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SOCIO-ECONOMIC PRECONDITIONS OF THE RETURN OF REFUGEES TO UKRAINE IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD

Dmytro Lyashov

PhD (Econ.), Associate Professor,
Research Associate of The Institute for Research in International Assistance (IRIA)
at Akkon University
12099, 34-36 Colditzstraße, Berlin, Germany
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6712-6562>

Ihor Yurko

Postgraduate Student
Cherkasy State Technological University
18006, 460 Shevchenko Blvd, Cherkasy, Ukraine
<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-7704-9947>

Abstract. After the large-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, a large number of Ukrainian citizens left the country. Most of them prefer European countries whose governments are ready to assimilate Ukrainian refugees, while some migrants plan to return to their homeland.

The problem of the article is related to the fact that the migration of a significant number of Ukrainian citizens abroad has negatively affected both the domestic market - due to a significant drop in demand, and the labor market, particularly in the service sector, which was significantly affected during the war. In the future, some Ukrainian families may prefer reunification abroad instead of reunification in Ukraine. The purpose of this study is to determine the factors that influence and will influence the return of Ukrainian refugees after the end of the war. The research was conducted using the methods of systemic, comparative, sociological analysis in combination with cultural and behavioral methods.

It is established that despite the desire of many Ukrainians to return to Ukraine, they are predominantly influenced by the desire to give their children a stable life in a country that provides social protection, guarantees of employment and transparency, as well as opportunities for social development. At the beginning of Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine, those who left Ukraine were mainly representatives of small and medium-sized businesses, their relatives and friends. Until now, they have not returned due to the fact that hostilities could threaten their lives and health. Housing security motivated the return of a relatively small number of respondents, with the most important factor being the opportunity to work or manage a legal business organization. The specified socio-economic factors will predictably influence their decisions to return to Ukraine in the post-war period.

Keywords: migration policy, population mobility, employment, external labor migration, national security

Introduction

The large-scale occupation of Ukraine by Russian troops forced 7 892 000 citizens of Ukraine (as of the end of November 2022) to leave the country, of which, according to the UN, about 4.8 million are under temporary protection and about 90.0% are women with children (Flee or Hibernate, 2022). The explanatory note to the project of the Law of Ukraine "On the State Budget of Ukraine for 2023" stated that a negative balance of migration in 2022 could reach 9.43 million people (Explanatory note, 2023). Most citizens of Ukraine who left the country did so in the first weeks after large-scale Russian aggression. However, much of those who left returned in the summer of 2022. Subsequently, even massive rocket strikes of the aggressor on the objects of Ukrainian infrastructure did not cause a new powerful wave of migration. Most citizens decided to overwinter at home by refraining from migration abroad. Thus, 67.0% of respondents stated they

did not plan to go abroad, and 20.0% said they did not plan, but may change their mind if they remain without electricity or heating for a long time (Diagnosing the state, 2022).

It is clear that hopes for relatively rapid completion of the war are in vain and that it can last long. As a result, the fate of forced displaced persons has become a question that determines the prospects and nature of remigration. The understanding of the scale of future re-emigration is critically important in connection with the need to provide the reconstruction of industrial and infrastructure objects destroyed by enemy, as well as the growth of the domestic market for goods and services for further economic development. If remigration increases the demand for domestic products, it will stimulate production and improve the work of the service sector. Therefore, the identification of measures that can have a positive impact on the growth of resettlement is an important issue in ensuring national security.

Literature review

Some aspects of the chosen topic of research are covered in scientific works of E. Libanova (After the war, 2022; As a result, 2022; The war with Russia, 2022). This researcher repeatedly emphasizes the possibility of reunification of post-war Ukrainian families abroad in case of long-term fighting. I. Gerlach and O. Ryndzak (2022) emphasize that due to lack of security in Ukraine a significant number of Ukrainian citizens are forced to look for ways of socialization abroad. These scientists believe that successful migration policy of the host country can be a significant barrier to the return of Ukrainian citizens to their homeland; C. Greenaway, G. Fabreau and K. Pottie (2022) consider this policy in connection with the Russian-Ukrainian war and emphasize the importance of introducing three-year visas by the Canadian government to facilitate the socialization of refugees. The importance of state support for the socialization of Ukrainian refugees in Europe is referred to in the study of G. Bosse, and the role of foreign educational institutions in preventing remigration is described by L. Morrice (2022). In general, foreign researchers try to analyze the attractiveness of economic programs for the socialization of forced migrants, while domestic ones - the influence of the "factor of the native country". However, both researchers agree that in the conditions of war in Ukraine there is a struggle for labor resources, and this can be an important factor that influences the economic development of attracted countries.

The purpose of this study is to determine the socio-economic preconditions of the return of Ukrainian refugees after the end of the war.

Methods

The results of this study have been obtained by a combination of sociological and cultural-behavioral methods. Such a combination makes it possible to obtain verified information on the evaluation of prospects for returning home by Ukrainian refugees. Comparative analysis allows to show the attitude of different categories of refugees to return to Ukraine. The use of the method of investigation of actions allows to identify positions of EU and Ukrainian political leaders on the return of Ukrainian refugees and expected EU government measures for refugee assimilation. The method of system analysis allows to build a general picture of the migration crisis after the start of a full-scale invasion of Russia into Ukraine.

According to the Department of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the full-scale invasion of Russia into Ukraine has led to the largest migration crisis since the Second World War. In the first days after Russia's declaration of "special military operation" against Ukraine, Russian troops moved relatively quickly south, occupying Kherson and approaching Kharkiv and Sumy. These actions have led to an increase in the number of refugees, some of which moved to the western borders of Ukraine with the intention of abandoning Ukraine (Ukrainian attitudes, 2022). Only by March 3, 2022, a week after the Russian invasion, more than 1 million refugees (2.3% of the population of Ukraine) were forced to migrate to neighboring European countries (Ukrainian refugees, 2022). In total, according to the UN, more than 7.9 million citizens were

forced to leave the country (Diagnosing the state, 2022). At the same time, E. Libanova, the Director of M.V. Ptukha Institute for Demography and Social Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, believes that the figure of 7 million refugees from Ukraine, which is often used to evaluate the migration process, is significantly exaggerated. According to her, about 5 million citizens left Ukraine as a result of the war (Libanova, As a result, 2022).

External migration on this scale is a significant threat to the economy of the state. The loss of much of the labor force leads to a reduction in domestic demand, which negatively affects the stability of certain sectors of the economy and development of services (Zakharova, 2019). Large-scale migration in late February and early March reduced the total domestic demand by almost 25.0% (Levytska, 2022). The total number of jobs lost during the war is estimated at 4.8 million (On World Refugee Day, 2022). In addition, the outflow of the able-bodied population abroad will undoubtedly complicate the implementation of innovative projects and the restoration of production capacities destroyed as a result of the war, and can also be a significant argument against the restoration of some destroyed monofunctional settlements in the east and south of Ukraine. Ukraine is already experiencing a lack of medical staff, educators and service providers. Migration of a large number of children abroad will become more and more obvious in the future. Some of them may refuse to return home for safety or other reasons. As a result, recruitment to schools can be unbalanced, and the number of entrants may be reduced.

According to the authors of the study "Ukrainian refugees in Europe 2022" (Operational Data Portal, 2023), most children aged 14 years and older went to Poland (47.0%) and Germany (31.0%). 77.0% of respondents did not intend to migrate abroad before the Russian invasion, but 81.0% of respondents planned to return, and only 12.0% did not have such intention (Table 1). In contrast, the intentions of adults to return are somewhat different: the number of adults who want to return to Ukraine grows. Thus, almost 90.0% of adults intend to return, while 7.0% refuse to return. 21.0% of adults stated that they would be ready to return to Ukraine in all circumstances, while 15.0% would return if they found a job, 7.0% - if their home or village were rebuilt, 2.0% - if they found a new place of residence. Among the preconditions of return, 56.0% of the adult population called safe living conditions, 40% - the cessation of shelling and 25.0% - the end of the war as a precondition of return. At the same time, the youth were more open: 59.0% stated safe living conditions, 58% - the cessation of shelling and 39% - the end of the war as a precondition of return (Slieptsova, 2022). At the same time, according to a telephone survey of 2022, adult respondents had a more pronounced "feeling of home" (Ukraine's labor, 2022; Ukrainian attitudes, 2022), and, despite the threat of hostile shelling, the desire to return to normal life and established forms of economic activities remained obvious.

Table 1. Number of Ukrainian citizens who left Ukraine during 2022 to European countries

Country	thousands of people	Country	thousands of people	Country	thousands of people
Poland	1469,0	France	118,9	Lithuania	69,3
Germany	1008,9	Slovakia	99,3	Estonia	61,2
Czech Republic	455,7	Moldova	95,4	Belgium	58,5
Italy	171,5	Romania	87,8	Ireland	56,3
Spain	150,4	Austria	85,4	Portugal	52,9
United Kingdom	141,5	Netherlands	79,2	Sweden	47,6

Source: according to UNCCD as of November 8, 2022 (Operational Data Portal, 2023)

The decision to return to Ukraine in the summer and early fall of 2022 was supported by the success of the Ukrainian troops, which not only stopped the enemy, but also forced him to retreat in many key areas. This decision was also influenced by: the hope of stopping active fighting, lack of sufficient funds to stay abroad, difficulties of social adaptation at a new place of residence, desire to

reunite with the family and friends who remained in Ukraine, confidence that the war will not touch the central and western regions of Ukraine.

However, in the fall and winter of 2022 it became increasingly clear that the previously projected ending of the war was far from reality. It became increasingly clear that the warring parties were preparing for a protracted military campaign. Russian attacks on critical infrastructure caused significant damage in Ukraine, causing prolonged disruptions with electric, water and heat supply in many cities. In some cases, the destruction of thermal power plants and power lines did not allow energy companies to return to full operation, which led to mass power outages. The necessity for stabilization of Ukraine's energy system in the conditions of hostile attacks led to emergency and stabilized power outage. This situation has adversely affected the ability of employers and workers to work remotely and caused some changes in the labor market. Some employees can no longer work remotely. This is despite the fact that on the eve of large-scale missile shelling, about 40.0% of migrants could not return to previous work, even if they could work remotely (Ukrainian refugees, 2022). Therefore, for some migrants, the issue of employment abroad stood on the agenda at the end of summer and in the fall of 2022, and for many of them the lack of knowledge of a foreign language was the main obstacle. On the other hand, 60.0-70.0% of migrants had higher education (Walsh & Sumption, 2022) and could adapt to new working conditions abroad if desired. Therefore, in countries that accept the largest number of Ukrainian migrants (especially in Poland and Germany), relevant language courses were organized.

Some EU countries expressed interest in the socialization of Ukrainian migrants. This was connected with depopulation due to low birth rates, so they tried to solve this problem through external migration (Ukrainian attitudes, 2022). Germany has increased the help to Ukrainians running away from war to the highest level among EU countries, and Poland has increased the number of vacancies in sectors with the highest employment of Ukrainians.

Persons with appropriate level of professional and qualified education, knowledge of the latest information and communication technologies, proficiency in at least two foreign languages and high adaptability to the culture of the country of residence were most likely to be able to find a legal employment in the EU. Migrants with the first or second education got in another country also had greater opportunities for employment. For other migrants, official employment often meant low professional status and great difficulty with legal employment; knowledge of the EU labor market and the ability to adapt to long-term living conditions were insufficient for most Ukrainian migrants.

At the same time, in Poland, where workers' shortages in certain sectors of the economy were felt, it was Ukrainian migrants who saved the situation in the labor market: if in 2020-2021 the main reason for Ukrainians to work in Poland was the high wages, then in 2022 45.0% of respondents of the labor survey "Ukrainians who will work in Poland in 2022. How do you evaluate work and stay in Poland in 2022?" emphasized the importance of personal safety, 37.0% - the opportunity to earn income, 29.0% - the desire to provide a better life for their families. Much of the internally displaced Ukrainians in Poland (43.0%) noted that they would like to see how the situation in Ukraine will develop in the future. At the same time, 38.0% of respondents said they plan to study Polish. In addition, 21.0% of Ukrainian workers in Poland stated they would like to find their own home, about 20.0% of respondents said they intended to transport their families to Poland and 25.0% said they did not intend to return to Ukraine from Poland after the war, and almost as much answered that they have not yet decided on this issue. Thus, according to the labor survey, only about half of Ukrainian migrants planned to return to Ukraine by the end of 2022 (Operational Data Portal, 2023). This figure is close to the data of the Kiev International Institute of Sociology, which found that 42.9% of Ukrainians are ready to plan the future of their children and grandchildren in Ukraine (Ukraine's labor, 2022). However, even with about 50.0% of those who plan to return to post-war Ukraine by the end of 2022, this figure is lower than the expected one, published in the summer of 2022. For example, according to a survey of Razumkov Center, at the end of August 2022, almost 71.0% of respondents planned to return to Ukraine if the security situation after the war would improve (Attitudes, 2022).

The increase in the number of potential migrants can be explained by the influence of two main factors: the desire to protect children from war and the desire to ensure a higher standard of living in an EU country that guarantees social protection, security, business transparency and opportunities for social growth. This desire motivates them to learn the host country's language, send their children to local schools, and decide whether to buy or rent housing in the long term.

By that time, the tools used by European countries for the socialization of migrants, such as retraining them in professions that are in demand on the labor market, encouraging employers to hire migrants, creating programs for part-time and temporary employment, programs for the development of self-employment of migrants, as well as providing legal and informational support to their business, can become more and more effective (Ukrainian attitudes, 2022).

On the other hand, for some refugees, difficulties in adapting to living conditions in EU countries can become a decisive factor in making a decision to return to Ukraine. Despite a relatively long stay outside of Ukraine, not all migrants (even children) were able to adapt to new living conditions. Some Ukrainians are dissatisfied with working conditions, medical care and housing in the service sector. Those who planned to leave Ukraine even before the war adapted to these conditions. Their total number is about 10.0% of migrants (Walsh & Sumption, 2022).

Intense shelling of Ukraine's critical infrastructure in the fall and winter of 2022 did not cause a new wave of emigration from Ukraine. The majority of respondents did not want to leave the territory of Ukraine in the winter months. However, the duration of the war and the degree of destruction of settlements are likely to be among the most decisive factors for emigration from Ukraine. Optimistic forecasts regarding the end of the war in 2023 are unlikely to come true by the beginning of 2024, which will significantly affect the desire of Ukrainians to return home in 2023. According to the results of the survey, which took place on October 8-9, 2022, by experts of the social group "Rating" of those Ukrainians, who through the war left the border of Ukraine, it was established that 45.0% of respondents were ready to return home only after the war, 21.0% of respondents planned to do this in the near future and 15.0% of respondents did not have a positive answer to the question of the probability and readiness of their return to Ukraine at all (Operational Data Portal, 2023). Unfortunately, every extra day of the war leads to a reduction in those who want to return.

Ukrainian legislation does not resolve all issues that may arise in the context of large-scale re-emigration. First of all, this concerns the preconditions for the reconstruction of destroyed housing and the provision of temporary housing for those returning to Ukraine. It is also necessary to determine the preconditions for the restoration of destroyed commercial premises, including procedures for compensation of losses to entrepreneurs. Blaming the offending state does not guarantee immediate compensation or reparations. Therefore, it is important that returnees are given the right to participate in the local distribution of funds allocated by foreign partners for the reconstruction of Ukraine. This is also important given that a significant part of returnees may prefer to live in areas less affected by the war. This is likely to lead to significant changes in the structure of population resettlement, and this is important to consider when providing assistance and compensation to returnees.

At the beginning of the large-scale Russian invasion, mostly representatives of small and medium-sized businesses and/or their relatives and friends left Ukraine. A significant part of migrants had enough funds to live abroad for a certain time. At the same time, many of them were enterprising citizens who could adapt to different business environments, and the general level of education of migrants was quite high, which made it easier for them to find work if they were willing to learn the language of another country.

In most cases, migrants reduce their savings while living abroad and are reluctant to return because of the potential threat to their lives and health during the war. Relatively few respondents indicated the availability of housing as a determining factor in the decision to return. The possibility of free economic activity after the end of the war is more important. According to the correspondents who

conducted interviews with returning Ukrainian citizens, the opportunity to work in or manage a business organization was the main motivation for returning to Ukraine. At the same time, slightly better working conditions, especially in Poland, attract those who refuse to return to Ukraine. Thus, in order to encourage business representatives to return, Ukraine needs to provide an attractive investment climate and stable economic development. Providing these conditions can be an important incentive for those who plan to return in the future, but have not yet decided when exactly.

Ukrainian scientists somewhat overestimate the influence of "motherland consciousness" as a determining factor of remigration. Foreign scientists also tend to overestimate the possibility of earning more in the EU than in Ukraine as a determining factor in the decision not to return.

The cessation of military operations will be an important factor that will determine the pace of remigration. In the spring of 2022, the majority of respondents wanted to return to Ukraine as soon as possible (perhaps by May 9), but over time, more and more respondents indicated that they would be forced to stay abroad for permanent residence. The number of respondents who will be forced to stay abroad for permanent residence is growing. A change of mood was seen in the summer of 2022 and became dominant in the fall. At this moment, a significant part of Ukrainian migrants who planned to return to Ukraine have already done so, and the majority of those who remained abroad are women with children, for whom the issue of security as a precondition for return has become dominant. Realizing that they would have to stay outside of Ukraine for an indefinite period, Ukrainian migrants increasingly began to consider the possibility of engaging in economic activities outside their native country. Due to the duration and nature of the war (rocket attacks on the civilian population), migrants realized the difficulty of continuing economic activities in the Ukrainian private sector (On World Refugee Day, 2022).

Those who returned as entrepreneurs faced a conflict with the local Ukrainian authorities, which tried to focus such citizens on their interests. The presence of enterprising businessmen helps to stimulate production, increase entrepreneurial activities and create new jobs in the regions, which in turn stimulates demand and becomes a driving force for the development of production. Therefore, the development and implementation of regional business support programs can become an important factor in ensuring remigration. Such programs include both quantitative and qualitative elements. Quantitative elements include increased benefits for private enterprises, while qualitative elements include tax deferrals and payments set by local authorities for specific types of business activity. The issue of allocating land plots for business projects is becoming quite serious. The impossibility of resuming economic activities in occupied or war-torn territories in the near future (including due to the need for demining) will increase the demand for the allocation of land plots in territories where there is no direct conflict, energy infrastructure has been preserved after enemy shelling, and intact transport routes are available. Therefore, it is important for local authorities to restore the road network as soon as possible. The restoration of the road network can be an important factor for the development of business in the region, as well as an incentive for remigration, since the restoration of logistics will allow a quick recovery of the business environment.

Conclusions

After the end of the war, local authorities in Ukraine could encourage internally displaced persons to decide for themselves where to live, as public sector workers are prohibited from working in remote areas. At the same time, such decisions should not be made in wartime, as they may have a negative impact on future remigration. It is also important to preserve the possibility of distance learning in Ukrainian higher education institutions. The desire to obtain a relevant diploma can become a decisive factor when choosing a permanent place of residence in the future. The vast majority of Ukrainian migrants in the EU do not consider the liberation of their homeland from occupation as a precondition for returning to Ukraine, since for many of them the cessation

of military operations is sufficient. For a significant number of internally displaced persons, participation in the post-war reconstruction and ensuring the economic recovery of Ukraine is important. Awareness of the need for foreign aid for the reconstruction of destroyed Ukrainian cities and villages may also be important for returnees from the point of view of their own participation in the distribution of funds allocated for local reconstruction. In this case, entrepreneurial experience can help to improve the efficiency of local resource use.

The restoration of Ukraine is a prerequisite for stability and peace in Europe. Based on the international experience of reconstruction, we believe that the post-war reconstruction phase should be as effective as possible and generate trust in society and international sponsors, especially as a promising path to EU membership. Opponents believe that there are risks on this path, such as corruption, inconsistency in reforms and harmonization of legislation. The scale of the recovery agenda and the possibilities of modern digital technologies create a favorable basis for creative solutions in creating and solving unique challenges. The dynamics of military operations at the front in recent months (including successful actions of Ukrainian forces on the contact line) confirms the main hypothesis regarding the nature of Ukraine's post-war functioning, namely: Ukraine retains existing strong state and social institutions, but its economic system and state budget are heavily burdened. Therefore, the state structures of Ukraine should closely monitor the active involvement of international partners and the implementation of the new Marshall Plan, the realistic prospect of membership in the EU, the legal base of Ukraine, which must be harmonized with the EU legislation in order to ensure the rule of law, a low level of corruption, strong democracy, modern and reliable economic system.

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Conflict of interest

None.

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СОЦІАЛЬНО-ЕКОНОМІЧНІ ПЕРЕДУМОВИ ПОВЕРНЕННЯ БІЖЕНЦІВ В УКРАЇНУ В ПОВОЄННИЙ ПЕРІОД

Дмитро Олександрович Ляшов

кандидат економічних наук, доцент,
науковий співробітник Інституту досліджень міжнародної допомоги (IRIA)
при Університеті Аккон
12099, Colditzstraße, 34-36, Berlin, Germany
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6712-6562>

Ігор Сергійович Юрко

аспірант PhD
Черкаський державний технологічний університет
18006, б-р Шевченка, 460, м. Черкаси, Україна
<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-7704-9947>

Анотація. Після широкомасштабного вторгнення росії в Україну велика кількість громадян України покинула країну. Більшість із них надають перевагу європейським країнам, уряди яких готові асимілювати українських біженців, тоді як частина мігрантів планує повернутися на батьківщину. Проблематика статті пов'язана з тим, що міграція значної кількості громадян України за кордон негативно вплинула як на внутрішній ринок – через значне падіння попиту, так і на ринок праці, зокрема у сфері послуг, який суттєво постраждав під час війни. У майбутньому деякі українські родини можуть надати перевагу возз'єднанню за кордоном замість возз'єднання в Україні. Метою цього дослідження є визначення факторів, що впливають і впливатимуть на повернення українських біженців після закінчення війни. Дослідження проводилося з використанням методів системного, порівняльного, соціологічного аналізу в поєднанні з культурними та поведінковими методами. Встановлено, що, незважаючи на бажання багатьох українців повернутися в Україну, на них чинить переважний вплив прагнення дати своїм дітям стабільне життя в країні, яка забезпечує соціальний захист, гарантії зайнятості та прозорості, а також можливості для соціального розвитку. На початку широкомасштабного вторгнення росії в Україну ті, хто виїхав з України, були переважно представниками малого та середнього бізнесу, їхніми родичами та друзями. Досі вони не повернулися через те, що воєнні дії могли загрожувати їхньому життю та здоров'ю. Житлова безпека мотивувала повернення відносно невеликої кількості респондентів; найважливішим фактором була можливість працювати або керувати легальною бізнес-організацією. Зазначені соціально-економічні чинники прогнозовано впливатимуть і на їхні рішення щодо повернення в Україну у повоєнний період.

Ключові слова: міграційна політика, мобільність населення, зайнятість, зовнішня трудова міграція, національна безпека