants – 1,709 Serbians were registered as working in Slovakia legally at the end of 2015.

Most Ukrainians legally working in Slovakia work here for a period of 2–3 years. At the end of 2015, 565 Ukrainians worked in Slovakia for 12–24 months (38.6% of total working Ukrainians in SR), 439 persons for 25–36 months (30.0%). 214 Ukrainians worked in Slovakia for 7–12 months (14.6%) by 31.12.2015. There are only few Ukrainians who work for more than 4 years (59 persons by 31.12.2015, 4% share on employed Ukrainians in SR), which is quite different to e.g. immigrants from EU countries, who usually work in Slovakia for a longer period (2,267 persons working for more than 4 years in SR, 17% share on EU countries immigrants working in the SR).²⁴⁷ A very high percentage of legally working Ukrainians are specialists. A lot of Ukrainians (334 persons, 22.8%) are working in Slovakia as operators and installers of machinery and equipment in factories. 93 Ukrainians worked by 31.12.2015 as workers in services and trade (6.4%), 79 as technicians and associate professionals (5.4%). 70 Ukrainians worked as legislators and executives (7.8%) and only 57 (3.9%) as skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers. The numbers of Ukrainians in elementary occupations is very low (129 persons, 8.8%), well below third country nationals (9.3%) and the total migrant average (10.6%)²⁴⁸.

Almost 45% of Ukrainian migrants working in Slovakia have a Master's degree (656 persons by 31.12.2015), so they are very well educated. Another 17 Ukrainians have finished tertiary level of education. 288 of working Ukrainians in SR have secondary education (19.7%), 159 secondary vocational education (10.9%) and 125 general secondary education (8.5%). There are only few Ukrainians living and working in Slovakia with primary or lower secondary education (58 persons, 4.0% share on total working Ukrainians in SR) that is well below the TCNs average (6.7%) and also immigrants from EU countries (6.6%).

### 4.2.3 Visa policy towards Ukrainian citizens

Ukrainian citizens represent a substantial percentage of persons applying for Schengen or national visas at the embassies and consulates of the Slovak Republic. Most of the applied and granted visas are C type – short-term visas which allow the holder to reside in a Schengen Country for a certain period of time depending on the visa validity. A national “D” category visa is granted to certain individuals who are to be studying, working or permanently residing in Slovakia and there is a certain growth of this kind of visas issued to Ukrainian citizens (see Fig. 13).

The number of visas applied for and granted in recent last years has varied. This is connected to the visa liberalization process between the EU and Ukraine based on the visa liberalization roadmap and the signature of the Association agreement between the EU and UA. Slovakia started to implement the liberalization measures in 2013, which resulted in a rapid growth of applications and also visas granted. The Slovak consulates

²⁴⁷ Ibid.
²⁴⁸ Ibid.
also started to issue more long-term multiple-entry visa in 2013, therefore in the following years (2014–2015), the number of applications fell again.

The total refusal rate of Slovakia (all consulates) in 2015 was 2.67%, in 2014 1.55%, in 2013 1.67% and in 2012 1.53%, which are below the Schengen average²⁴⁹. The visa refusal rate of Slovak consulates for Ukrainian citizens was 2.72% in 2015, 1.23% in 2014, 1.01% in 2013, and 0.80% in 2012.

### 4.2.4 Irregular migration & Asylum seekers

The Slovak Republic does not have data or complex overviews of the total number of irregular migrants residing in the country. The only analysis made in this connection is a report compiled by Boris Divinský (Divinský, 2009). Based on a questionnaire research and estimates by representatives of state authorities and nongovernmental organisations. Divinský estimates that as of the end of 2007 the number of irregular migrants residing in the SR reached approx. 15,000–20,000. Divinský estimates that at least half of the irregular migrants are Ukrainians, but he is unable to verify it.

It is assumed that due to the significant decline in the number of apprehended migrants and the decreasing number of asylum seekers, the phenomenon of irregular migration in Slovakia has decreased in recent years (especially after Slovakia joined the Schengen Area). Numbers of apprehended migrants (illegally crossing the borders or illegally staying in the SR) reached its peak in 2001 (15,548 persons), while in 2013 it reached a historical minimum (1,091 persons). Since 2007 the percentage of irregular stays

²⁴⁹ On average, 5.1% of visa applications in the whole Schengen area were refused in 2014 (down from 5.5% in 2011, but up from 4.8% in 2012). There are, however, important differences between Member States (e.g. Belgium refuses 16.9%, Malta 14.8%, Sweden 10.3% of applications, while Lithuania, Latvia and Iceland refuse less than 1%) and between third countries (while in Congo 44%, Senegal 36%, Nigeria 35% Algeria 26% and e.g. in Kosovo 24% of applications are refused, in Russia, Belarus and Oman the refusal rate is below 1%). Source: www.schengenvisainfo.com.
has outnumbered illegal border crossings and currently around 60% of apprehended migrants are those accused of irregular residence (irregularly working, staying over the permitted period, etc.).

In addition, since Slovakia’s accession to the EU, numbers of asylum seekers have been gradually decreasing, from 3,549 in 2005 to 441 in 2013 and 330 in 2015. The number of persons granted asylum remains consistently low. From 1993 to the end of 2015, asylum was only granted to 653 applicants, of whom 20 were Ukrainians. The chance of an asylum seeker getting citizenship in Slovakia is close to zero, as over the last 20 years only 238 asylum seekers received Slovak citizenship. This reflects the general consensus supporting a very strict migration policy among both political parties and the public.

Fig. 13 Visa applications and granted visa to UA citizens by SK consulates

Source: Author, based on the data provided by the Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Slovak Republic (2016).
As far as ethnic structure is concerned, irregular migrants come to the SR from three main regions – countries of the former Soviet Union (predominantly from Ukraine, then from Moldova, Russia, and Georgia), some Asian countries (mostly from Vietnam and China, then from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh), and Western Balkan countries (Serbia including the province of Kosovo, Albania, and Macedonia).

Analysis of provided data shows the rapid growth of irregular migration comparing the years 2014 and 2015 (especially in the category of Illegal stays), even though the general numbers of irregular migrants on the territory of the Slovak Republic are very low compared to neighbouring countries. An increase in the number of “over-stayers” has been evident since October 2014 and it is still growing. This means that a lot of Ukrainians (and other 3rd country nationals) who got to the EU legally are staying there for a much longer period that they were allowed to (visa validity).

At the same time, from June till September 2015, Syrian migrants took over the “statistical leadership” when speaking about irregular stays – overtaking Ukrainians in those months. Most of them were crossing the border between Hungary and Slovakia (being apprehended at SK territory), trying to travel to Czechia and later on to Germany. With the Syrians and also Afghans (several of whom were returned from other EU countries under the Dublin convention), numbers of irregular stays started to grow rapidly.

However, Ukrainians still dominate the irregular migration statistics for 2015. The number of Ukrainians apprehended because of an irregular stay grew by 54% in a year. Most of them were identified as illegal stayers at border crossing points (BCPs) – departing from the SR to Ukraine.

Asylum seekers in Slovakia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Asylum seekers</th>
<th>Of which UA</th>
<th>Granted asylum</th>
<th>Of which UA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>11,395</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>3,549</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2,849</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2,642</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>909</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>822</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL 1993–2015</td>
<td>58,321</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * Refused asylum – also includes decisions to reject applications for asylum as manifestly unfounded and to reject the application for asylum as inadmissible.
The number of illegal crossings of the state border of the Slovak Republic with Ukraine (joint Schengen border) decreased from 240 to 222 cases in 2014–2015, which is an indicator that the Slovak-Ukraine border is well protected.

Ukrainians (and Afghans) dominate the statistics on illegal border crossings. 92 Ukrainians and 42 Afghans were apprehended in 2015, since it was reverse in 2014,

** SP – subsidiary protection as another form of international protection for persons granted asylum

### Tab. 14 Overview of illegal migration on the territory of the Slovak Republic in 2014 and 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to SR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IBC</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External land border between BCPs</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External land border at BCPs</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External air border (at airports)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland</td>
<td>634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At BCPs – departure from the SR</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned from other Member State</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>1,064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>1,304</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: IS – Illegal stay; IBC – Illegal border crossing; BCP – border crossing point; SR – Slovak Republic
Source: Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Slovak Republic (2016).
while 114 Afghans and 47 Ukrainians were accused of illegal border crossing. Most cases of illegal border crossings of Ukrainians are connected to counterfeit or forged travel documents, identified during document control at the BCPs. Cases of counterfeit/forged visas or residence permits are very rare (only 5 cases in 2015 and 9 cases in 2014). The number of persons for whom an alert has been issued in the national registry for purposes of entry refusal is also rare: 3 cases in 2015, 2 cases in 2014. Most of the migrants apprehended at “the green border” (between the BCPs) are on foot without any travel documents (108 cases in 2015, 185 cases in 2014) (Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Slovak Republic, 2016).
4.3 OWN RESEARCH

4.3.1 Methodology

The Country Report was prepared based on desk research and interviews (field research – interviews with Slovak migration experts and Ukrainian migrants residing in Slovakia – migrants who arrived in Slovakia after March 2014). Statistical data in the report are provided mainly by 3 institutions: Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, specifically by the Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Presidium of the Police Force and by the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior, the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic and the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family.

From November 2015 to March 2016 field research included interviews with 16 selected Slovak migration experts, including 3 experts from academia, 2 from the Slovak Academy of Sciences, 4 from the NGO sector, 4 from governmental institutions, 1 from an international organisation and 2 independent experts (see the annex of this chapter). Within the interview, we asked them about their opinions on the following sub-topics: current Ukrainian migration to Slovakia, the availability of data, personal assessments of the situation, changes in trends (structure of inflows, motivation, migrants’ strategies, etc.), types of migration, refugee situation, any new occurrences related to Ukrainian migration and possible recommendations for better migration management. Furthermore, several consultations with the Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Presidium of the Police Force and by the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior were carried out.

At the same time, 15 semi-structured interviews were performed with migrants of Ukrainian nationality. The definition of the target subject – the migrants – was as follows: adult migrants (only one member per family) with legal or irregular status, who migrated abroad after the conflict started in March/April 2014, from the whole of Ukraine (not just the Eastern part or Crimea). The details about the informants are summarised at the end of this chapter. Selection of the informants was made via a snow-ball method; primary contacts with migrants were mediated through personal ties, several already settled Ukrainians in Slovakia (mostly Bratislava, Košice and Prešov regions) and selected non-governmental organizations.

4.3.2 Slovak Migration Experts

Changes in migration patterns of Ukrainians to Slovakia

Slovak migration experts see only “small changes” in migration patterns of Ukrainians in the last years. The number of Ukrainian migrants in Slovakia, even though they dominate
the statistics of migrants from 3rd countries, is very small. Generally, all experts see an increase in the number of Ukrainian migrants coming to Slovakia, in 3 groups: 1) young people, mostly men, coming for to study at university; 2) qualified workers that are invited to fill labour shortages, especially doctors, nurses, IT specialists; and 3) less qualified workers e.g. for construction sites, which is also connected to economic growth in Slovakia and the fall in unemployment in recent years. Some experts also pointed out a group of richer Ukrainians who have started to invest (or protect their money in the instable environment of Ukraine) in Slovakia individually, via joint companies with Slovaks, or invested in property in Slovakia.

An expert representing a governmental institution: “In terms of migration of Ukrainians there is an upward trend, whether in legal or even illegal migration. Until the end of 2014, valid travel by 8,033 nationals of Ukraine was recorded in Slovakia, at the end of 2015 it was 10,706 (compared to 31.12.2011: 6,091). Visa liberalization in order to facilitate legal travel meant that in 2013 there was a nearly 100% increase in the number of submitted applications for a Schengen visa at the embassies of the Slovak Republic (88,095 applications) compared to the years 2011 (40,882), 2012 (44,093), 2014 (49,657), and 2015 (46,148). The situation has stabilized and the number of visa applications has declined.” An independent expert declared: “It’s a relatively sharp increase in historical perspective in such a short time.”

An expert representing a governmental institution added that “Illegal migration by Ukraine nationals occurred in 2015 with a further increase compared to 2014 amounting to 32.8%.” As mentioned above, in terms of percentage change, this increase is very large, but in terms of the number of people, the situation is not so dramatic. In 2015 illegal migration figures recorded 867 Ukrainian nationals, while in 2014 the total number amounted to 550 people (for comparison, in 2011 it was 353 persons).

Several experts however, noticed that Slovakia is not a major destination or transit country for Ukrainian migrants and one expert added: “Millions of people have left the Donetsk and Luhansk region, but given the considerable size of Ukraine this is a national migration, to Russia and maybe to some EU countries such as Poland and Czechia.” Other Slovak migration experts have identified a new type of migration: a group of migrants from Ukraine – young men who came because of the war to avoid conscription (military service).

In terms of the type of migration, all the experts agreed that the growth is associated mainly with temporary migration, male dominated migration and labour migration. One

\[\text{250} \quad \text{A15, A16.}\]

\[\text{251} \quad \text{A11.}\]

\[\text{252} \quad \text{A7.}\]

\[\text{253} \quad \text{A11.}\]

\[\text{254} \quad \text{A4, A9, A16.}\]

\[\text{255} \quad \text{A4.}\]

\[\text{256} \quad \text{A1, A2, A3, A8, A14, A16.}\]
expert noted that only one segment is dominated by women – “a form of permanent migration is marriage with a Slovak citizen. These cases are mostly women, who thus get to Slovakia, mainly to escape poverty. This method of migration, however, has a tradition of more than 20 years and it is not a new modus operandi.”

Almost all experts have identified a strongly growing segment of Ukrainian immigration to Slovakia – an increase in the number of Ukrainian students at Slovak schools. Some associate it with the creation of a new scholarship fund at the IVF and the Ministry of Education of Slovak Republic, which was made available for students from Ukraine. However SK experts think that in a great part this it is a way to avoid serving in the army (for men).

Only one expert also identified an increase in family reunification migration, i.e. “Those who work and live in Slovakia ‘drag’ family members when they are able to establish themselves here in a better social and living situation.”

In terms of localization of Ukrainian migrants in Slovakia, it is dominated by Bratislava and its surroundings, where there are plenty of job opportunities. A larger number of Ukrainian migrants can also be found in eastern Slovakia, which is associated with a greater Ruthenian and Ukrainian minority living in Slovakia (kinship and family connections), but also due to the proximity of the territory (for Ukrainians from western Ukraine, especially the Transcarpathian region) and also a greater increase in Ukrainian students has been recorded at universities in Prešov and Košice.

Three experts also drew attention to a new trend: Ukrainians legally travelling to Slovakia with a valid passport and a Schengen visa or a residence permit (mostly a tourist Schengen visa), but subsequently illegally prolonging their stay in Slovakia and the EU: “This group of Ukrainians is often in the Schengen area in violation of the conditions and do not respect the period determined by the visa or the residence permit, in many cases staying much longer than its validity, with related activities having characteristics of undeclared work.” An NGO expert equally thinks that “a large part of migration from Ukraine within the framework of ‘tourist visas’ is for the purposes of illegal work. However, there is no research or statistics available.” One expert representing a governmental institution also noted that “the simplification of the visa regime opened up greater scope for action by individuals or organized groups, with speculative organizing of trips for Ukrainians to the EU/SR, often with a fictitious purpose. The actions of these individuals are focused mainly on Ukrainians from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and from regions with a higher unemployment rate. Under the pretext of earnings Ukrainians are lured towards the EU/Slovakia, helping them to get a Schengen visa for purposes such as tourism, visiting

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257 A3.
258 A15.
259 A8, A11, A16.
260 A11.
261 A16.
262 A11.
friends, attending cultural events and so on. Apart from the risk of abuse of a Schengen visa, there is a risk of an increase in crime (e.g. smuggling of goods, trafficking in persons)."

Impact of the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine and the Russian annexation of Crimea on Ukrainian migration to Slovakia

In terms of the impact of the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine and the Russian annexation of Crimea on Ukrainian migration to Slovakia, it is necessary to separate the direct and indirect impact of the conflict on migration. The majority of Slovak experts concluded that these events had virtually no direct impact on labour migration to Slovakia or the Slovak labour market. Nobody in Slovakia is officially nor unofficially examining what part of Ukraine migrants come from²⁶³, but from empirical observations of experts, the number of Ukrainian migrants from the western part of Ukraine affected by the conflict, who came as a direct result of the conflict is very low. It cites the unattractiveness of Slovakia in this regard, restrictive immigration policy (e.g. an expert from a University²⁶⁴: “it is related to the high unemployment in Slovakia – the lack of jobs, difficulties in obtaining residence permits, etc.”), but also the absence of direct contact to the community of Ukrainians now living in Slovakia. Another expert²⁶⁵ noted that “Ukrainians in Crimea and the ATO area move to the western regions of Ukraine, buying real estate here. Only those who are richer may seek to emigrate to the EU. And Slovakia is usually not a destination country... (they mostly migrate to Czechia, Poland, Spain...).” The same sentiments were echoed by an NGO expert²⁶⁶: “The rich Ukrainians emigrate mainly to the United States, Israel and Canada. Those looking for work go mainly to Poland, Czechia, Portugal and Italy. Slovakia remains attractive for doctors and students, and mostly for migrants coming from western Ukraine – Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankovsk and Lvov regions. Labour migration to Slovakia was never massive due to the limited possibilities earnings (weak labour market and low wages) and also due to Slovaks’ arrogant attitude towards migrants, including Ukrainians.”

The secondary impact of the conflict and annexation of Crimea is noticeable, and it is connected to the social and economic situation in Ukraine, which motivates greater numbers of Ukrainians to seek better paid work in other countries, including Slovakia.

An increase in the number of migrants from Ukraine, however, according to Slovak experts had essentially no major effect on labour migration to Slovakia or the Slovak labour market. An expert from the Research Institute²⁶⁷ said that “interest of the Slovak companies in the workforce (mainly skilled) from the UA is on an upward trend. Employers can obtain skilled labour, with minimal language barriers, which seeks to integrate into

²⁶³ A10, A11, A14.
²⁶⁴ A3.
²⁶⁵ A10, A11, A14.
²⁶⁶ A15.
²⁶⁷ A5.
mainstream society. In terms of the Ukrainian migrants, there is a significant improvement in the social and economic situation in Slovakia. They are not ‘taking jobs’ of Slovaks, but rather just replacing the lack of domestic labour. However, these are mostly Ukrainians from the western part of Ukraine, not from war-affected areas.” Another expert²⁶⁸ added that “Ukrainian migrants are usually filling gaps in the labour market, for example the shortage of doctors or workers in construction and the like.” With falling unemployment in Slovakia in recent years, the growing number of working Ukrainians in Slovakia has not yet given rise to any tension in the labour market.

In terms of analysis of where Ukraine migrants come from, all experts agreed that there is an absolute lack of any relevant information and no research has been carried out on this topic, yet. There are no such statistics at the level of the state institutions and responsible institutions, whether for issuing visas, residence permits or asylum, are not doing any such analysis. Most experts, however, believe that citizens of eastern Ukraine and the areas affected by military conflict or from the Crimea, are very few. An expert from a governmental institution²⁶⁹ said: “Considering the overall growth in the number of Ukrainians who were granted international protection in the Slovak Republic in the years 2013 to 2015, we can conclude that there was an overall increase in the provision of international protection, but it is not a high number (as of 31.12.2015 only 25 Ukrainians were granted international protection in Slovakia).” Almost all experts recorded and met more migrants coming from the western regions of Ukraine than before, but not in much higher numbers. Another expert²⁷⁰ added that “eastern Ukrainians prefer Russia, Belarus, Czechia, Poland and Romania, where they have some connections (a Ukrainian community) and also the advantage of proximity and language is important, as well as more a liberal labour market than in the case of Slovakia.” In a similar vein NGO expert²⁷¹ added: “With its immigration and asylum policy as well as its poorly developed labour market, in relation to the distance that a western Ukrainian migrant must overcome, Slovakia has no interest for them.”

An NGO expert²⁷² pointed out: “However, the risk of dramatic changes in terms of the increasing number of migrants from eastern Ukraine due to the deteriorating situation/expansion of the conflict may be a reason for increased migration from these parts of Ukraine in the near future.” At the same time he added that “the Ukrainian community in Slovakia is becoming more functional, e.g. in 2014, a new non-governmental Slovak-Ukrainian initiative, founded by immigrants from Ukraine who have lived in Slovakia for a long time, is trying to organize the collection of aid to Ukraine, but also helps Ukrainians who came to Slovakia in recent years.”

²⁶⁸ A8.
²⁶⁹ A11.
²⁷⁰ A4.
²⁷¹ A15.
²⁷² A6.
Experts were split on their view on the issue of the “integration” of eastern Ukrainians into Ukrainian communities already existing in Slovakia. An expert representing international organisation²⁷³ who carries out language education of migrants stated that “the Ukrainians who came in the last 2 years from eastern Ukraine differ notably in the greater proportion of students rather than migrants for family reunification or employment and entrepreneurship. Among these groups, there are ongoing normal social contacts.” An expert²⁷⁴ working with migrants at the university claims that “almost everyone wants to finish school, and many even want to find a job in the Slovak Republic or other EU countries after graduation, if they can obtain a residence permit. Many of them do not believe in an early end to the conflict and are trying to integrate with the local Ukrainian community.”

On the other hand, several experts²⁷⁵ think that Ukrainians from eastern Ukraine will not integrate into existing communities of Ukrainians in Slovakia. One of the NGO experts²⁷⁶ even speaks of isolation: “Migrants coming from the eastern regions of Ukraine are quite isolated from the social life of the local Ukrainian community.” Another NGO expert²⁷⁷ also thinks that the “new” immigrants who are here temporarily, are not involved in the activities of the already functional Ukrainian community, but rather may be using their social networks, especially for advice as to where, what and how to deal with, for example, getting a job and so on. A similar view was expressed by a third NGO expert²⁷⁸ (A16), who stated that “new migrants only use the services of lawyers and mediators from a number of older immigrants who help them to prepare documents (e.g. invitation letters for visas), looking for residential property, employment, or training business proposals … but they often charge for it, which for many migrants is very expensive, and unavailable.” Like other Slovak experts, he thinks that the migration strategy of Ukrainians from eastern Ukraine is generally similar: “Many believe that they will return home, so their migration is temporary. Although it may change, if the worse in Ukraine worsens and if the conflict persists, their strategy can change to becoming permanent. They will look for opportunities to further legalize their stay – a more permanent job, starting a business and so on.”

An independent expert²⁷⁹ commenting on this subject, said: “Their main migration strategy is to get satisfactory conditions for a temporary stay. However, a lot of them are willing to return home after the final settlement of the military conflict. Of course, they differ from their compatriots who came to Slovakia earlier, especially from those who came before them solely for economic reasons and not because someone completely destroyed their home and regularly shot over their head. The contact between these groups is fairly symbolic.”

²⁷³ A12.
²⁷⁴ A3.
²⁷⁵ A2, A14, A15, A16.
²⁷⁶ A14.
²⁷⁷ A15.
²⁷⁸ A16.
²⁷⁹ A2.
Legal and social situation of Ukrainian migrants residing in Slovakia

From the point of view of types of legal statuses that Ukrainians ask for in Slovakia, they are usually trying to get a permanent or interim/temporary stay in the country for the purpose of business, employment, study or family reunification. Some Ukrainians prefer to obtain the status of a Slovak living abroad, taking advantage of their roots (An expert from a governmental institution said\textsuperscript{280} that “a higher number of Ukrainians are registered in applications for temporary stay as a ‘Slovak living abroad’”). Other groups are trying to legally get a job, which is complicated in many respects, also by complicated administrative procedures. Often Ukrainian migrants in Slovakia set up their own company or business, although it is questionable whether it is a real business. Others study.

Partial liberalization of visas in 2013 also increased the number of Ukrainians who have long-term visas, i.e. for 2–5 years, as more of them provide the opportunity to look for a “long-term temporary stay”.

The numbers of asylum seekers in Slovakia are not great and are measured only in tens of people, including the very few Ukrainians. Ukrainian asylum seekers in recent years have increased in numbers, but only by a few persons in the years 2013–2015 from 14 to 24 people. However, the increase in the proportion of asylum seekers from Ukraine in the total number of asylum seekers in Slovakia is more significant, from 3% in 2013, to 7% in 2014, and 14% in 2015. This can be assessed as “very strong growth”. Overall, the proportion of asylum seekers in Slovakia decreased sharply, so that asylum migration from Ukraine does not yet pose any risk. Asylum was for many years assigned only to a single applicant from Ukraine in 2015. It is not possible to talk about a migration wave of asylum seekers in Slovakia.

Several experts also concluded that the Slovak Republic is very restrictive in this respect (e.g. an expert from a research institute\textsuperscript{281} noted: “restrictive asylum practices are proverbial of Slovakia”). An independent expert\textsuperscript{282} added: “The responsible institutions of the Slovak Republic have behaved quite selfishly on the problem of migration of Ukrainians. Practically they do not care ... and there are only one or two cases when it comes to families with young children who came to Slovakia as a result of fighting in Donbas and have lost their homes. In these cases, it was notably the publicity and trying to show up in the best possible light before the EU partners. The state has no intention of accepting Ukrainian applications for refugee status, while some fear that any positive move in this direction could lead to a significant increase in the number of applicants for refugee status.”

\textsuperscript{280} A11.
\textsuperscript{281} A4.
\textsuperscript{282} A2.
In a similar context, two NGO experts²⁸³ argue that “refugee status for Ukrainian migrants in the EU and especially in the Slovak Republic does not work, because until now the events in eastern Ukraine were officially called an ‘anti-terrorist operation’ and not ‘war.’” One NGO expert²⁸⁴ also considers that “it is also associated with the Russophile orientation of Slovak society, which is clearly felt in the media. Therefore, more Ukrainians migrated to Poland or Czechia.” One academic expert²⁸⁵ noted that “refugee status in the Slovak Republic in the case of Ukrainians is unrealistic, for political reasons of the existing ruling establishment. Even in the media, there were reports that representatives of the Ministry of Interior tried to convince Ukrainian migrants not to ask for asylum.”

All Slovak experts agreed that “the legal and social situation of asylum seekers from Ukraine is standard, Slovakia provides adequate protection.” One independent expert²⁸⁶ noted that “it is less problematic compared to some Afro-Asian migrants” and an expert representing a governmental institution²⁸⁷ added that “in terms of integration of migrants in society, asylum seekers from Ukraine are obviously at an advantage because their culture, religion and language are closely related to Slovak.”

**Changes in migration patterns of ethnic Slovaks living in Ukraine**

Slovak migration experts identified two changes in this “migration segment” as a result of developments in the last 3 years in Ukraine:

- A significant increase in the number of applications of Ukrainian citizens of Slovak nationality for certificate of Expatriates, which gives them the right to temporary residence in Slovakia for 5 years, and gives them the right to study and do business in Slovakia. An NGO expert²⁸⁸ provided the information on the doubling of the number of such requests within the last two years after the escalation of the conflict in the Donbas, while the increase in temporary stays of foreign Slovaks in Slovakia was reported by an independent expert²⁸⁹ who registered a 20% increase for 2014 and 2015 over 2013. Several experts think that this increase is also associated with male migration to avoid military service.

- One NGO expert²⁹⁰ justifies it: “A Slovak passport for ethnic Slovaks living in Ukraine during this period is more desirable since it facilitates traveling or studying in Slovakia and is seen as a safeguard in case of worsening of the security/economic situation in Ukraine.” Similar considerations apply to one expert representing a governmental

²⁸³ A15, 16.
²⁸⁴ A15.
²⁸⁵ A3.
²⁸⁶ A7.
²⁸⁷ A10.
²⁸⁸ A6.
²⁸⁹ A7.
²⁹⁰ A8.
Many Ukrainians are disappointed by politicians. They feel cheated and deceived. Everything is getting worse, the security situation and growing corruption. It follows the increased interest of foreign Slovaks about the possibility of travelling to or staying in Slovakia – for worsening the situation further. A similar opinion was also expressed by other experts.

Experts representing state institutions have indicated that they do not address the topic. In connection with this issue, two experts also drew attention to the significant disparities in access to foreign compatriots from the perspective of the V4 countries. One NGO expert noted that ‘thousands of indigenous people of Transcarpathia whose grandparents were born in the first Czechoslovak Republic and lived and worked there are trying to claim the rights of ethnic Slovaks, but the procedure is very complicated and many do not have the right to obtain the status of a Slovak living abroad. The Slovak Office sets very difficult conditions, for example, completely incomparable e.g. with Hungary. Often the element of obtaining the status of a Slovak living abroad is associated with corruption. For this reason, most of the ‘Ukrainian-Slovaks’ learn Hungarian and try to obtain the status of Hungarians living abroad and thereby solve their life problems.’ While one expert representing a governmental organisation even recommended that ‘Slovakia should adopt a similar scheme for ethnic Slovaks to that Hungary has introduced for Hungarians living abroad. That would also enable better and more effective integration of these people into the home state.’

In general, however, the share of foreign migration of ethnic Slovaks in the overall migration of Ukrainians in Slovakia is minimal. An NGO expert notes in this regard that ‘ethnic Slovaks who wanted to leave Ukraine (the vast majority of them live in the Transcarpathian Region) have done so a long time ago. Others are trying to get a ‘certain safeguard’ if the situation in Ukraine gets even more complicated – they are more concerned about how and where to ‘run away’. But most of them believe that they want to remain in Ukraine.’

What could be done to better address the needs of Ukrainian migrants?

All experts are looking at the need for humanitarian assistance to migrants in this matter. However, the responses of experts from governmental institutions on one hand and experts from NGOs, academia, and international organizations on other were very different. Four representatives of state institutions stated that ‘Slovakia provides Ukrainian...’
migrants as well as other migrants with standard protection and applies the same approach to all migrants.” At the same time they stressed that Ukraine and Slovakia provide significant humanitarian assistance to migrants. One expert representing a governmental institution²⁹⁷ added: “Valid and practiced procedures applied to all nationalities requesting international protection are sufficient and it is not necessary to extend them. Nor is it appropriate for the application of the general rules of law to be different for certain nationalities, ethnic groups, etc., which could be an indication of discrimination. In general, it is necessary to note that in the event of a large increase of illegal migration (not only from Ukraine) this could lead to the emergence of risks (social, criminal, religious, etc.), which leads to the possibility of a decreased quality of life not only for traditional citizens but also for by foreigners. The main challenge for people seeking asylum and traditional populations of individual countries then becomes finding a balanced approach that will not discriminate against traditional inhabitants, while those in distress are provided with the required assistance and protection.”

He also proposed as a starting point “adoption of unified standards (shelter, social, criminal and other), which would be binding without exception on all EU countries and which would ensure the internal security of the Member States.”

Two experts representing governmental agencies²⁹⁸ added that it is necessary to provide a variety of Ukrainian migrants with assistance associated with their integration as such, facilitate better access to the labour market, provide more scholarships for Ukrainian students and e.g. organise Slovak language courses.

On the other hand, the views of the participating experts representing NGOs and academia can be summarized as follows:

- Clearly simplify the whole process of immigration policy as well as the asylum procedure: “Because of demographic trends in Slovakia, Ukrainian migrants should not be discouraged, but rather enticed to immigrate to Slovakia. Slovakia could become a final destination for these migrants.”²⁹⁹;

- Facilitate obtaining work permits and long-term residence for migrants from Ukraine, who can find a job³⁰⁰;

- Psychological and post-traumatic support, therapy and counselling, legal assistance, help with emergency accommodation for those migrants who have lost everything as a result of the conflict;

- “Heal the wounded, take the victims of war, but send them back to the Ukraine – to their regions to talk about a European standard of living. Typically, these are people who have never been abroad and never can or will. Such is life in Central and Eastern Ukraine…”³⁰¹;

²⁹⁷ A11.
²⁹⁸ A9, A11.
²⁹⁹ A2.
³⁰⁰ A4, A5.
³⁰¹ A16.
- Cut red-tape in processing their long-term stays in the Slovak Republic and develop tools for their better support: improve awareness of migrants, assist in providing housing, enable them to obtain work appropriate for their education and qualifications, include children of Ukrainian immigrants in primary and secondary schools and accelerate their integration into society;

- Help them with integration into society: legal aid, language courses, social counselling... “This integration is failing so far, it is often provided by the NGOs, which do not have a sufficient background, or finance”³⁰²;

- Create a more efficient financial instruments to support NGOs and institutions assisting migrants: “State institutions do not pay enough attention to such issues, NGOs have very limited resources and international organizations are also unable to comprehensively address all issues relating to migration and the needs of migrants. Therefore, Slovakia recorded a downturn or termination of activities of some institutions that help migrants in recent years.”³⁰³;

- Eliminate prejudice, seek a more objective approach to the clarification of the causes of conflict and the European objectives of Ukraine and the migration of³⁰⁴;

- Create conditions for richer migrants: “If a citizen of Ukraine has funds, they can find ‘their migration strategy’, whether in the EU, US and other countries. For Slovakia and V4, however, such migrants might be beneficial, e.g. in that they will help and assist create the conditions for investing their money in Slovakia and V4.”³⁰⁵

**Sources of information on Ukrainian migration to Slovakia**

In terms of professional and general awareness about the migration of Ukrainians, all the experts agree that there is a lack of accurate and timely information about the Ukrainian immigration. Reports in the media, the internet, the websites of government institutions and civil society organizations are too general or vice versa, too specific. There is a lack of detailed information on the community of Ukrainian migrants in Slovakia and only limited research has been done on the topic.

In terms of statistical sources, the most comprehensive statistics are available from the Office of Border and Alien Police P-PZ SR, Migration Office, if necessary. The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. Experts also benefit from Eurostat and international institutions such as IOM and UNHCR, but “the data are insufficient”. One expert from a university³⁰⁶ pointed out that “in the last period as public authorities are more cautious when publishing statistics on migration, both detailed statistics and the statistics available to the public come with a longer delay.”

³⁰² A13.
³⁰³ A12.
³⁰⁴ A14.
³⁰⁵ A16.
³⁰⁶ A1.
Slovak migration experts are gathering information for use mainly from personal contact with migrants in our country, or their relatives in Ukraine, but also by monitoring the Ukrainian, Slovak, Czech and Polish media.

All the experts agreed that an awareness campaign and training is needed, but the wider community also needs to significantly increase, broaden and deepen research and data collection in the field, improving the provision of a database of more specific data (e.g. education of legal and illegal migrants' regions of origin, and also religious structure), including strengthening the capacity of the ministries that are able to collect and evaluate data on migration.

Policy changes to be implemented in governing migration from Ukraine

Experts’ advice can be divided into two areas:
1. Solving Problems in Ukraine: Conflict, social and economic situation, for internal displaced persons, and;
2. Activities of Ukraine and the EU/V4 and Slovakia in managing the migration.

In the first area, the experts agree that it is crucial to end the war, secure peace in the east of Ukraine (some experts explicitly stated “to ensure the withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukrainian territory”), and start reforms to aid the rapprochement of Ukraine with the EU and social and economic stabilization in Ukraine. One expert representing a governmental institution urged: “In any case, it is essential that the EU fully supports the V4 and stakeholders in strict compliance with the Minsk agreement and reconciliation between the two parties to the conflict.”

A critical area for Slovak experts is Ukraine's ability to address the situation of displaced persons, where they see potential risks of migration flows to the EU if Ukraine fails to cope with their difficult situation. Some experts criticize the low level of activity of the V4 in humanitarian aid to these people: “critically considered important financial, material and technical assistance from the EU and V4 Government of Ukraine to improve the living conditions of internally displaced people within Ukraine to prevent their further migration into the EU.”

In the second area – migration management – the experts agree on the following priorities:
- Further liberalization of the visa regime towards Ukraine and possibly early abolition of visas.

307 A10.
308 E.g. A3.
309 A6.
“Instead of nationalist and isolationist passwords the V4 countries should move to rational use of Ukrainian immigrants on the labour market and improving demographic trends in their respective countries.”

“Ukrainians can be beneficial (economically, culturally and socially.) for the EU and V4. The V4 countries should not create barriers to immigration and their subsequent return. Immigrants from Ukraine should see demographic and hence economic potential. They should use the fact that the population in the V4 countries accept Ukrainians over Arab and African migrants, of whom they as yet have no experience.”

- Develop a system of migration management in the EU, including the unification of asylum. In this framework, the direct flow of migrants is not flat, but has specific regional features.

“The adoption of a common EU migration policy which would determine the conditions for the admission of immigrants, their integration into society, admission to the labour market and not least the acquisition of nationality. An important factor is that the countries participating in the EU migration policy have a clear consensus on issues dealing with support of the needed migration and on creating conditions for the development of a uniform opinion in adopting measures to eliminate illegal migration.”

- Closer cooperation with Ukraine, including “pressure” on its government to address the problems of migration of its citizens.

“The required steps are an officially defined Ukraine Action Plan on visa liberalization. The V4 and the EU may continue to provide support in this area, but the implementation of the necessary reforms is still on the shoulders of the Ukrainian government.”

“The Ukrainian government must restore order in the issuing of passports of citizens and eliminate corruption in it.”

- One of the experts is sceptical of possible liberalization asylum procedures against the Ukrainians by the EU: “The theme of Asylum is only a Ukrainian migrant ‘theory’. Unless there are changes in the political and legal status of the conflict (ATO) for the war, so they should give Ukrainians the legitimate right to obtain support from the governments of the V4 countries and the EU in the field of asylum. If that happened,” he assumes that “within a few months there will be several million more people in the EU – Ukrainians. We know it and Brussels knows it, and therefore will not try to change this legal situation … and will put pressure on Ukraine to avoid this …”

310 A4.
311 A5.
312 A11.
313 A10.
314 A15.
315 A16.
4.3.3 Ukrainian migrants to Slovakia

Reasons for Emigration

Although each of the interviewed Ukrainian migrants who came to Slovakia in the last 2–3 years had to emigrate from Ukraine for their own reasons, we can divide the interviewed group into 1) economic migrants and 2) students, or persons who are enhancing/extend- ing their qualifications. Almost all mentioned the difficult social, economic and political situation in Ukraine as a main reason behind their departure from Ukraine. Only some migrants\(^\text{316}\) at the same time also mentioned the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Students cited their main reason as obtaining an education that is accepted in the EU. Many also got a scholarship and the cost of studies are very high. Male students also admitted a fear of military service\(^\text{317}\). One of the interviewed migrants was a college teacher who gained residence in Slovakia to support the mobility of teachers and researchers.

The second group consists of migrants who arrived in Slovakia primarily for economic reasons – to work. One of the migrants\(^\text{318}\) firstly went to visit a friend from Ukraine, who is married in Slovakia. She then helped her to get a job in Slovakia, where she met her husband, who she married and they now have a daughter.

Migrants with higher education and specialists (doctors, IT) stated that their primary objective arrival in Slovakia was “an effort to develop a professional direction and the opportunity to work in conditions of greater technical and financial security (steady income \(\text{and a better salary than in Ukraine}\).”)\(^\text{319}\) One of the migrants\(^\text{320}\) also mentioned the very poor working conditions in Ukraine (corruption, nepotism and problems with career development). The wife of an IT specialist\(^\text{321}\) said that the main motive was the unstable situation in Ukraine and the military conflict, but the concrete decision for Slovakia was related to her husband’s work: “in terms of her husband’s profession and because of the underdeveloped IT sector there, which is however developing fast and her husband has a great opportunity here to develop.”

All migrants working in lower-skilled occupations (services, construction) reported a very simple reason for their stay in Slovakia: better reception than in Ukraine, and financial support for their family in Ukraine\(^\text{322}\). At the same time, due to the worsening economic and social situation in Ukraine, rising unemployment and the problems builders reported the construction sector, i.e. few orders and the decline of wages in the sector.

\(^{316}\) B2, B4, B6, B7, B15.
\(^{317}\) B4, B6.
\(^{318}\) B5.
\(^{319}\) B8.
\(^{320}\) B11.
\(^{321}\) B15.
\(^{322}\) B12, B13, B14.
Almost everyone chose to Slovakia due to the proximity to home, family and relatives in Ukraine, similarity between languages and the Slovaks’ tolerance towards Ukrainians. Some also reported lower costs on arrival and “acclimatization” in comparison with other EU countries (e.g. renting an apartment, etc.).

**Impact of annexation of Crimea or the eruption of armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine on the decision to leave Ukraine**

Only two interviewed migrants\(^{323}\) have come from conflict-affected areas. However, several noted that one reason for their departure from Ukraine was the armed conflict in the east of the country and the fear associated with it. One such case is a migrant from Cherkasy Oblast\(^{324}\): “There is a very bad situation, and that translates into other regions of the country. I am afraid of their future and for my family.”, Vinnitsa\(^{325}\): “I formerly wanted to go abroad to study and the situation in eastern Ukraine contributed to this decision. My parents were against it at first, but because of the worsening situation, they started to support me in this decision.”, and Kiev\(^{326}\): “We did not have to flee from the war zone, but in the complex nature of our decision the political climate, economic and especially the military situations in the country, including permanent mobilisations all played a part. A large part of our family lives in the area under military exercises and manoeuvres. These threats and their conflict would confirm the correctness of the decision to emigrate.”

**Everyday life of Ukrainian migrants in Slovakia**

Most of interviewed migrants arrived in Slovakia only in the last year – 2015. There are only three of them who have resided in Slovakia for a longer period\(^{327}\). With a few exceptions\(^{328}\), the majority of interviewed migrants are in Slovakia for the first time. Those who have been here before, either transited through Slovakia to another EU country or previously visited Slovakia as tourists.

Similarly, most of the migrants are here alone, without any family member. Others are here with close family, most often a husband/wife and children, a sister and/or a son\(^{329}\).

Migrant students are in Slovakia on a student visa, workers have residence permits and work permits. All the interviewed migrants received help in obtaining permits from the school/university or employer. One migrant\(^{330}\) added that: “the system to obtain a

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\(^{323}\) B4, B6.  
\(^{324}\) B1.  
\(^{325}\) B3.  
\(^{326}\) B15.  
\(^{327}\) B8 and B10 2 years, and B11 1.5 years.  
\(^{328}\) B5, B7, B8, B9, B11, B13.  
\(^{329}\) B3, B5, B8, B10, B12, B15.  
\(^{330}\) B15.
work permit is very complicated, without the help of the employer, it is almost impossible. Many employers do not want to embark on a complex administrative procedure. That’s why I am at home and only my husband works (Ed. IT specialist). With my qualifications (accountant), it is difficult to find a job in the same field because accounting rules in the EU are different than in Ukraine.” Doctors also helped with the processing of residence and work permits in hospitals. Builders help employees in the service of their companies and Slovak companies are already seeking employees in Ukraine and offering help with administrative procedures.

Students were looking for study opportunities in Slovakia mostly alone, especially via the Internet, in few cases also with a reference from someone. All informants are studying in the field which they studied in the Ukraine. All economic migrants also said that they work in the field for which they have training and experience in Ukraine. Interviewed economic migrants used three ways to look for a job in the Slovakia:

1) advice from a friend or broker who lives in Slovakia³³¹;
2) searching by themselves, usually using the Internet and social networks³³² and then contacting the employer;

“The work I have found over the Internet – in the EU/SR it is not a problem ... and there are a number of good websites, for example www.profesia.sk. I then submitted the documents required by the hospital and communicated with them via e-mail and telephone. Then they invited me for an interview and after mutual agreement helped me with the necessary authorization.”³³³

3) A Slovak company addressed them in Ukraine³³⁴;

“A Slovak construction company was doing some construction in Ukraine, where I was working for them. They were satisfied with me and offered me a job in Slovakia. At the same time they helped me arrange all the permits related to business stays in Slovakia, but also with basic things such as transport to Slovakia, accommodation and so forth.”³³⁵

In terms of living conditions, the Ukrainian migrants differ and it partly depends on the type of residence in the Slovak Republic. All students live in dormitories. Economic migrants who are in Slovakia and family members, as well as highly qualified staff (doctors, they) can usually rent the apartments, if necessary. Some of them are apartments and houses bought privately (believing that their employer will assist them to prolong their stay and their migration strategy is focused on long-term residence in the country). Migrant workers in services, construction are mostly provided with accommodation in different types of hostels by their employer.

³³¹ B5, B10, B13.
³³² B7, B8, B11.
³³³ B11.
³³⁴ B12, B14.
³³⁵ B12.
All the interviewed migrants praised the study or working conditions. Some stated that they had some problems with settling in – language, bureaucracy of documents and travel to Slovakia as well. All noted the smooth and friendly relations with colleagues (fellow students, co-workers) and none of interviewed migrants has had a negative experience that someone behaved inappropriately to them: “Slovaks are very good people, relations with all are normal, although conflicts arise.”³³⁶ Some, however, stated that they felt more language barriers and of course, in a short time it was not possible to even get “family friends” in mainstream society. A migrant woman³³⁷: “So far we don’t have family friends in Slovakia. But my husband has good relations with colleagues, although they still do not visit us.”

From the perspective of the Ukrainian community, students meet regularly and likewise, for example, construction workers. They are not in close touch with the local minorities living in Slovakia. On the other hand, doctors and IT specialists are building a circle of Ukrainian friends: “The Ukrainians are in regular contact and meet on various occasions. We have a circle of friends – about 20 people from Ukraine – who live in Košice and the surroundings.”³³⁸

Most Ukrainian migrants spend their free time exploring Slovakia, hiking, going to cultural events, or playing sports. Migrants in specialised professions stated that they do not have much free time as it is needed to study the materials for work. Some also learn the language. And if there is any free time left, they try to visit family in Ukraine.

All interviewed migrants communicate regularly with family and friends in Ukraine. They usually use social networks, internet or various phone applications that save money. Many go regularly to Ukraine, but some students carry out fewer trips for economic reasons – “So far I’ve only been at home once (Christmas). I do not have much money, so I can’t go more often.”³³⁹ or another migrant³⁴⁰: “The trip is long and costly.”

In terms of sending remittances, it depends on the type of migrant. Students can help very little – “The scholarship is enough just for basic things, such as for the trip home. No more...”³⁴¹ Those who are here with their families invest in an apartment or a house where they live and do not send remittances, or one migrant³⁴² invests in a business in Slovakia. Other migrants³⁴³ bring earned money home in cash.

³³⁶ B3.
³³⁷ B15.
³³⁸ B8.
³³⁹ B3.
³⁴⁰ B1.
³⁴¹ B4.
³⁴² B10.
³⁴³ B11, B12, B13, B14.
Attitude of Slovaks towards Ukrainian migrants

The behaviour of Slovaks towards Ukrainian migrants is perceived as very good and positive by interviewed migrants, although some see certain changes during the current migration crisis. Some Slovaks are seen by some migrants as deeply pitying the Ukrainians for what has happened in Ukraine: “Some people find it hard to understand a foreign mentality, due to the existing stereotype about the dangers of refugees and their negative impact on civilian populations in Europe. Then there’s the media and politicians who haunt diseases, terrorism, or that migrants are harvested by people jobs.” Migrant woman adds: “Many Slovaks also do not understand the reasons for and consequences of the war in Ukraine, like many Ukrainians. Slovaks feel sympathy for the Ukrainians. Ukrainians, however, differ from many other migrants, because they do not come to Slovakia to live at the expense of the state. Ukrainians come here to work, pay taxes and provide its contribution to the development of the country.”

According to most of the Ukrainian migrants interviewed, the migration crisis in Europe has not yet changed opinions of Slovaks about Ukrainian migrants, who are perceived positively: “The perception of migrants in Slovakia it is not very good, and the current situation is worsening the mood in the Slovak Republic, but for me, people behave very well.”

But some, however, have mixed feelings: “The attitude of the local population is normal, although I feel alien. Particularly in the case of discussions with Slovaks on the social, political, and social problems in Ukraine – a lot of Slovaks are ‘pro-Russian’.”

Another migrant: “Slovaks treat me well, but over time is clear to me that it does not depend on the country and who is born here, but it’s about specific people – if you are a normal person and how you treat others, as well as they behave towards you. Colleagues know me as a normal person and understand the reasons why I travelled from Ukraine – with the aim of finding a new and better life. However, we understand that a lot of Europeans, including Slovaks, have negative attitudes towards migrants and are not able to accept them and integrate the, both because they are currently coming in ‘millions’ and also because there are many social and economic problems in the EU. Equally, many migrants themselves form a negative opinion, because they expect that there may not be work and they only receive social assistance or other charity.”

Similar sentiments were echoed by a migrant from Poltava Oblast: “Everything depends on the person because everyone has their own opinion and their own head on
our shoulders. Some may behave well to us immigrants, others badly. Our task is to do everything possible so that all local people behave well towards us.”

Migration strategy of Ukrainian migrants

Future migration strategies of individual informants differ. In summary we can summarize them into four types.

A) All students want to stay here until the end of their studies and get a degree. In addition, some are planning to go to any residence within support programs in other EU countries. After graduation they have different plans, one wants to remain living and working in Slovakia or in another EU country, some planned to return to Ukraine, but it will also depend on the current situation in the country.

“I want to stay temporarily in Slovakia – while I’m studying. In the future, I plan to work in another EU country, there are problems with unemployment in Slovakia and wages are lower than in other EU countries.”

“I want to stay here for a longer period of time and do not want a date to return to Ukraine. Everything depends on whether I manage to graduate and find other ways to remain here after graduation. But this is the distant future ... The other countries should reconsider.”

“I came here just to get an education and I plan to return to Ukraine and actively use the skills and knowledge obtained in the course of study in the SR/EU into practice in that country. It would help to solve the difficult situation in the UA.”

B) They plan to stay only for a limited time in Slovakia, and then either return to Ukraine or go to another EU country.

“Everything depends on the economic and political situation in Ukraine and the opportunity to be get a good job in my profession. If the situation in Ukraine does not improve, I would choose some of the European countries. I suppose I will leave Slovakia, but it also depends on the situation for my wife and children – opportunities to work, school, etc. If they are happy here in Slovakia, we will look for ways to settle here for longer.”

“I plan to stay in Slovakia only 5–6 years, but then move to another EU country – it depends on jobs. Many Slovak doctors are leaving for example for Czechia, Austria or Germany, where working conditions are still better. But first I want to improve my languages and get a better work reference. I really do not want to go back to Ukraine

351 B3.
352 B4.
353 B6.
354 B8.
because I do not believe Ukraine will improve in the next 5–6 years ... The main problem of Ukraine is not the war in eastern Ukraine, but the problem is in the Ukrainians themselves, especially those who in government. Unless they begin to think differently, it makes no sense to return to Ukraine, because there will always be nepotism, acquaintances, corruption, ‘government money’ ... “³⁵⁵

“I do not want to stay here long. I believe that the situation in Ukraine will improve and I want to find a job at home so I can be with my family. I am not currently planning to go to other EU countries or to another continent ... but I cannot estimate how many remain in SR, but it’s just my temporary residence.”³⁵⁶

C) They want to stay and live and work in Slovakia all their lives.

“All my life I want to keep living in Slovakia, as there is a much better situation than in Ukraine. And I need to bring my immediate family here.”³⁵⁷

“We want to stay in Slovakia for ever, regardless of the situation in Ukraine. We have already established ourselves here and we are satisfied. We are doing a Slovak language courses and trying to integrate into the local community. We are doing well so far in business and do not consider the other EU countries.”³⁵⁸

D) They cannot say, since the situation in Ukraine as well as the migration crisis in Europe is changing the situation “day by day”:

“It depends on developments in Ukraine. My goal is to acquire experience and further qualifications to a European standard. Whether my family comes to me later or I return to Ukraine, will depend on many external factors that I cannot influence.”³⁵⁹

“I want to stay here as long as possible because I am working and earning enough. I’d like to return to Ukraine, but when the conflict stops, the economic situation in Ukraine will improve day by day.”³⁶⁰

“In our family, everything will depend on my spouse’s work and earnings. We will go to the country with the best conditions for his career. In Košice the IT sector is now very developed, but the conditions are not the best. Many of our well-known Ukrainian IT specialists have already returned to Ukraine, because this area is beginning to develop intensively there. However, we are open to other European countries.”³⁶¹
Assessment of the political and economic situation in Ukraine by Ukrainian migrants

As was already mentioned, the migration strategies of the interviewed Ukrainian migrants in Slovakia are largely dependent on the development of the situation in Ukraine. Ukrainian migrants themselves perceive the situation in Ukraine as very poor and unpromising, but will also look at possible developments. Many do not believe that the war will finish soon, but rather fear that the situation will get worse and possibly spread to other regions of Ukraine: “The situation is very negative and bad. The war is not over, it is simply in a passive stage. Large areas of Ukraine are under the control of illegal armed groups.”

Another migrant added: “The worst is that there is no visible action and no strategy to improve the situation in Ukraine. In the absence of agreed joint action on the global crisis by the key actors (EU, US, Ukraine and Russia), the military conflict will only escalate and continue to expand to other regions of Ukraine.” Furthermore, one migrant thinks that the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine is over, but “freezing after the model of Abkhazia, Ossetia and Transnistria”.

Another migrant noted that “the existing Ukrainian government deals with the current situation as it can, as the former government stole public funds and ran various rackets and excuses for war and any of the enemies”. They accuse political opponents of being “agents of the Kremlin and play a variety of games, so that the Ukrainian people do not think”. Similar sentiments were echoed by another migrant: “The war, it’s a business of oligarchs. The situation is bad and the war will be long.”

Policy changes to be implemented in the field of governing migration from Ukraine

In terms of possible solutions to the current situation of migration of Ukrainians to the EU and Slovakia, the opinions of informants can be divided into several areas. For a given sample of the first group of informants best tells statement of one migrant: “The best thing would be if the situation in Ukraine was governed by law – citizens of Ukraine have been forced to emigrate.” Another migrant adds that the key should be “an effective and active position of the state on issues related to the war, a unique position to resolve the conflict and bring peace.”

The second group would welcome a greater involvement of the EU in Ukraine, both in conflict resolution and also in the implementation of necessary reforms. At the same
time, according to some migrants\textsuperscript{369}, the EU should step up and improve material assistance to refugees and internal displaced persons in Ukraine: “not everyone wants to leave the Ukraine!”\textsuperscript{370}

Third, the largest group\textsuperscript{371} of interviewed migrants would welcome the liberalization of European laws on migration for Ukrainians, visa facilitation or complete abolition, or simplification procedures for obtaining work permits. Several noted the complexity of the visa and authorization procedures for residence: “The procedures are complicated and terribly difficult. As a university educated person, I had a problem understanding the different requirements and presenting the number of documents required for a visa and temporary residence — it is a pile of paper … not to mention the complexity of showing that I have a guaranteed job. I was lucky that my employer helped in this.”\textsuperscript{372} Another migrant\textsuperscript{373} thinks that “for ordinary Ukrainians, travel to the EU is unattainable for several reasons: e.g. finance, and the complexity of the process.”

At the same time migrants would welcome it if EU or V4 countries created better conditions for easier employment. First, there should be better information in Ukraine on where and how to find a job and whether you can get some help with settling or in the case of students where you can get a scholarship to study. One migrant\textsuperscript{374} also added that there is not yet a well-established “blue card” system in Slovakia and it is necessary to greatly simplify the system for issuing them.

In relation to Ukraine and to its role in helping to address the migration of its citizens, the interviewed migrants are rather sceptical: “It is a complicated issue … and no one knows yet … how to find a solution.”\textsuperscript{375} Several informants see the crucial point as the rapid integration of Ukraine into the EU, even if none of them believe in early EU membership for Ukraine. As the primary objective, however, Ukraine must as soon as possible meet the EU’s conditions for the abolition of visas to the EU, say Ukrainian migrants living in Slovakia.

\textsuperscript{369} B1, B5, B6.
\textsuperscript{370} B5.
\textsuperscript{371} B2, B5, B7, B8, B9, B10, B11, B12, B13, B14, B15.
\textsuperscript{372} B11.
\textsuperscript{373} B9.
\textsuperscript{374} B15.
\textsuperscript{375} B7.
4.4 CONCLUSIONS

The fundamental push factors for recent migration from Ukraine are mainly the difficult economic and social conditions, the lack of jobs, poverty and unstable financial situation and only secondly, unsafe life with persecution for racial, religion, ethnic or political reasons, and violation of human rights and freedoms. The current situation in Ukraine can be a strong push factor for migration, and not only in the short term. The Balkan wars example should be recalled here and the huge numbers of refugees, while major immigration waves from the Balkan were seen even up to 2005.

Economic factors are usually the most important stimulus for people who decide to migrate. When speaking about migration factors, economic ones are coming to play a more important role year on year. All Slovak regions are converging towards the EU average and are catching up with more developed countries and regions (Slovakia converged to 75% of the GDP per capita compared to the EU27 average in 2015, compared with 47% in 1995, and the Bratislava region became the 6th richest region in the EU) (Eurostat, 2016). Slovakia is slowly becoming a destination for economic migrants.

Slovak migration experts also gave as the most important factors for Ukrainian migrants coming to Slovakia the geographic proximity and low travel costs, cultural and linguistic proximity, and poverty and social tensions in the country of origin. Experts agreed that the main pull factors for migrants entering the territory of the Slovak Republic include: aspirations for a better life, a better job and educational opportunities, as well as the opportunity to set up a business. Other influencing factors may also be the cultural, religious and mental affinities of a certain percentage of migrants to the Slovak environment, along with easier language communication. This is the case with Ukrainians. Historically created relations to Slovak minorities in the neighbouring countries cannot be omitted either, although the numbers of migrants coming to Slovakia with a definite intention to return/settle down in the country are not very high compared to total figures of migrants.

However, most of the Slovak migration experts are convinced that only a low percentage of migrants crossing the borders of the Slovak Republic wish to stay there for a longer period or to settle down. The essential pull factor for them is rather the fact that Slovakia is a transit country to the EU. Ukrainian migrants may therefore see a good opportunity to continue from Slovakia towards the countries of Western and Northern Europe with a better economic situation and living standards, often with better support for migrants.

Slovak migration experts see only “small changes” in migration patterns of Ukrainians in the last years. However, the number of Ukrainian migrants in Slovakia, even though they dominate the statistics of migrants from 3rd countries, is very small. Generally, all experts see an increase of the number of Ukrainian migrants coming to Slovakia in 3 groups: 1) young people, mostly men, coming for university studies; 2) a qualified workforce that is invited to fill gaps in the labour force, especially doctors, nurses, IT specialists; and 3) a
less qualified workforce, e.g. for construction sites, which is also connected to economic
growth in Slovakia and falling unemployment in recent years.

According to the interview, Slovakia is not yet a major destination or transit country
for Ukrainian migrants. Even though millions of people have left the Donetsk and Lu-
hansk region, given the considerable size of Ukraine this is also national migration to
Russia and maybe some EU countries such as Poland and Czechia.

The majority of Slovak experts concluded that armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine and
the Russian annexation of Crimea had no direct impact on the migration of Ukrainians to
Slovakia in recent years. However, the secondary impact of the conflict and the annexa-
tion of Crimea is noticeable, based on the worsening social and economic situation in
Ukraine that motivates greater numbers of Ukrainians to seek better paid work in other
countries, including Slovakia.

However, non-state actors are claiming that Slovakia has no reason to fear the influx
of migrants, especially from Ukraine, to an extent that would threaten national security. Conversely, Slovakia needs and will continue to need labour from third countries and
the government should establish mechanisms for the integration and utilization of the
human, intellectual and linguistic capital of migrants. A more appropriate approach than
restriction is to create conditions for a dignified and fulfilling life for migrants to facilitate
their integration into Slovak society.

As can be concluded on the basis of exiting data, trends, policies, laws, and our re-
search carried out within the project, the Slovak Republic is currently at a turning point
as far as international migration is concerned. From a country where immigration was not
high and the number of asylum seekers was low, as was the number of migrants living and
working in the country, Slovakia has been undergoing an important transformation in
this respect during the past 3–5 years. The inflow of legal migrants has been growing to an
unexpected extent, bringing with it a great acceleration of challenges. This concerns not
only the numbers of migrants proper, but is also reflected in the phenomena, processes,
mechanisms and trends accompanying migration and influences the life of Slovak society
in many dimensions.

Our empirical research proved that most Slovak migration experts are in favour of the
liberalisation of migration policy particularly towards Ukraine. Abolition of short-term
standard visas could be one of the measures to be taken. As stated in some responses
from Slovak migration experts, migration as such can in the future become an instrument
contributing to the future development of Slovakia.

To conclude, we can provide these recommendations:

- In the media and public discourse it is needed to stress the difference in the rate and
  character of migration from the Mediterranean and from Ukraine and other Eastern
  Partnership countries

  Ukrainians are mainly labour migrants (with a high level of education, mostly spe-
  cialists in their profession) who are interested in finding legal employment and the
  majority are seasonal or temporary migrants.
- There is a need for an information campaign in Ukraine on migration to the EU/V4. Information should be provided on the rights and social protection of migrants, on immigration procedures, on the risks of human trafficking and many other issues related to migration. It is important to promote successful integration examples and avoid xenophobia and anti-immigration sentiment.
- Coordinate technical and humanitarian assistance at the V4 level directed towards internally displaced people (IDPs) in Ukraine. Improve protection and assistance to IDPs in Ukraine. The growing humanitarian needs in Ukraine require an urgent response. Provide targeted assistance, promote and develop adaptation strategies of IDPs in Ukraine including a range of assistance programs (e.g. credit schemes, business start-up schemes), infrastructure projects (housing, social facilities, etc.), community integration projects, employment assistance services and many others.
- Maintain the pace for introducing a visa free regime between the EU and Ukraine. Assist Ukraine in implementing the reforms required for a visa free regime with the EU.
- Develop programs in the V4 countries for voluntary return of Ukrainians to their homeland, as well as in the Ukraine in cooperation with Ukrainian government.

REFERENCES

1) Main characteristics of our informants: Group A – experts (N = 16)

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Source: Own research, 2016

2) Main characteristics of our informants: Group B – Ukrainian migrants (N = 15)

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Source: Own research, 2016
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CONCLUDING REMARKS

Dušan Drbohlav, Marta Jaroszewicz
In this final section we will provide an overview of selected important results of our re-
search, without focusing overly on details, referring both to chapters on individual coun-
tries as well as to the introduction where our main research goals and methodological
approach are summarized. In addition to a fairly standard description using traditional,
generally available although not so often used statistical sources mapping very recent
migratory situation and trends, we used our own qualitative interview. Interviewing
migration experts and migrants themselves via semi-structured interviews and getting
valuable information through focus groups has provided unique added value to what
has so far been known about the issues in question on recent migration from Ukraine
in times of widely defined crisis. It says a lot about realities, as to how they are lived and
perceived, helps penetrate many nuances of migrants’ lives and circumstances that condi-
tion and determine their fates, be it at micro-individual or meso- and macro-structural
levels. Such an understanding is not achievable through quantitative approaches. On
the other hand, the applied methodology of our research (based on rather small samples
designed through non-probability sampling methods) does make it difficult to gen-
eralize, to formulate broad and far-reaching conclusions. In the light of this, one has to
draw conclusions from individual informants’ expressions. On the other hand, monthly
reports collected for 10 consecutive months (between September 2015 and June 2016)
providing information on the latest migratory developments (quantitative data) speak
for themselves (see the second volume of the book). To sum up, below we answer our
basic research questions in a simplified way, without distinguishing between different
data sources or groups of informants. It is a sort of an “idealized reconstruction of the
story” based on both the subjective and more objective sources we identified through
the research.

We concentrated on answering several basic research questions: 1) How has the an-
nexation of Crimea by Russia and the conflict in Eastern Ukraine influenced mobility
patterns of the Ukrainian population? 2) Has the Crimean annexation and the conflict
in Eastern Ukraine influenced labour migration in Ukrainian society? 3) What are the
quantitative and qualitative characteristics of IDPs, asylum seekers and labour migrants
from Ukraine? 4) What are the main motives that drive IDPs and asylum seekers to leave
the conflict zone? 5) What is the legal and social situation of Ukrainian forced migrants
in Ukraine and in the various countries studied? 6) What could be done to better address
the needs of Ukrainian forced migrants? 7) What policy changes could be implemented
by the Ukrainian government, V4 governments and the EU?

**Influence of conflict: IDPs and new migration flows**

It appears that the annexation of Crimea by Russia and the armed conflict in Eastern
Ukraine did, to some extent, change the dynamics and migratory patterns character-
izing migration within, from and even to Ukraine. Both the analysis of available statistical
data and the results of semi-structured interviews with experts and migrants clearly demonstrate that we are witnessing a new migration phenomenon in Poland. Since 2014 Poland has been experiencing a huge inflow of Ukrainian migrants not witnessed since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, overall migratory patterns of Ukrainian migration to Czechia have not changed too much – including numbers of immigrants/asylum seekers with some exceptions: probably increasing illegal/irregular migration and migrants’ economic activities, the arrival of Ukrainians who were granted Polish visas and, in harmony with what has been detected in Ukraine, more young migrants, students and family members of those who have settled in the country started coming to Czechia more often. The rate at which students and both qualified and unqualified Ukrainian workers started officially coming to Slovakia has also increased, with probably more involvement in irregular economic activities there (the “legal stay along with irregular work” model) ... but many other migratory patterns related to Ukrainian migration to Slovakia have shown no significant changes over time.

Internally displaced persons, forced migrants escaping the war zone, appeared in massive numbers. They do not usually intend to migrate outside their mother county. What is worth stressing is, indeed, that vulnerable groups are quite often represented among the given IDPs (mainly disabled or/and elderly people).

Moreover, due to these events the overall socioeconomic situation in Ukraine, which was previously bad, worsened still further (opportunities to do business shrank, unemployment increased, social benefits for IDPs created a burden on the budget etc. ...), thus intensifying international migration outflows based on economic (labour) motives. As a corollary, those who thought of migration in the future or even those who have never wanted to migrate may and in some cases have set out on this journey. It is indicated that many young Ukrainians, often professionals, entrepreneurs and females may be newly on the move. It seems, however, that direct migration from the conflict areas abroad is relatively exceptional. Those people become IDPs or some migrate abroad later as asylum seekers or economic migrants from other primary destinations within Ukraine (a significant growth in residence/work permits mainly in Poland). Currently, an increase in Ukrainian asylum seekers is also noticeable, especially in Poland (see above). Ukrainians can often join family members who have already gone abroad.

As far as spatial patterns are concerned, the share of IDPs in Ukrainian regions depends on the distance from the areas hit by the conflict. Generally, the attraction of Russia as a real and potential migration destination decreased (due to its role of aggressor and because of the economic crisis emerging in the aftermath of the EU sanctions) in favour of the growing attraction of EU countries, including the Visegrad group, mainly Poland. Moreover, whereas emigration or short-term and long-term migration was traditionally typical of Western Ukrainian regions, it seems that due to the circumstances Eastern regions of the country and the capital city of Kyiv also became areas characterized by international migration outflows (though exact statistical data is lacking, this seems to be evident in all three Visegrad countries studied).
Although numbers of Ukrainian asylum seekers in the EU in general and in the Visegrad countries is growing, the number of them granted international protection statuses is still very low. It seems that this migration out of Ukraine may sometimes be accompanied by illegal migration, irregular economic activities by migrants or even trafficking in human beings. Some increase in irregular economic activities related to Ukrainian migration was indicated in all three respective destination countries.

Different factors influencing migration

Whereas the war with its tragic and devastating consequences lies behind the internal migration, there are many important “push” and “pull” migratory factors that are driving the current Ukrainian international migration. The war as such (chiefly security threats and the danger of being prosecuted by pro-Russian separatists ruling the region), the unstable political and economic situation, corruption, nepotism, the ongoing economic crisis, the very limited opportunities for individuals to enter the labour market and to make use of their own human capital, very low earnings, falling living standards, non-existent social security and a desire to avoid (escape from) military service are among the most important “pushes”.

Of course, the political stability and relatively positive economic development of Poland, Czechia and Slovakia and the related demand for a cheap (foreign) labour force (until now supported by a rather liberal visa and migration policy in Poland as opposed to much more restrictive migration policies applied in Czechia and Slovakia) accompanied by relatively high earnings pull Ukrainians to these countries.

Strong diasporas, functioning social networks – family members, friends or acquaintances already settled in these Visegrad countries and previous (positive) experience of migration facilitate the movement and make the subsequent integration into a new host society and its labour market easier, too. It is also becoming increasingly popular to gain a university education abroad – e.g. via newly launched training programs for Ukrainians by the EU countries (especially in Poland) or simply because high quality education for those who understand the majority language is free of charge (e.g. Czechia). Here we should also recall the common Slavic culture and heritage shared with the given three Visegrad countries, as well as their geographical proximity (with related low travel costs).

Circular and permanent migration

Apart from migration dynamics (particularly in the case of Poland) the most important changes in the most recent migration of Ukrainians can be observed when it comes to the relationship between circular and permanent migration. Some primarily temporary labour circular movements may change into permanent settlement abroad (see Czechia,
partly also Poland). On the other hand, some of the informants argue that a circular migratory mode is still dominant among Ukrainians. Indeed, this is supported by the current significant increase of temporary labour migration movements of Ukrainians to Poland (under the simplified employment scheme that does not require a work permit), although there are indications of migrants “prolonging these movements” or applying different strategies to transform their stay into long-term or even permanent settlement there, too. Furthermore, there is another migratory channel widely used mainly in Poland, to smaller extent also in Slovakia, which is making use of the fact that an individual can trace and prove their ethnic roots in the respective would-be destination countries, so getting preferential treatment.

**IDPs’ and migrants’ integration**

It has been found that many IDPs in Ukraine have relocated and are trying to integrate into their new host communities, but they are exposed to significant obstacles when adapting to a new place of residence. Many of them face a significant lowering of their living standard – lower vis-à-vis the local population. Furthermore, they experience problems in arranging basic matters relating to their living – official documents, social benefits and humanitarian aid. There are signs of discrimination against them on the labour market in terms of offering inadequate jobs or paying low salaries, problems with finding housing or placing children in schools, or getting a loan. Nor is it easy for people from an urban background to adjust to life in the countryside. Many of these problems are difficult to overcome especially for vulnerable groups (e.g. single mothers or seniors). Despite all these problems, open hostile conflict between IDPs and locals is exceptional.

When abroad, the very important role of family members, friends and/or acquaintances was proven. They serve as an effective tool easing integration and meeting cultural, economic and psychological needs.

It seems that Ukrainian migrants are able to integrate well and quickly into the labour markets of the respective destination Visegrad countries. On the other hand, their work is mostly manual and not intellectually demanding and their human capital is often not made use of. Although there is not a major language barrier for Ukrainians, the importance of mastering the language of the host society was quite often mentioned as a prerequisite for getting to know the society better, getting a good job and climbing up the social ladder. Migrants’ integration into the broader society (apart from family circles) is more complicated, socializing with the majority population is still rather limited and is more likely for well-off professionals with better jobs. Problematic relationships were indicated inside Ukrainian migrant diasporas, perhaps referring to differences by time of arrival (old-settled versus newly arrived) and region of origin (“Western” versus “Eastern” Ukrainians). In this regard, informants in Poland pointed out the specific situation of a small and very closed community of Crimean Tatars in Poland. In some localities, namely
in regions of Eastern Poland bordering on Ukraine, a huge concentration of Ukrainians and consequent competition on the local labour market poses some problems, giving rise to tensions between “old” and “new” migrants and migrants and locals.

One significant factor is that all migrants regularly communicate with family and friends in Ukraine via phone or internet.

Generally, it seems that the attitude towards Ukrainians in the host countries was not negatively influenced by the ongoing migration crisis related to mass inflows of refugees from the Middle East. On the contrary, it seems rather that positive reactions towards Ukrainians were strengthened vis-à-vis perceptions of the mass of more culturally distant Middle East refugees.

**Policy measures**

There is a clear message by de Haas (2007) that international migration as such is no panacea for solving more structural development problems. “If states fail to implement more general political and economic reform, migration ... is unlikely to contribute to nation-wide sustainable development” (de Haas, 2007, iii; similarly e.g. Piracha, Saraogi, 2011; Vetrovec, 2004 etc.) In addition, of course, the conflict on the territory of their own country only exacerbates the whole knotty situation and adds forced migrants to voluntary ones. Hence, resolving the conflict with Russia seems to be the first imperative. Then, a deep-reaching political and socioeconomic transformation of Ukrainian society should follow, which, however, would probably be accompanied by even greater migration outflows (see de Haas, 2010). Only establishing a functioning democratic system based on a free market economy comparable to what we know from the EU or other developed democratic countries can lead to gradual stabilization of emigration and circular migration flows in Ukraine. Good economic and social policy is, at the same time, the best migration policy. As often stated, within the necessary rapid Ukrainian reforms, the EU should be instrumental through the EU Eastern Partnership program and fulfilment of the Visa Liberalization Action Plan, which will enable much more intensive cooperation between Ukraine and the EU within a freer migratory regime (e.g. Duvell, Lapshyna, 2015).

The above strong message was more implicit than explicitly mentioned many times within our interviews. In this perspective, informants suggested other measures to improve the situation in Ukraine that seem to be important but partial. Some of those which were raised by Ukrainian informants and researchers in Ukraine:

For IDPs:
- supporting robust state programs for the social adaptation and integration of IDPs, improving registration of IDPs and putting into place provisions for voting rights, developing programs for the resettlement of IDPs in regions where the population has significantly decreased.
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For international migrants:

- maintaining cultural ties with migrants (via their respective compatriot cultural and educational institutions);
- increasing the number of consulates and of officials, improving border crossing procedures and increasing the capacity of border crossing points;
- opening the European labour market to Ukrainians;
- recognizing Ukrainian diplomas and scientific degrees in the EU;
- supporting joint research on Ukrainian labour migration and the mutual exchange of information in this field;
- preparing information for migrants about the destination countries and especially about their employment possibilities and requirements;
- facilitating the return of migrants who have been abroad by launching effective programs with the aim of “stabilizing” and successfully reintegrating them; introducing opportunities for launching and maintaining a small business while directing migrants’ money into the Ukrainian economy. This should go hand in hand, for example, with recognition of skills acquired by migrants abroad and certain tax and customs exemptions;
- strengthening social protection of Ukrainian workers abroad.

What may the future look like?

Many signals indicate that the overall societal situation and, consequently, the economic situation in Ukraine is unlikely to improve significantly in the short term. The generally prevailing picture of future development in Ukraine is pessimistic rather than optimistic. Accordingly, one cannot expect a radical decrease of international migration outflows from Ukraine whilst, of course, migratory patterns can be perhaps slightly rather than robustly changed (there are some important “stable factors” closely related to migration firmly rooted into reality).

As far as the future migratory strategies of those migrants who have already migrated to the Visegrad group countries are concerned, no clear and unambiguous picture was found. A range of scenarios depending on many “micro and macro” related factors may be fulfilled – from staying to migrating further “westwards” to possibly returning.

Conceptual issues

Last but not least, there are at least three more general conceptual issues that we touched upon when doing our research, which are worth brief commenting on, namely, relationships between voluntary and forced migration movements, trajectories of migration development of the relevant Visegrad group countries, and migrants’ strategies in terms of opting for short-term circular versus long-term or permanent migration.
Relationships between voluntary and forced migration movements

The example of migration movements springing from the Russian annexation of Crimea and fighting in Donetsk and Lugansk provinces shows us how complex a phenomenon forced migration is. Rather than a frantic flight from danger (though this also occurred) it was a considered departure that resulted more often in out-migration to other safe regions of Ukraine than in emigration abroad. If the latter destination was chosen, migrants often moved via a “step-by-step” migration model – to another Ukrainian region/city and only then, some time later, abroad. In this regard, forced migration was “supplemented” by a “voluntary economic one”, since the migrants considered all the advantages (vis-à-vis disadvantages) they could gain when moving to a more developed, prosperous country. When migrating, they often effectively made use of their social networks – mostly family members who had already been in one of the respective destination countries for some time. Not only family and friends, but also often their own positive experience of a previous (working) stay were instrumental in choosing a destination and fulfilling migration plans. At this point, factors conditioning “forced migration” were the same as those which propel voluntary economic migration movements. Whereas young, healthy and economically active persons could set out on a journey, seniors or disabled individuals stayed in the war zones despite the critical threat to their lives. This was often the case with grandparents or parents of the migrants.

Now we cannot describe what will happen after the conflict has been resolved (it is still ongoing), who will return and under what conditions. Obviously, when putting it into a broader migratory context, the lesson learned here is that forced migration has many variants depending on which micro and macro factors play a decisive role. Nevertheless, micro and macro factors may differ significantly between cultures and regions. Much more investigation is needed on the relationship between voluntary and forced migration movements.

Trajectories of migration development of the Visegrad group countries studied

There is a concept of a European “migration cycle” broadly discussed, for example in Okolski (2012), Drbohlav (2012). It is based on the assumption that all European nation states, while going through a modernization process, over time also shift from net emigration to net immigration countries. In the course of the change, countries go through specific migration stages: preliminary, take off, expansion and maturity. In the preliminary stage, large parts of the rural population are pushed out and compelled to migration due to a fast growth of productivity coupled with a high rate of natural increase leading to large emigration. On the contrary, the mature stage involves a steady and sizable presence of immigrants (or their descendants) and a continuous but strictly regulated inflow of foreigners in accordance with the needs of the economy. The stage of maturity develops
gradually with declining natural increase, ageing of the population and a growing demand for labour. Hence, the main drivers of the country’s change from an emigration to an immigration country relate to demographic and economic developments, together with paradigms of migration and control policies. “Furthermore, there is an additional assumption that “young” – meaning more recent – immigration countries go through more or less similar phases or stages within the migration cycle as did the “old” immigration countries two or three decades previously” (Drbohlav, 2012).

The point is that when applying this concept to Visegrad countries one would expect a gradual harmonizing of migration development, probably also including rather similar trajectories through which they reach the final stage. When formulating conclusions on the analysis of Poland, Czechia and Hungary (Slovakia was not included) in 2012, we arrived at the conclusion that “it is rather difficult to justify one single coherent transition model through which Central/Eastern European countries go from their emigration to immigration eras” (Drbohlav, 2012) and “the Czech Republic, followed by Hungary, are further along on the path to becoming mature immigration countries, while Poland lags significantly behind” (Drbohlav, 2012).

Now, after several years, the current migratory situation, including the impact of the military conflict in Ukraine, shows us that the migratory development of the various Visegrad countries (with Slovakia now included instead of Hungary) is distinguished by divergence rather than convergence. This concerns numbers of immigrants and emigrants to and from individual countries (with significant differences between the countries in absolute and relative terms!), the structure of inflows in terms of individual migratory statuses – mainly short-term versus long-term versus permanent residence and, finally, also the development of migration policies (very restrictive versus rather very liberal); for all these differences, see the text above. Some heterogeneity did exist before but it seems that despite assumptions of the concept (and perhaps also EU attempts) it is evolving over time.

One rather relevant question arises as to whether the current migratory European “mass mess” and its impact upon individual countries will contribute to further differentiation or, on the contrary, harmonization of the migratory development of the EU and Visegrad countries.

**Migrants’ strategies in terms of using short-term circular versus long-term or permanent migration**

There is another concept called the “S” curve pattern introduced by Martin, Taylor (1995) who (based on migratory realities in Western Europe, Singapore and the Gulf states) argue that over time there is a gradual transformation of circular migration into permanent immigration and settlement (see also Drbohlav, Janská, 2004). In fact, this “regularity” is called into question by several other concepts such as transnationalism (Vertovec, 2004;
Portes, Guarnizo, Landolt, 1999) or liquid migration (see Engbersen, Snel, de Boom, 2010), in which this transformation is not necessary. By contrast, these are based on permanent circulating\(^{376}\) (creating two “worlds” and identities composed of the country of destination and origin) or permanent changes of destinations (more pragmatic, flexible, and spatially more variable migratory behaviour).

In the light of these concepts, the results of our study present another puzzle. Whereas some realities correspond, at least to some extent, to the “S” curve model (see Czechia), other migration movements resemble the other two concepts more closely (see, e.g. the relatively “transnational immigration” to Poland, or the “liquid migration” of Poles to other EU countries). The puzzle is even more complex when war (forced) refugees, some of them with subsequent economic motivations (see above) come into play.

\(^{376}\) The transnationalism, however, has not to be necessarily tied to “permanent circulation”.

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Ukrainian Migration in Times of Crisis: Forced and Labour Mobility

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Results of the second round of the presidential elections of 2010 in the regions and districts of Ukraine. Source: Karácsonyi, D. el al. (2014).
The destruction of the school building in Nikishino, Ukraine 2015.
Source: UNHCR / Andrew McConnell.

Apartment building destroyed during War in Donbass. Lysychansk, Lugansk region, August 2014.
Source: Ліонкінگ Wikimedia Commons.
Liuba stands in front of her destroyed home in Nikishino, Ukraine 2015. Source: UNHCR / Andrew McConnell.

Residents walk along the main street of Nikishino village, in eastern Ukraine. Source: UNHCR / Andrew McConnell.
UNHCR distributes aid to people returning to Nikishino, Ukraine 2015. Source: UNHCR / Andrew McConnell.

Sergei, Katia and daughter Sofía, 3, return home after receiving aid from UNHCR in Nikishino, eastern Ukraine 2015. Source: UNHCR / Andrew McConnell.

Refugee camp in Khartsyzk, March 2015.
Source: Andrew Butko, Wikimedia Commons.