

MYTHS AND FACTS ON UKRAINIAN LABOUR MIGRATION TO THE VISEGRAD GROUP



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1. UKRAINIAN LABOUR MIGRATION AND ITS IMAGE IN MEDIA

Ukraine during its history was both a country of origin and transit/destination for migrants. The large-scale emigration of Ukrainians over the past 150 years is evident from the numerous developed diasporas in Canada, the United States, Argentina and also neighboring countries of Ukraine. At the same time, during the Soviet Union, although the external borders were closed for free movement, residents of other Soviet republics actively moved to the territory of Ukraine. As a result, according to the UN, the number of immigrants (people born outside the country) in Ukraine ranged from 6.8 million in 1990 to 4.8 million in 2017¹, so, in fact, every 9th person was a migrant.

Despite this, since most of these immigrants are well-integrated and have obtained citizenships, the topic of migration in Ukraine is not popular, often remaining within the framework of right-wing radical discourse².

Instead, the issue that is much more often examined by the media and politicians, is the significantly high level of external labour migration of Ukrainians, which seriously affects the economic development of the entire country. According to a 2018 poll, "mass migration of Ukrainian citizens abroad" was identified as one of the main threats to the country by 59% of the respondents³.

Currently there are discussions in Ukraine about the "fifth wave" of migration, which continues the large-scale migration processes occurring between the 19th and early 21st centuries⁴. Millions of people are involved in labour migration. In 2018, according to the National Bank of Ukraine, the volume of private transfers from abroad increased to 11.6 billion dollars, which significantly exceeds the volume of foreign direct investment, and by the end of 2019 the transfers are expected to reach 12.2 billion⁵. In the latest report on Ukraine, the International Monetary Fund called labour migration one of the reasons for rising wages⁶ (due to competition with foreign employers, Ukrainians are forced to raise the wages as well).

Naturally, such a noticeable phenomenon becomes the object of the populist rhetoric, manipulations and false interpretations. The situation is complicated by the lack of systematic collection of statistical data and clearly articulated state policy on labour migration.

The peculiarity of the Ukrainian situation is, albeit less significant than before, the presence of Russian media⁷, which are often deliberately manipulating data on labour migration, in order to convince consumers of the worsening economic, demographic and political situation in Ukraine.

Together, these factors lead to the spread of distorted or completely false data on labour migration, which, on its part, affects the formation of public opinion and political agenda. Available data on labour migration from Ukraine in general and to the countries of Visegrad Group (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic) in particular will be provided below. Also, examples of false or

¹ UN data about the migrants <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates17.asp>

² Deutsche Welle <http://tinyurl.com/yxjgltsx>

³ <http://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/354a0dde7bc4bd5e6fa291b0bd1dc997.html>

⁴ <http://day.kyiv.ua/uk/blog/polityka/pyata-hvylya>

⁵ <https://news.finance.ua/ua/news/-/443543/mbu-prognozuye-zrostannya-perekaziv-trudovyh-migrativ-v-ukrayinu>

⁶ <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2019/01/08/Ukraine-Request-for-Stand-By-Arrangement-and-Cancellation-of-Arrangement-Under-the-Extended-46499>

⁷ <https://detector.media/infospace/article/164308/2019-03-21-dzherela-informatsii-mediagramotnist-i-rosiiska-propaganda-rezultati-vseukrainskogo-opituvannya-gromadskoi-dumki>

questionable statements on labour migration that are disseminated by both Ukrainian media and officials or politicians will be examined, as well as examples of those topics that are probably disproportionately covered in Ukrainian media landscape.

1.1. FAQ about labour migration

Who are the labour migrants?

According to the UN definition, "migrant worker" is "a person who has been, is, or is intending to be engaged in paid activities in a country of which he is not a citizen"⁸. An important nuance of this definition is the temporal continuity - it includes not only those who now work abroad, but also those who had such experience in the past⁹. There are several models of labour migration:

- permanent (departure without return)
- reversed (one-way departure for a long term, for example, a year, and then return)
- circular (regular departure and return, including seasonal work)
- border-related (when a person travels to work abroad, and returns home every day, or at least weekly)

Circular migration is currently the most typical for Ukraine¹⁰.

How many Ukrainian citizens work abroad?

The exact number is *unknown*. All available versions contain research errors, or are approximate, incomplete, and speculative. At the same time, some of them are more substantiated than others, because they are based on certain expertise, access to data, and evaluation methodology.

Each of the following estimations has its own methodological and other limitations that need to be taken into account, when using this data.

The first proposed figure of **1.3 million** comes from the State Statistics Office (SSO) and is based on a survey of 20 thousand households conducted in 2017, with extrapolation to the entire population (according to the International Labour Organization's methodology). However, it covers only those, who traveled for a short period or long-term migrants, who have a family in Ukraine. Those, who left with the family or did not have families in Ukraine, were not in the sample group, therefore this figure is lower than the real number. Similar studies were conducted in 2008 and 2012, after which it is possible to trace the dynamics of labour migration from Ukraine. For example, compared to 2008, the number of migrant workers has decreased.

There is also an estimate that from the National Bank that **5-8% of the workforce** are labour migrants, but it is very approximate. Based on the SSO data on the number of able-bodied population (17.296 million)¹¹, it can be estimated that there are **865 thousand - 1.384 million labour migrants**.

⁸ Ukrainian-English dictionary of international terminology in the field of migration http://iom.org.ua/sites/default/files/iom_migration_glossary_color_block_press.pdf

⁹ At the same time, the question remains as far as the scope of this definition extends. Is a person, who had experience of labour migration three, five or ten years ago, a migrant worker or not? In Ukraine, the State Statistics Service limits the definition of labour migration to a period of 2.5 years for its research.

¹⁰ Ukrainian migration during the crisis: forced and labour mobility <https://europewb.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Migr-mobility-ukr.pdf>

¹¹ Economic activity of the population by sex, geographical location and age group in 2018 <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>

According to the conclusion of the study of the Center for Economic Strategy (CES) in 2018, the actual figure for migrant workers was **4 million people**. It is based on the SSO data, data on border traffic and expert assessments. When using these data, it is important to remember that out of 4,6 millions, **only 2,6-2,7 are abroad at the same time** (according to the CES).

Table 1. Estimates of the number of migrant workers from Ukraine

| <i>Number of migrant workers from Ukraine</i> | <i>Institution</i> | <i>Notes</i> | <i>Links</i> |
|--|---|--|---|
| 1,3 millions | State Statistics Office (SSO) | Those, who traveled abroad for the purpose of employment at least once in the past 2.5 years | http://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_u/2017/bl/12/bl_zt_m_2017.zip |
| 5-8% of the workforce | National Bank of Ukraine | Approximately 865 thousand - 1.384 million people | https://tinyurl.com/y3zlkjma |
| 4 millions | Center for Economic Strategy (CES) | Only 2,6-2,7 are abroad at the same time | https://ces.org.ua/migration/ |
| 2-3 millions | International Monetary Fund | | https://tinyurl.com/y4sy65lg |
| Overall assessment of the number of migrants from Ukraine | | | |
| 6,5 millions | State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (SBGSU) | "Pure departure" of Ukrainian citizens abroad from 2002 to 2018 (the number of Ukrainian citizens leaving with the number of entries subtracted) | SBGSU data on border crossings |
| 5 millions (4,964) | The UN | Based on official data of member countries on the number of citizens of Ukraine or born in Ukraine, takes into account also the period before 1991 | https://tinyurl.com/y65cdyxc |

The International Monetary Fund, in its report on Ukraine in January 2019, estimated the number of Ukrainian labour migrants at **2-3 million**. Although no methodological grounds for this assessment were published, it could be used in view of the credibility of the institution.

According to the State Border Guard Service, from 2002 to 2018, **6.5 million** Ukrainian citizens left and did not return to Ukraine. This indicator takes into account not only labour migration, but also permanent emigration, which is caused by non-economic factors. There may be errors in the calculation for 2014-2015, when Ukraine did not control a significant section of the border with Russia due of the military conflict. Also, in order to use this data, it is important to take into account that the "pure departure" of Ukrainian citizens does not equal the decrease in the population, because during this period foreigners entered and stayed in Ukraine.

At the same time, the data of "pure departure" over the past two years show that *the visa-free regime and the strengthening of labour migration did not lead to a significant increase in permanent migration*. In 2017, 150 thousand people left and did not return to Ukraine, and 200

thousand – in 2018. For comparison, during 2009-2014, about half a million people on average did not return each year¹².

The UN estimates that the number of emigrants of Ukrainian descent in the world reached **almost 5 million** by 2017. This is the sum of the data of the official statistics of the UN member states on the number of Ukraine citizens or citizens of other countries, born in Ukraine. This data include not only migrant workers, but also citizens, who left Ukraine before 1991.

A poll, conducted by Kyiv International Institute of Sociology in 2018 about the migration tendencies, showed that **7% of the population** of Ukraine are going to go abroad for the next 6 months for a long time¹³, but only 62% of that number took any steps to do so. This figure may include both those, who have never left, and those, who already have experience of labour migration, and plan to repeat it.

Also, to have an idea of the number of migrant workers from Ukraine in some countries, one can refer to the statistics of Eurostat about the number of residence permits issued to Ukrainians for the purpose of employment¹⁴ or statistics of the Visegrad countries. At the same time, one should keep in mind that this data is also incomplete - for example, in Poland or Hungary, temporary employment without a work permit is possible. Also, this data does not take illegal workers into account.

Which countries do the Ukrainian labour migrants go to?

The State Statistics Office's above-mentioned study showed that Poland was the main destination for Ukrainian labour migrants with 38.9%, while only 26.3% of migrant workers left for Russia in 2015-2017 (43.2% during the earlier periods). However, it should be kept in mind that research in 2017 was not conducted in the Crimea and in the occupied territories of the Donbas, which could also affect the reduction of the share of migration to Russia. The proportion of migrants traveling to Italy, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Portugal is also high.

According to Eurostat, in 2017 Ukrainians received the highest number of first-time residence permits (the sum of permits for employment, education and family reasons) in Poland (585.4 thousand), the Czech Republic (18.9 thousand), Hungary (7.8 thousand), as well as in Italy, Germany, Slovakia, Spain and Britain. Among the polled Ukrainians, who are planning to leave, the leaders of the migration destination are Poland, Czech Republic and Germany. Hungary was also in the list of top ten countries¹⁵.

Which regions and locations do people migrate the most from?

Traditionally, labour migration is associated with the western part of Ukraine. According to a SSO study, in 2017, 69% of labour migrants were from the West. However, the percentage of migrants from the Center and the South increased by 9% compared to the previous survey in 2012. The distribution of migrants from urban settlements and rural areas was almost equal. The SSO study also analyzes the gender-age structure of Ukrainian labour migrants, the average time spent abroad, migration intentions, etc¹⁶.

¹² SBGSU data on border crossings

¹³ <https://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=765&page=1>

¹⁴ In 2017, Ukrainians received 580 thousand first-time employment permits in the EU
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/9333446/3-25102018-AP-EN.pdf/3fa5fa53-e076-4a5f-8bb5-a8075f639167>

¹⁵ <https://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=765&page=1>

¹⁶ External labour migration of the population (based on the results of a sample survey)
http://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_u/2017/bl/12/bl_ztm_2017.zip

What are the effects of labour migration?

In the above-mentioned study of CES, the effects of labour migration are divided in quality into positive and negative. In the sphere of influence - on economic, social, and human capital.

Table 2. Examples of the effects of labour migration¹⁷

| <i>Spheres of influence</i> | <i>Positive effects</i> | <i>Negative effects</i> |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Economy | Money transfers Investments Reduction of unemployment | Pressure on the social system Labour market deficit |
| Human capital | Acquiring new knowledge and skills Motivation for the education for those, who stayed | Loss of the human capital |
| Society | Improvement of quality of life | Changes in families ("Euro-orphans" etc.) |

1.2. Labour migration and migrant workers in Ukrainian media

Myths, stereotypes, and their debunking

False or distorted judgments relate mainly to three things:

- the number of migrant workers;
- the type of migration. For example, information about the diaspora is provided as information about migrant workers;
- the time period for which the data is given. Information on departure for a longer period of time is given as a shorter one, for example, data on departure from Ukraine for 27 years is provided as data for the period after 2014.

A typical mistake is the use of terms and synonyms that distort perception of information, for example, the term "left" for the designation of temporary labour migration or "ready to migrate" in the interpretation of sociological surveys, which actually questioned respondents on "thinking about departure" or "desiring to leave"¹⁸.

There are several approaches to labour migration in political rhetoric. Pro-Russian politicians, or representatives of the former government, who left Ukraine after the Revolution of Dignity, often turn to the issue of labour migration in order to show the negative effects of the actions of the current authorities. Similarly, labour migration is used by the opposition in order to criticize the authorities. Another type of manipulation, mainly employed by Russian and pro-Russian media/speakers, is the exaggeration of poor and humiliating working conditions for Ukrainian migrants (the presentation of all migration as a low-skilled, describing "humiliating" and "dirty" types of work, such as "cleaning the toilet"¹⁹).

¹⁷ Full table - CES, How many Ukrainians went abroad and what to do with it, p. 6 <https://ces.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Migration-note.pdf>

¹⁸ <https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-40814954>

¹⁹ <https://www.obozrevatel.com/ukr/politics/43289-soratnik-yanukovicha-zayaviv-scho-ukraintsi-potribni-es-tilki-schob-miti-unitazi.htm>

Examples of manipulations and distortions

Questionable claim: *Minister of social policy Andriy Reva stated that 3.2 million Ukrainians are working abroad and 9 million are involved in seasonal labour migration, and the media report that up to 12 million Ukrainians work abroad.*²⁰

Fact: The number of people of working age in Ukraine as of January 1, 2018²¹, according to the State Statistics Service, amounted to 28.7 million, that is, if one comes from a figure of 9 or 12 million, it turns out that every third or almost every second employee is a migrant worker, which is extremely unlikely.

This data contradicts all the above-mentioned data from the State Statistics Office, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, expert and research estimates of the volumes of labour migration. It is also important that the Minister does not indicate a period of time during which 9 million people were "involved in seasonal labour migration".

Questionable claim: *Minister of foreign affairs Pavlo Klimkin said that in a year more than 1 million people left Ukraine, with 100 thousand people leaving per month*

Fact: It is not clear here what is meant by the word "leaving" - these are migrant workers who are planning to return, students, or those who go to permanent residence. However, the term "leaving" is semantically perceived as irreversible departure. Similarly, the minister does not indicate the source of data. At the same time, according to the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, "net departure" from 2002 to 2018 amounted to 6.5 million people, in 2018 - 200 thousand people.

False claim: *Since 2014, 8 million people have left Ukraine, states a little-known Russian media with a reference to the Facebook post of former Prime Minister of Ukraine Mykola Azarov, who, in turn, refers to the well-known study of Expat Insider.*²²

Fact: This statement combines several types of manipulations at once. The statement about 2014 in the title is invented by the authors, it was not present in the quoted Azarov's post. This is a classic time-frame manipulation, but not the only one. Expat Insider, to which Azarov refers, is a well-known project of the Inter Nations organization that deals with research on migration and its conditions in the world, and indeed in 2015 published a study "Ukrainians Abroad" on Ukrainian migration. However, as reported by the organization at the request of a "Europe without barriers"²³, it has never been involved in quantitative research, and it did not provide to the number of emigrants in different countries. False information about 8 million emigrants, with Expat Insider citation, appeared in Ukrainian media in November 2017 and was reprinted by a number of publications with reference to the respectable news-agency Interfax-Ukraine²⁴.

False claim: *False claim: Ukraine has a positive migration balance. In recent years, there are 11-14 thousand more migrants coming to Ukraine than those leaving*²⁵

Fact: SSO official data on the positive migration balance is based on data on registration of place of residence in regional registries. However, many Ukrainian citizens travel abroad without changing their place of registration. At the same time, foreigners, who come to Ukraine for study or

²⁰ <https://www.depo.ua/ukr/life/na-zarobitki-yizdit-9-mln-ukrayinciv-reva-20181222890315>

²¹ http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_u/2018/zb/07/zb_rpu2018xl.pdf

²² <http://infocenter-odessa.com/index.php?newsid=50686>

²³ <https://www.internations.org/expat-insider/2015/ukrainians-abroad>

²⁴ <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/rus/news/2017/11/30/7074407/>

²⁵ https://zn.ua/UKRAINE/saldo-migracii-v-ukraine-polozhitelnoe-ekspert-311184_.html

work, are required to register for a residence permit, therefore the given balance of migration does not reflect the real state of things. At the same time, by 2010, the "pure entrance" of foreigners significantly exceeded the departure of Ukrainian citizens.

Here is another statement that is not false or distorted, but is still worth mentioning in this section, as it is part of the discourse of exaggerating the scope of labour migration.

"**Bleeding**" is the author's metaphor of Julia Mostova and Sergei Rachmanin ("Dzerkalo Tyzhnya"), which, after the publication of the article with the same title²⁶ in January 2018, became a "commonplace" in media and had a great deal of resonance - according to the study, conducted "in hot pursuit" of the publication, the article was referenced 400 times in three days, and its individual claims had the outreach of millions of contacts with the audience. Despite the serious analytical component (the article is based on the sociological data of a specially conducted survey), this text was criticized for the incorrect use of data and their adjustment under the pre-set concept, excessive suggestion (darkening the tone), and the media that were quoting it - for data distortion and accent on negative aspects for the sake of click-baiting (1²⁷, 2²⁸).

Also in the titles and articles of online media, as well as in political rhetoric, a number of popular labour migration clichés are used actively, which have a mostly negative tone: "**brain drain**", "**outflow of labour**", "**employment hunger**"²⁹.

Labour migration - what does media miss?

Even though there is a lot of rhetoric and analytics in Ukrainian media on the issue of labour migration, both of high quality and also false or manipulative, many other important topics appear to be poorly represented in the media.³⁰

For example, there is practically no analytics on the topic of interstate agreements and treaties on **labour and social security regulation** (wages, social guarantees, seniority, pensions), which is an important topic for all migrant workers and their relatives.

There is little talk in the media about **legal employment and its rules, the rights of hired help** in other states. Civil society organizations that work in the area of combating human trafficking and employment, are the most frequent disseminators of this information³¹, but the media lack concrete information on this subject, especially in Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.

In Ukraine, the **Law "On Foreign Labour Migration"** has been active for three years, and the **Action Plan on ensuring the reintegration into the society of labour migrants and members of their families**³² has been active for two years. Both offer a number of measures to regulate the processes of labour migration, in particular regarding data collection (a reminder: nobody knows exactly how many labour migrants Ukraine has); mechanisms for informing labour migrants about employment opportunities and their rights; reintegration of returning migrant workers.

²⁶ https://dt.ua/internal/krovotecha-chomu-ukrayinci-pokidayut-svoyu-krayinu-267394_.html

²⁷ <https://voxukraine.org/uk/krovotecha-diagnoz-bez-analizu-retsenziya-sotsiologa-na-rezonansnu-stattyu-dzerkala-tizhnya/>

²⁸ <http://noksfishes.info/landing/mediareponsibility.html>

²⁹ <http://jrnل.nau.edu.ua/index.php/go/article/view/13294/18435>

³⁰ Assessment of the level of representation of a topic is subjective, since in the framework of this study it was not possible to apply quantitative methods

³¹ https://europewb.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/EwB_Brochure4_2017-1.pdf

³² <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/ua/npas/249919575>

Monitoring of the implementation of this law has a significant information potential - both at the central and at the local levels. For example, in 2017, "Europe without Barriers" made inquiries about the compliance with the provisions of this Law about regional and district administrations in six regions of the West and the South, and found that in none of them the local authorities implemented reintegration measures³³.

The **economic and social effects of external labour migration** are much deeper than currency transfers, brain drain and "blood-letting", but many of them end up outside the focus of journalists, which is true both for positive and negative effects (*see Effects of Labour Migration*)

Examples and analysis of **policies, aimed at minimizing the negative effects of labour migration and the development of positive ones** are practically absent in the Ukrainian media landscape. A number of interesting recommendations on the economic and organizational mechanisms for the reintegration of migrants can be found in the aforementioned "Bleeding " article and the CES study.

Another dimension is the media coverage of labour migration not as an abstract phenomenon, but as **personal stories**. There are negative stories related to victims of trafficking, poor working conditions of migrant workers³⁴, as well as positive or neutral ones that try to counter stereotypes, for example, a photo project on Ukrainian migrants in Poland, which broadens the standard representation of them as a "construction workers" and "cleaners"³⁵. However, negative stories often merely point out the fact of fraud or exploitation, without explaining the reasons or the circumstances and also the algorithms of avoiding such situations, while the positive ones are limited to success stories in another country, and rarely speak of, for example, a migrant investor, who had earned some money, returned home and started their own business.

Filling these gaps could help to establish evidence-based understanding and approaches to the phenomenon of labour migration to minimize its negative effects and increase positive ones.

So far, the **main problem of coverage of Ukrainian labour migration** is the problem of assessment, both in the sense of value (positive or negative), and in quantitative/qualitative one (how many Ukrainian citizens are migrant workers, in which countries they work, how long they spend there, how much money they earn, their age, education and gender distribution, etc.). Therefore, under the conditions of uncertainty and lack of data, in order to avoid the dissemination of false information, fair and well-founded coverage of labour migration should include **finding reliable sources and an intensive examination of all public statements on this topic**, as well as an **intensive search for new topics and approaches** that would allow to depart from the patterns that are already formed.

Pavlo Kravchuk, NGO "Europe without barriers", Ukraine

³³ Europe without barriers. Audit of the regional reforms <https://europewb.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Zvit-ostatochnyj.pdf>

³⁴ <https://ukr.segodnya.ua/ukraine/na-zarabotki-v-rabstvo-polsha-odin-iz-liderov-evropy-po-torgovle-lyudmi-1157289.html>

³⁵ <https://birdinflight.com/ru/vdohnovlenie/fotoproect/20180710-ukranians-in-poland.html>

2. MYTHS AND STEREOTYPES ABOUT UKRAINIAN LABOUR MIGRATION IN POLAND

2.1. Review of political and social context

Migration of Ukrainians to Poland started with collapse of the Soviet Union and intensified since 2014 with occupation of Crimea and with beginning of Russian-Ukrainian war in Donbass that led to the economic crisis in Ukraine. It has caused a growing demand among Ukrainians for better-paid jobs that coincided with relatively easy access to the Polish labour market for temporary workers, along with demand for workers from Polish employers and the closeness of the border. Ukrainians became the main group of migrants in Poland. Majority of them are the temporary migrant workers, who are employed through temporary work agencies (TWA), unofficial intermediaries or directly in the following sectors: manufacturing, construction, agriculture, services. However, the number of highly qualified Ukrainian workers constantly increases along with the number of Ukrainian students and alumni³⁶. Highly skilled Ukrainians work in diverse segments of economy such as: IT, academia, logistics, medicine, business, etc.

There were some crucial developments in Poland in terms of migrations policy and attitude of political leaders to migrants. 2015 was the year of presidential and parliamentary elections in Poland, which coincided with the EU migration crisis due to the war in Syria. Presently ruling party, "Law and Justice", had used the anti-refugee rhetoric in its campaign and contributed to creation of the negative attitude towards refugees in particular and migrants in general. After coming to power, this party continues the anti-refugees rhetoric, using Ukrainian migrants as an excuse for not accepting refugees allocated to Poland. Polish politicians claim that Poland accepted from 1 to 2 million of Ukrainian refugees³⁷, and, thus, cannot accept refugees from Syria. Moreover, Poland terminated *Migration Policy of Poland*³⁸, claiming that there is a need in new policy valid for present times. This policy, according to the state authorities, is under development, but there is no foreseen date of its announcement³⁹. Government also has terminated the distribution of European funds for integration of migrants among the non-governmental organizations. These funds were distributed among local governors, but only few civic organizations were invited to cooperate into implementation of the integration activities.

The rhetoric of the Polish government and ruling party about the Ukrainian migration depends on what branch of power and what ministry politicians represent. In general, the rhetoric is dual. On the one hand, politicians claim that Poland accepted 1 or 2 million of Ukrainian refugees (or, in a later version, of Ukrainian economic migrants), but on the other hand, politicians working for the ministries dealing with labour market, development and economy claim that Poland needs even more Ukrainian migrants on the labour market. Moreover, there is a need to bring workers not only from Ukraine, but also from India, Bangladesh and other Asian countries. Presently, one can note that despite the anti-immigrant rhetoric of political leaders, and, even, dismissal of Paweł Choraży⁴⁰, the vice-Minister of Ministry of Investment and Development for acknowledging the

³⁶ Iza Chmielewska, Grzegorz Dobroczyk, Adam Panuciak, Obywatele Ukrainy pracujący w Polsce – raport z badania. Warsaw 2017. https://www.nbp.pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci_2018/obywatele-Ukrainy-pracujacy-w-Polsce-raport.pdf

³⁷ <http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,114871,19504967,milion-uchodzcow-z-ukrainy-liczby-mowia-zupelnie-co-innego.html>

³⁸ <https://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/blaszczak-rzad-uniewaznil-dokument-w-sprawie-polityki-migracyjnej,725200.html>

³⁹ Witold Klaus, Ewa Ostaszewska-Żuk, Marta Szczepanik, Jak wstrzymanie FAMI wpłynęło na organizacje wspierające cudzoziemców? Warsaw 2017. https://interwencjaprawna.pl/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/raport_po-FAMI_net.pdf

⁴⁰ <http://wyborcza.pl/7,75398,23921340,dymisja-wiceministra-inwestycji-i-rozwoju-bo-uznal-imigracje.html>

need in migrants also from Asian countries, Poland brings migrants from Asian countries. Poland has the most open access to the labour market in EU, especially to the temporary work for the citizens of the Eastern Partnership countries and Ukrainians are the main group that uses such opportunity to work in Poland and as an access to EU.

The specific issue in terms of attitude to Ukraine and Ukrainians in Poland is that the ruling party brought the question of the historical memory about Polish-Ukrainian conflicts during the WWII into the present day politics. Polish politicians also claim about overpowering nationalism in present-day Ukraine having caused tensions between two countries. The Minister of Foreign Affairs Witold Waszczykowski, for instance, similarly to other politicians claimed that “Ukraine with Bandera will not join the EU⁴¹.” Being distributed by the means of public media and silent approval of the right wing nationalist movements in Poland with their anti-migrants and anti-Ukrainian slogans such claims cause the decrease of Poles’ sympathy of towards other nationals in Poland. The level of sympathy towards Ukrainians decreased by 20% comparing to 2013⁴². Police statistics and research show increase of hate speech and hate crimes against people of other nation, religion or skin colour⁴³.

2.2. Myths about labour migration from Ukraine in Poland

Poland accepts Ukrainian refugees

False statement: Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydło during the debate in the European Parliament on situation in Poland on 19 of January 2016 claimed that “When we talk about migration and immigrants, Poland accepted approximately one million refugees from Ukraine.”⁴⁴ Two years later, on 4th of July 2018 the next Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki also in the European Parliament stated that “Poland became a new home for one and half million of Ukrainian citizens. They are not registered as refugees, because our regulations provide them with possibility to receive work permits.” He basically claimed that Ukrainian migrants in Poland are refugees. In February 2019 Morawiecki in his interview to “Le Figaro” stated “Do I have to remind, that we accepted 1,5 million of Ukrainians, and 10% of them came from the Donbas, where war is going on.”

There were numerous statements of Polish politicians from ruling party about accepting “Ukrainian refugees” or “economic migrants,” where numbers varied from several hundreds to 2 million and terminology “migrant” and “refugee” was mixed.

Fact: These statements show the misuse of terms “refugee,” “migrant” and “accepted.” Polish Office for Foreigners shows that in 2015, before the speech of Beata Szydło, only 2 Ukrainians received the status of refugee and 47 persons got international protection and tolerated stay, but not 1 million. In total, during the period of 1.01.2014-1.03.2019 Poland granted refugee status to 107 Ukrainians, and international protection and tolerated stay to 426 Ukrainians.

⁴¹ <https://wpolityce.pl/polityka/347083-waszczykowski-dla-wsieci-o-stosunkach-polsko-ukrainskich-nasz-przekaz-jest-bardzo-jasny-z-bandera-do-europy-nie-wejdziecie>

⁴² Jacek Kucharczyk, Agnieszka Łada, Polacy a inni Europejczycy. Dystans społeczny na przykładzie Francuzów, Niemców, Ukraińców i Włochów. Warsaw 2018. P. 18. https://www.isp.org.pl/uploads/download/polacy-a-inni-europejczycy_pl_1554980960.pdf

⁴³ <http://statystyka.policja.pl/st/kodeks-karny/przestepstwa-przeciwko-13/63613,Publiczne-propagowanie-faszyzmu-nawolywanie-do-nienawisci-art-256.pdf>

⁴⁴ <http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,114871,19504967,milion-uchodzcow-z-ukrainy-liczby-mowia-zupelnie-co-innego.html>

Polish officials use terms “refugees” and “migrants” interchangeably. Beata Szydło claimed that 1 million of Ukrainians, who allegedly came to Poland are “refugees.” The Ministry of Foreign Affairs shows that their consulates in 2015 issued 922 240 visas to Ukrainians, among which 456 085 were Schengen visas and 466 155 national, and that means that Ukrainians came to Poland or with intention to work, study, travel or to reunite with family, but not as refugees. The other issue is, whether this 1 million of visas mean that 1 million of Ukrainians came to Poland at all, stayed or it was a short term visit or they went to other EU countries. There is no available data on that issue, since Ukrainian migration to Poland is mostly short term and shuttle (circular) migration.

Prime Ministers claim that Poland “accepted” Ukrainian migrants or refugees. The acceptance means provision of some integration support, but in case of Ukrainian migrants (in case of Beata Szydło statement they were called “refugees”) there are hardly any integration means provided. The only support is some language courses and information on legalization provided by the civic organizations, mostly in large cities and with little state financing. Government presents the Ukrainian labour migration as the humanitarian aid, however, in reality the migrants fill the gaps on the Polish labour market, pay taxes and support Polish economy receiving no integration support.

People die because of unqualified Ukrainian nurses

False statement: Deputy Speaker of the Polish Sejm Stanisław Tyszka from party “Kukiz’15” on 27 of May 2018 while talking about the nurses said: “Gaps of personnel in hospitals are filled in by workers from Ukraine, who often have lower qualifications. Because of that people are dying. Doctors will not say it directly. I have an obligation to say it.”⁴⁵.

Факт: Ministry of Health indicated that they have no registered cases of decease because of medical mistakes of Ukrainian nurses or due to their lack of professionalism. Polish hospitals employ only those nurses from Ukraine, who have right to work in this profession, what means they have necessary qualifications similar to Polish nurses. The process of obtaining right to work in the profession is very complicated, thus only few of Ukrainian nurses decided to proceed with it and obtained such right. Supreme Chamber of Nurses and Midwives states that 82 nurses and 8 midwives from Ukraine worked in Poland on 31 of December 2017. Supreme Doctors Chamber shows that 1142 foreigners had the right to work as a doctors in Poland (including interns) and 314 of them were Ukrainians (Data from 31 of December 2017).

Ukrainian migrant workers take jobs from Poles

False statement: Ukrainian migrant workers take jobs from Poles and stop wage growth in Poland. If the former is raised by the right wing nationalist, the later appeared in media, reports and statements of experts dealing with labour market.

Fact: Since 2013 unemployment rate in Poland constantly decreases. Eurostat shows that in January of 2019 it was 3,7%. Simultaneously, due to the development of the economy and aging of the population Poland up to 2025 will lack 1,5 million workers⁴⁶. Presently Poland needs more labour force than is currently present on the labour market, including Poles, Ukrainians and other migrant workers. Poland, already, starts to bring migrant workers also from the Asian countries. Thus, the statement on migrants taking jobs will not be valid in the nearest future.

⁴⁵ <https://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/tyszka-o-ukrainskich-pielegniarkach-ministerstwo-zdrowia-odpowiada,843302.html>

⁴⁶ Report of PwC. <https://www.pwc.pl/pl/media/2019/2019-01-22-luka-rynek-pracy-2025-pwc.html>

The issue of the “migrants stop the wage growth” statement is more complicated. There is a constant growth of wages in Poland during recent five years, however, experts from the National Bank of Poland and other financial institutions claim that the slower growth is connected with the influx of the Ukrainian labour migrants to Poland and their willingness to work for the lowest wages^{47 48}.

Still the claim that migrant workers lower the wage growth is a simplified explanation. The influx of Ukrainian migrants is one of the transformations that occurred on the Polish labour market during recent years. Polish companies in order to be competitive on the European market, provide cheaper services, especially it refers to transport and logistics. These companies are in search for cheaper workers, who agree on precarious types of employment, lower wages and extended working hours. Migrant workers in their willingness to maximize their earnings during the short period of work permits fit into that scheme, and, thus, take such jobs. But there is another development during recent five years that changed the functioning of the labour market -growth of the Temporary Work Agencies (TWA). They increased their presence of the Polish labour market and one can note an institutionalization of temporary employment both of Poles and of migrants. Majority of Ukrainians used the services of TWAs while working in Poland.

Presently there are 3 043 TWAs in Poland (data on 20.03.2019) and they provide leasing of workers to Polish and foreign companies. Their goal is to earn as much as possible through providing cheap labour force. They are not willing to pay wages, that are higher than minimal wages and they are in constant search to minimize the costs of labour. For instance, in order not to pay higher salary for weekend work, such companies introduce the weekend workers, who work only during weekends and receive minimal wages. Such companies recruit workers both in Poland and abroad, for minimal wages. As a result, migrant workers work on low paid jobs, but they have no mechanisms to negotiate the raise of salaries and they have no collective representation to negotiate the wages. Trade unions only recently started dealing with labour rights of migrant workers. Thus, one can state, that migrants are involved in the mechanisms of slowing the wages growth as objects, but they are not the reasons for such process. Still the National Bank of Poland predicts the grows of salaries in next 2 years, despite the growing presence of Ukrainian workers on the labour market.

2.3. Basic data about Ukrainian labour migration to Poland

The exact number of Ukrainian nationals legally residing in Poland is unknown due to the temporality and shuttle character of this migration. Ukrainians often combine various residence permits and visa free regime, thus one person can appear in statistics of different institutions. 179 154 Ukrainians received residence permits in Poland in 2018. Majority of temporary permits issued in 2017 and in 2018 is due to work (77% and 73% respectively)⁴⁹.

Poland has relatively easy access to the labour market for temporary migrant workers. Majority of them are Ukrainians, who in order to obtain a working visa need to receive a Declaration to employ a foreigner (during 2007-2017 it was called: Declaration of intent to employ a foreigner) from the employer which after obtaining visa gives them right to work for 6 months. Declaration is valid for 12 months.

⁴⁷ <https://www.money.pl/gospodarka/wiadomosci/artykul/zarobki-wynagrodzenia-zatrudnienie-dane-gus,217,0,2411225.html>

⁴⁸ https://www.nbp.pl/polityka_pieniezna/dokumenty/raport_o_inflacji/raport_listopad_2018.pdf

⁴⁹ Source: Office for Foreign ers

Figure 1. Number of Ukrainians who had a residence permit in Poland in 2007-2018

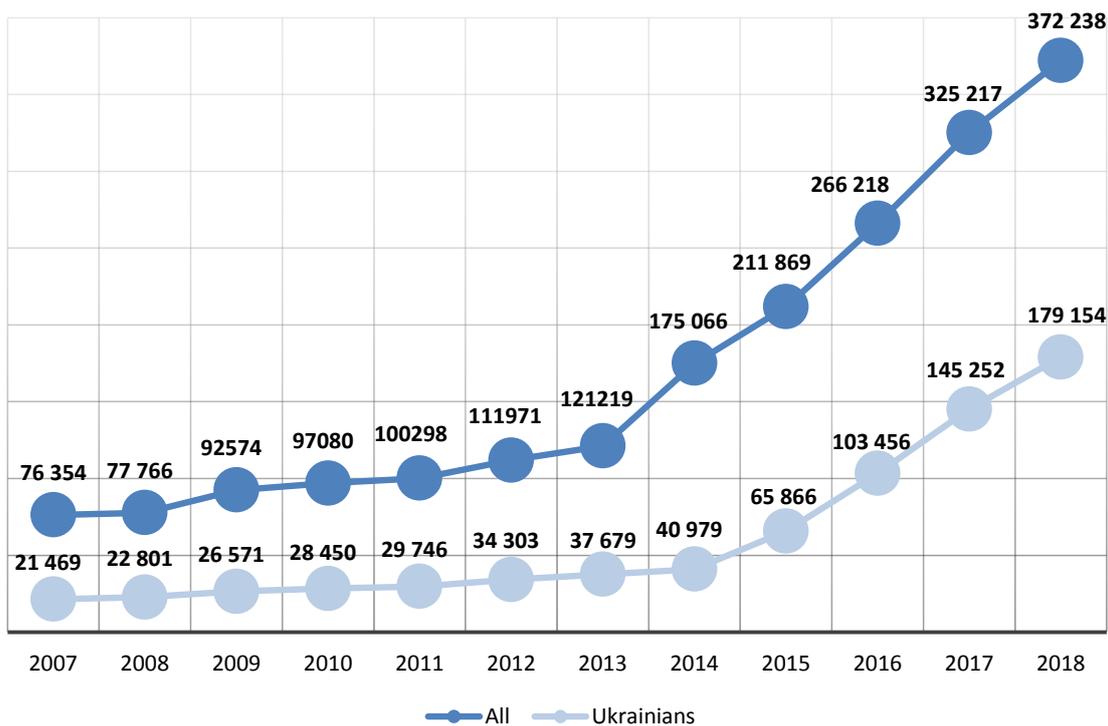
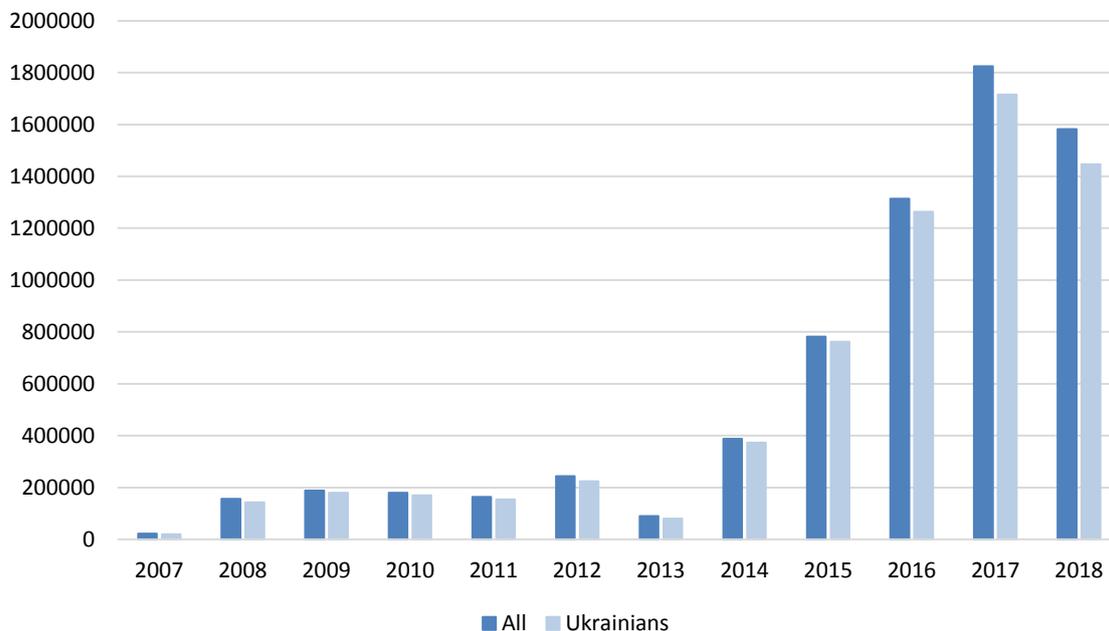


Figure 2. The statistics of declarations issued to Ukrainian citizens during 2007-2018⁵⁰



⁵⁰ Source: Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy

Statistics of Ukrainian nationals who obtained working and Schengen visas at the Polish consulates in Ukraine (2017-2018)

In 2017 Ukrainian citizens received 1,15 million of visas comparing to 1,36 million of visas in 2016. In 2018 the number of visas to Ukrainian citizens decreased to 876 064, what could be explained by the introduction of the visa free regime on 11 of June of 2017.

Citizenship

Until 2012 the right to grant citizenship belonged to the President of the state and his/her decision was undisputable. Since 2012 local representative of government, that is *województas* received the right to issue decisions about citizenship. Here is the statistics of naturalization in Poland in 2009-2012 (President's decisions) and in 2013-2017* (decisions made by President, wojewodas and Minister of Interior and Administration)⁵¹.

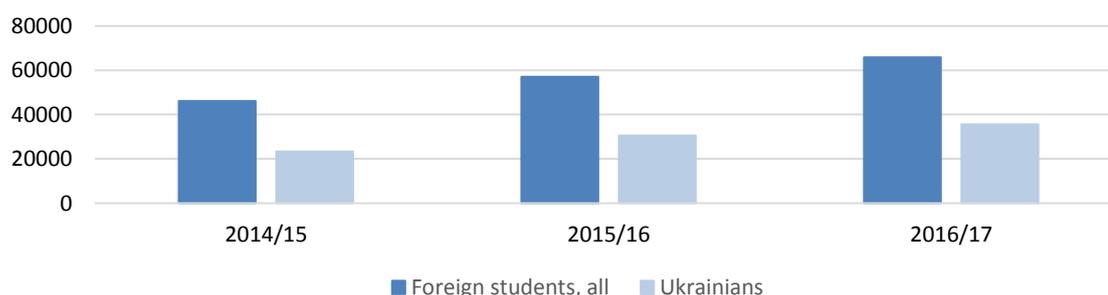
Table 3. Naturalization in Poland

| Country of Origin | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013* | 2014* | 2015* | 2016* | 2017* |
|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| All | 2,503 | 2,926 | 3,445 | 3,792 | 4,782 | 4,939 | 4,435 | 4,569 | 4,585 |
| Ukraine | 877 | 992 | 1,086 | 1,196 | 1,667 | 1,918 | 2,012 | 2,096 | 2,410 |

Number of Ukrainian students

Number of Ukrainian students in Poland is constantly growing, especially since 2014. Research conducted on foreign students in Poland (including Ukrainians) and alumnae of Polish Universities indicate on tendency that Ukrainians plan to remain in Poland or other EU countries, and only small number plans to return to Ukraine⁵².

Figure 3. Ukrainian students in Poland⁵³



⁵¹ Poland / Central Statistical Office, Rocznik Demograficzny 2017 [2017 demographic yearbook], p. 454

⁵² More: "Highly skilled migrants in the Polish labour market. Research Report 2014-2015 "ed. Joanna Konechna-Salamatin. Warsaw, 2015; Ukrainian Students in Poland: Engagement Policy, Integration, Motivation and Student Plans, CEDOS, Kyiv 2018

⁵³ Study in Poland

Labour market segments where Ukrainian citizens are the most involved, age and gender structure of Ukrainian migrants in 2018

Ukrainian temporary migrants received declarations to work in the following sectors: 1) Industrial processing; 2) construction; 3) “administrative services and support of activity” (it means that workers are employed by a TWA and work in various sectors); 4) transport and logistics. The age groups of Ukrainian nationals who received such declarations: 1) 25-34 y.o. 2) 35-44 y.o. 3) up to 24 y.o. 4) 45-54 y.o. Women comprise 1/3 of all Ukrainian migrants, who received the declarations in 2018.

Attitude to labour migration from Ukraine (data of sociological research)

Several institutions conduct regular research on attitude of Poles to some nationalities, including to Ukrainians. The Institute of Public Affairs in its research indicated the increase of positive attitude to Ukrainians since 2000 to 2013. But their recent research shows the sympathies decreased on 20% comparing to 2013. Such change could be explained by the “policy of historical memory,” which the ruling party Law and Justice implement in relation to Ukraine since coming to power in 2015. As a result the political relations between Poland and Ukraine became dense and some negative stereotypes were facilitated or emerged such as “Ukrainians take jobs from Poles”⁵⁴.

Average salary of a labour migrant / average salary in the labour market segments where UA citizens are the most involved to

Question of salaries of Ukrainian migrants is a disputable issue and reason for speculations. Research conducted by the Personnel Service, a temporary work agency, indicates that in the second half of 2018 30,4% of Ukrainians earned 2501-3000 zł netto per month, 29,7% - 3001-3500 zł, 19,7% - 1551-2500 zł, 15,5% - more than 3501 zł and 4,7% - app. 1550 zł. The medium salary for Poland in 2018 was 4 864 zł, and it is approximately 3500 zł netto per month. So, around 30% of Ukrainians, who worked for TWA earned medium salary. But, majority of Ukrainian migrants are employed on the basis of non-labour employment and it includes precarious types of employment based on civil law, so called **civil law employment, self-employment and temporary agency work**, which are not regulated by the Labour Code. In majority Ukrainian workers are paid per hour or per piece, and in order to earn salary comparable to Poles they have to work for 10-12 hours a day and 6 days per week. Poles most often work not via agency and on the basis of full-time employment that is regulated by the Labour Code. They rather work 40 hours per week for the same salary. More on this see in the report of National Bank of Poland⁵⁵.

Number of Ukrainians in Poland counted by the smartphone applications

The Company Selectivv, which specializes in studying practices owners of smartphones, counted that in January 2019 there were 1 270 398 Ukrainians in Poland, what comprises 3.5% of total population. Considering this data one should note that this method has some limitations⁵⁶.

Myroslava Keryk, Foundation «Our choice», Poland

⁵⁴ <https://www.isp.org.pl/pl/publikacje/polacy-a-inni-europejczycy>

⁵⁵ See more about this. in a report from the National Bank of Poland and Iza Chmielewska, Grzegorz Dobroczyk, Adam Panuciak, Obywatele Ukrainy pracujący w Polsce – raport z badania Warsaw 2017 https://www.nbp.pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci_2018/obywatele-ukrainy-pracujacy-w-polsce-raport.pdf

⁵⁶ See more: <http://wyborcza.pl/7,156282,24522397,smartfony-policzyly-ukraincow-ile-ukrainek-planuje-miec-dzieci.html>

3. UKRAINIAN MIGRATION TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC – MYTHS AND FACTS

3.1. Ukrainian migration to Czech Republic in public discourse

Ukraine and the Czech Republic share a long history of migration relationship lasting for at least 150 years. Since the 1990's the migration from Ukraine to the Czech Republic was usually associated with economic reasons. Lately, however, this association is changing; Czech media and politicians are sometimes discussing Ukrainian migration in relation to the situation in the Eastern Ukraine.

In this first part of the text we will discuss the specifics of Ukrainian migration caused by safety factors, especially how this type of Ukrainian migration is reflected by Czech politicians, and its connection to labour migration.

Some of Czech politicians sometimes mention refugees from Eastern Ukraine as an excuse for not providing an international protection (in the form of asylum or subsidiary protection) for refugees from the Near East. These politicians claim that refugees from Ukraine should be privileged to those coming from the Near East. For example, Czech president Miloš Zeman has spoken in such manner, describing Ukrainian refugees as *“hardworking and culturally close to us”* in contrast to refugees from the Near East, while Czech prime minister Andrej Babiš demonstrated a typical example of whataboutism; when asked, whether Czech Republic would provide an asylum for 50 Syrian orphans, Babiš responded: *“And when we are talking about orphans, why are some people forgetting the war in Ukraine? There are no orphans? So why should we take care precisely of Syrians?”*⁵⁷

The number of Ukrainian citizens granted one of the forms of an international protection has rapidly increased in year 2014. In this year, in which Ukraine saw an eruption of Russian-backed insurgency in the eastern part of the country, the Czech Republic granted 25 Ukrainian citizens an asylum and 119 Ukrainian citizens a subsidiary protection. Numbers have culminated in year 2015, when 7 Ukrainian citizens were granted an asylum and 174 Ukrainian citizens were granted a subsidiary protection. Since then the number of approved applications for an international protection has been dropping – in year 2018 only 6 Ukrainian citizens were granted an asylum and 12 Ukrainian citizens were granted a subsidiary protection.

The number of Ukrainian citizens residing in Czech Republic as holders of an international protection is insignificant next to the number of Ukrainian citizens residing in Czech Republic based on temporary or permanent residence permits.

It is obvious that in the case of Ukrainian immigration the main motive for migrating to the Czech Republic is economical; Czech politicians use Ukrainian migration as a reason for not providing an international protection for refugees from other regions, namely from the Near East. This political rhetoric is merely an excuse unsupported by statistic facts, especially in recent months and years, when numbers of Ukrainian citizens granted with an international protection are dropping substantially.

⁵⁷ https://www.irozhlaz.cz/zpravy-domov/andrej-babis-sirotci-syrie_1809151129_pj, <https://www.e15.cz/clanek/domaci/zeman-dobrovolnych-kvot-by-meli-byt-pocitani-i-ukrajinci-1228066>

Based on our experience, the Czech Ministry of Interior has taken a strict position regarding the prolongation of already granted subsidiary protections; the Ministry is now declining application for prolongation of subsidiary protection for Ukrainian citizens arguing that Ukrainian citizens have an option to become IDP's – internally displaced persons – and have no reason to stay in the Czech Republic.

Table 4. Providing asylum and additional protection in the Czech Republic⁵⁸

| <i>Year</i> | <i>2013</i> | <i>2014</i> | <i>2015</i> | <i>2016</i> | <i>2017</i> | <i>2018</i> |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Number of asylum applications | 707 | 1156 | 1525 | 1478 | 1450 | 1702 |
| Number and share of asylum applications, citizens of Ukraine | 146 20.7% | 515 44.4% | 515 45.5% | 507 34.3% | 435 30% | 415 24.4% |
| Number of persons, who received asylum, citizens of Ukraine | 9 | 25 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 6 |
| Number of persons, who received additional protection, citizens of Ukraine | 0 | 119 | 174 | 46 | 25 | 12 |

Table 5. Ukrainian citizens, who received temporary and permanent residence permits in the Czech Republic

| <i>Pik</i> | <i>2013</i> | <i>2014</i> | <i>2015</i> | <i>2016</i> | <i>2017</i> | <i>2018</i> |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Temporary residence permits, Ukrainian citizens | 36591 | 30357 | 28416 | 29036 | 33992 | 46713 |
| Permanent residence permits, Ukrainian citizens | 68648 | 74031 | 77603 | 81209 | 83488 | 84996 |
| All residence permits, foreigners | 441536 | 451923 | 467562 | 496413 | 526811 | 566931 |
| All residence permits, Ukrainian citizens | 105239 23.8% | 104388 23.1% | 106019 22.7% | 110245 22.2% | 117480 22.3% | 131709 23.2% |

⁵⁸ All tables based on *Reports on the situation of migration and integration by the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic* (<https://www.mvcr.cz/migrace/clanek/vyrocní-zpráva-o-situaci-v-oblasti-migrace-a-integrace.aspx>)

3.2. Labour migration from Ukraine, statistics and media reflection

While migration from Ukraine motivated by safety concerns is discussed in the manner described in Part I., economic migration from Ukraine is receiving more coverage by Czech media.

Every process of migration is motivated by certain “push” and “pull” factors. “Push” factors, meaning factors driving people away from their home country, which are usually mentioned regarding the migration from Ukraine, are unsatisfactory economic situation, distrust of political representation, fear of an organized crime and unsatisfactory protection of employee rights. “Pull” factors are motives, because of which migrants are attracted to a specific country. The main reasons for Ukrainian citizens migrating to the Czech Republic are relatively stable and good economic situation, cultural and language similarity and a long history of mutual process of migration⁵⁹.

Statistics data show certain trends. The number of Ukrainian citizens employed in the Czech Republic is rising, both in numbers and in share. However the number of Ukrainian citizens conducting business in the Czech Republic is slightly decreasing. The number of Ukrainian citizens using Czech education system is rising⁶⁰. This trend is probably connected to the steadily increasing number of Ukrainian citizens residing in the Czech Republic based on a permanent residency permit. It seems, that the Czech Republic is transforming in the eyes of Ukrainians to a country suitable for permanent relocation, so lot of Ukrainian citizens are bringing their families to live in the Czech Republic⁶¹. Ukrainian citizens are focusing their economic activity in the Czech Republic on manufacturing industry, construction and seasonal works⁶².

Employment system

Despite the fact that migration from Ukraine to the Czech Republic is motivated mainly by economic reasons and the fact, that politicians like Andrej Babiš or Miloš Zeman are favouring Ukrainian migration in their statements, Czech authorities are relatively strict when it comes to offering a possibility for submitting an application for an employee card and therefore a possibility for employment in the Czech Republic. It has been brought to our attention, that even the act of submission of an application for an employee card is extremely complicated. Standardly, the application for an employee card is submitted through the Czech consulate. In case of Ukraine however, it is related to lot of difficulties and the attitude of Czech authorities has been criticized by Czech entrepreneurs, especially now, when it is very complicated to get employees in the Czech Republic due to extremely low unemployment rate⁶³.

Applying this way is only possible through the Czech consulate in Lviv, and the capacity is only 15 applications submitted per week. The possibility of booking the appointment to submit an application is very complicated and, according to our knowledge based on information from our Ukrainian clients, it is associated with corruption.

⁵⁹ p. 54-5, Drbohlav, Dušan, ed. *Ukrajinská pracovní migrace v Česku: migrace - remittance - (rozvoj)*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, nakladatelství Karolinum, 2015. ISBN 978-80-246-2995-7.

⁶⁰ Reports on the situation with migration and integration, Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, <https://www.mvcr.cz/migrace/docDetail.aspx?docid=21620122&doctype=ART>

⁶¹ The author's opinion is based on the statistics of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Czech Republic. For example, in the Czech Republic there is an increase in the number of Ukrainian children attending pre-school, elementary and secondary schools

⁶² p. 59-60, Drbohlav, Dušan, ed. *Ukrajinská pracovní migrace v Česku: migrace - remittance - (rozvoj)*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, nakladatelství Karolinum, 2015. ISBN 978-80-246-2995-7.

⁶³ https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/zamestnanost_nezamestnanost_prace

"Ukraine Project" and "Ukraine System"

Most employee cards are therefore granted through the so-called "Ukraine Project" and "Ukraine System"(also known as *Mode*). Both are projects of Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Industry. Purpose of *Ukraine System* is to simplify a process of applying for an employee card for skilled workers, while *Ukraine Project* is for highly qualified workers.

Table 6. Ukrainian citizens in the Czech Republic – employment and business

| <i>Year</i> | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Persons with employee cards | - | 9138 | 14391 | 24753 |
| Persons with employee cards, Ukrainian citizens | - | 4807 (52,2%) | 6587 (45.8%) | 11382 (46.6%) |
| Entrepreneurs - foreigners (total) | 83569 | 83862 | 85628 | 87228 |
| Entrepreneurs, Ukrainian citizens | 23639 (28.3%) | 22796 (27.2%) | 22150 (25.9%) | 21746 (24.9%) |
| Employed foreigners (total) | 260999 | 323244 | 382889 | 472354 |
| Employed foreigners, Ukrainian citizens | 35319 (13.5%) | 41847 (12.9%) | 54571 (14.3%) | 81695 (17.3%) |

A specific of these projects is that the employer first applies in the Czech Republic, and after a certain "pre-approval" of this application, the applicant for an employee card is invited to the embassy office, where he applies for an employee card. The main reason why this system was established was the effort to eliminate corruption that occurred in the process of applying for residence permits, and accelerate the entire procedure, too (which, however, did not change fundamentally, for example in 2017 the period for the issuance of the employee card through "Ukraine Project" and "Ukraine Mode" was over four months). However, "Ukraine Project" and "Ukraine Mode" have their own specificities, for example, it is not possible to participate in this programs for companies, which employ fewer than 6 people or are active less than two years⁶⁴.

As mentioned above, employers are the most significant critics of bureaucracy in the process of employment of foreigners, as well as of an insufficient number of granted employee cards. For example, Vladimír Dlouhý, the chairman of the Czech Chamber of Commerce and former Minister of Industry, said that 88% of employers complain about the excessive length of the process⁶⁵. Not only because of complaints of employers, but also because of the record low unemployment rate, the quota for the issuance of employee cards within project Ukraine and regime Ukraine is constantly rising. In 2016 it was 3,800 employees from Ukraine, in 2017 9,600 employees, in 2018 19,600 and finally in 2019 it should be 40,000 employees⁶⁶. This trend is supported by Prime Minister Andrej Babiš, who employs a large number of Ukrainians in companies belonging to his trust fund.

⁶⁴ <https://www.komora.cz/obchod-a-sluzby/prace-cizinci/rezim-ukrajina/>

⁶⁵ <https://www.businessinfo.cz/cs/clanky/dva-roky-od-spusteni-rezimu-ukrajina-program-pomohl-rade-firem-115433.html>

⁶⁶ <https://archiv.ihned.cz/c1-66295790-praci-v-cesku-muze-nove-ziskat-az-40-tisic-ukrajincu-rocne-podle-hospodarske-komory-by-ale-kvota-mela-byt-alespon-dvojnásobna>

Worth noting that the Czech Chamber of Commerce has set up an assistance office in Lviv, whose purpose is to help Czech entrepreneurs to find suitable employees in Ukraine and help these employees when they are applying. Its ambition is to replace dubious agencies⁶⁷.

Illegal employment

Due to the labour shortage in the Czech Republic and complicated recruitment of foreign workers, foreigners are also often employed illegally.

Numbers of revealed illegally working foreigners from outside the European Union are rising, while in 2017 some 1,900 were revealed, it was already 3,600 foreigners in 2018. For comparison last year State Labour Inspection Office revealed 700 illegally working citizens of the Czech Republic and 200 foreigners from the European Union. According to the estimates of “*the Association of Work Agencies in the Czech Republic*”, up to 250 000 illegal workers from abroad are working in the Czech Republic⁶⁸. In total, approximately 1,000 entities were fined for allowing illegal work and fines were imposed in the aggregate amount of over CZK 150,000,000⁶⁹.

In 2018 illegal work was proven to 2,873 citizens of Ukraine, 285 citizens of Vietnam and 197 citizens of Moldova⁷⁰. Most of these Ukrainians came to the Czech Republic from Poland, but the exact number is not traceable.

In this context, we can mention the so-called *Rohlík* case, which was widely publicized in its time (March 2017). In this case there was a control made by foreign police in company *Rohlík*, the largest online supermarket. 74 Ukrainian citizens were detained and immediately expelled for one year (regarding others the proceeding about administrative expulsion was started). These employees had Polish visas with which they might temporarily stay in the territory of the Czech Republic, but they couldn't work here. This is, in fact, a very frequent situation, when citizens of Ukraine whom have been issued a visa by Poland are employed in the Czech Republic, even though this type of visa doesn't authorize to work in the territory of the Czech Republic. The myth that Polish visa grants a right to work in Czechia is very common among Ukrainian citizens and widespreaded by illegal facilitators causing harm not only to Czech citizens and Czech entrepreneurs, but mainly to Ukrainian citizens migrating to the Czech Republic.

Petr Bisof, David Krotíl, Poradna pro Integraci, Czechia

⁶⁷ <https://www.khkmsk.cz/hospodarska-komora-otevrela-asistencni-kancelare-na-ukrajine-a-v-srbsku/>

⁶⁸ <https://archiv.ihned.cz/c1-66492970-u-nelegalu-to-mame-za-polovinu-a-hned-v-cesku-pracuje-nelegalne-az-ctvrt-milionu-cizincu-firmy-volaji-po-zjednoduseni-pravidel>

⁶⁹ Státní úřad inspekce práce – Zpravodaj, number 1/2019, accessible at http://www.suip.cz/_files/suip-80e133d686b0d976fada930a5477ebfd/zpravodaj_1_19.pdf

⁷⁰ See note 68

4. MYTHS AND STEREOTYPES ABOUT UKRAINIAN LABOUR MIGRATION TO HUNGARY

4.1. Political and social context

Ukraine passed through serious crises during the past 5-6 years that have impacted the migration processes. On the one hand, there appeared a number of war refugees fleeing from the territories affected by armed conflict. On the other hand annexation of Crimea by Russia and Russian-backed insurgency in the industrial eastern Ukraine seriously damaged the economy of the country too. While until 2016 10,000 people were killed and 21,000 were injured in the war, at the lowest point of the crisis in 2015, the Ukrainian economy fell by more than 10% and the GDP per capita decreased by \$1,000 compared to 2014.⁷¹

Crisis has changed the migratory situation in Ukraine having intensified movement to the EU countries. Hungary became an increasingly attractive target for Ukrainians. This is connected to the geopolitical position of the country (proximity of the EU member Hungary to Ukraine), the shared history and nationality patterns of the two countries (Transcarpathian Hungarians⁷²), and the fact that Hungary, recovering from the world economic crisis of 2007, was facing a serious lack of workforce after 2015 due to the rapid growth of production.⁷³

However, in the context of the Hungarian situation it is important to note that the migration increase from Ukraine has found the country in a peculiar historical and political state. The European migration crisis that began in 2015 did not leave Hungary intact either: because the country happens to lie on the Balkan route of migration, in 2015 a significant number of refugees passed through the country. This process rapidly became the key issue in domestic politics, and the phenomenon of migration got tightly intertwined with uncertainty, danger and demise of the ordinary and safe world order in the communication of the Hungarian government. And even though Hungary is a transit country and has never been the actual destination of refugees and immigrants coming from the Middle East, the anti-immigration voices have been continuously strengthening since 2015. As a result, it has become a commonplace that refugees leaving their homes because of political or economic reasons mean only problems, unnecessary burden, and in many cases even risk and danger to the social, cultural and political stability of the receiving countries.

While the communication of the Hungarian government had an explicit anti-immigration characteristic during the past years, the country has recruited workforce from Ukraine since 2016, moreover in some shortage jobs the foreign workers can work for 90 days without a work permit.⁷⁴ While some estimates suggest that more than 20,000 Ukrainian guest workers have already been working in our country, many think that this is not the answer to labour market problems, since after the training process the workers move on to Western countries offering higher wages.

Meanwhile, the relationship between Hungarian and Ukrainian workers is not without tensions either. It is a general view that the Ukrainians work harder after their arrival in the country, do more overtime and even take up jobs without a contract, but in many cases (unlike Hungarian workers)

⁷¹https://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/projekty/ukrainian_migration_in_time_of_crisis.pdf

⁷²https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hungarians_in_Ukraine

⁷³https://www.gki.hu/language/en/tag/national_economy/

⁷⁴https://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20181125_Huszezer_ukran_vendegmunkas_jott_Magyarorszagra

they receive accommodation for free, push the wages down, leave easily and have problems with both cultural and linguistic integration.⁷⁵ In many cases it also sparks cultural tensions that Ukrainian guest workers are working in the factories instead of the Transcarpathian Hungarians “promised” by the government. It is worth noting here that according to a survey conducted in 2016, 12.7% of Transcarpathian Hungarians were working abroad, which means that 16-17 thousand workers took up jobs in foreign countries. More than half of these guest workers with Hungarian origins worked in Hungary.⁷⁶

In conclusion the perception of Ukrainian guest workers shows an ambivalent picture in Hungary and this is also influenced by the global foreign policy situation alongside the consistently anti-immigrant communication strategy of the Hungarian government.

4.2. Myths about labour migration from Ukraine

Facts and official data about Ukrainian guest workers often contradict the news and rumours circulating in the media as well as the statements made by the governments of the countries concerned on the topic. In Hungary, the most significant contradictions regarding foreign workers strain between the government’s communication targeting voters and the actual foreign policy measures.⁷⁷

For instance, based on the 2017 budget, it has been discovered that under a government program 5000 Ukrainian citizens were able to get work permits, while 4600 persons were already employed for at least over a month in Hungary.⁷⁸ The program was launched by the government in 2016 which has spent 450 million forints on it.⁷⁹ Within the frameworks of the program the government signed contracts with Ukrainian labour brokerage companies, opened labour offices in Ukraine, created databases and even organized the workers’ travel. In the meantime, Viktor Orbán, Prime Minister of Hungary, made the following statement on Kossuth Radio: “*We never invited anyone here to be a migrant worker, nor for any other reason to live with us. Therefore, we are not an immigrant country, and Hungary does not wish to become an immigration country.*”

But all this is just the tip of the iceberg, because in the meantime politics has also helped the Ukrainian workers by loosening legislation. For instance, the government decided to allow Ukrainian professionals to work in the shortage of jobs (IT, drivers, construction workers, seamstresses, carpenters, nurses, etc.) without a work permit for three months.⁸⁰ So while the government rigidly rejects the practice of immigration, it takes serious measures in the background in order to lure Ukrainian workers to Hungary.

Another common misunderstanding can also be observed about immigration and foreign workers. In political communication about migration to the public, the discussion is almost exclusively about asylum seekers coming from Africa and the Middle East – they are portrayed as potential threats in the discourse. In contrast, the truth is that the vast majority of non-EU citizens wishing to actually work or settle down in Hungary are coming from neighbouring countries, mainly from Serbia and Ukraine.⁸¹ Thus, according to the data of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO), only in 2018 approximately 2400 Serbian and 6100 Ukrainian citizens resided in Hungary

⁷⁵ https://www.napi.hu/magyar_vallalatok/lecserelelunk_titekuk_ukranokra_mert_ok_olcsobbak_feszultseg_egy_multicegnel.657715.html

⁷⁶ http://archive.bgazrt.hu/_dbfiles/htmltext_files/2/0000000572/metszetek_201801_02.pdf

⁷⁷ <https://kijev.mfa.gov.hu/page/munkavallalas-magyarorszagon>

⁷⁸ https://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20181204_Csak_szeptemberben_45_ezer_kulfoldi_munkavallalo_kopogtatott_a_magyar_hataron

⁷⁹ https://index.hu/gazdasag/2018/10/04/a_sok_ukran_vendegmunkas_miatl_ukranul_tudo_magyarokat_keres_a_hankook/

⁸⁰ <https://www.vg.hu/gazdasag/szerbek-es-ukranok-viszik-hianyszakmakban-primet-708569/>

⁸¹ http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_eves/i_wvn001b.html

for similar reasons. So, while Ukrainian migrants are almost invisible in political communication, and in the media in general, in reality they make up the vast majority of the guest workers arriving in Hungary.

Finally, data from the HCSO also reveal that the vast majority of those who arrive to Hungary from Ukraine are not war refugees but guest workers. According to the data, between 2009 and 2017 only 127 applications for asylum were received from Ukrainian citizens, most of them in 2014, in the starting year of the crisis, but still there were only 37 of them. This figure has been steadily declining ever since, and while the number of Ukrainian migrants has already shot up into thousands, in 2015 only 28, in 2016 23, and in 2017 only 7 of these applications were received by the offices.⁸²

4.3. Ukrainian labour migration to Hungary before and after 2014

Detailed information on the number of citizens coming from Ukraine and the evolution of their situation is provided by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office's annual reports on population movements. From these we can find out that the number of Ukrainian citizens residing in Hungary within the official framework shows a significant fluctuation during the period from 2007 to 2018 (*Table 6*). While in 2007 15,866 Ukrainian citizens stayed in our country, in 2018 there were only 10,503, but the real low point can be placed after the period of crisis, when this number was only approximating around 6000 people in 2015-2017 (the exact reasons for this will be discussed later, in the light of work-related data).

Table 6. Ukrainian citizens staying in Hungary between 2007-2018

| Year | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Total | 15866 | 17289 | 17610 | 17241 | 16537 | 11894 | 10849 | 8317 | 6906 | 6749 | 5774 | 10503 |
| Men | 7573 | 8594 | 8810 | 8551 | 7810 | 5803 | 5037 | 3615 | 2909 | 2908 | 2668 | 6162 |
| Women | 8293 | 8695 | 8800 | 8690 | 8727 | 6091 | 5812 | 4702 | 3997 | 3841 | 3106 | 4341 |

We can discover interesting processes when examining the gender composition of Ukrainian citizens staying in Hungary. From this data it turns out that the majority of Ukrainians officially staying in Hungary between 2007 and 2017 are females, while men are always a few hundred people behind the number of women. This ratio changes only in 2018, but then in a significant way; men became the majority and their number grows by 3494 people compared to 2017.

While the number of Ukrainian citizens staying in Hungary can be considered significant between 2017 and 2018 (we are talking about one of the largest ethnic groups of Hungary), the number of Ukrainians officially seeking asylum was surprisingly low during the same period (*Table 7*). Up until 2012 only a few requests were handed in for the state, but even at the outburst and low-point of the crisis merely 28 (2014) and 23 (2015) people wished to make use of this opportunity. In 2017-2018 numbers of asylum seekers from Ukraine dropped back to those before 2014.

⁸²http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_eves/i_wvn002b.html

Table 7. The number of asylum seekers with Ukrainian nationality arriving in Hungary

| Country | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Ukraine | - | - | 9 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 37 | 28 | 23 | 7 | - |

In contrast, the number of Ukrainian citizens immigrating to Hungary shows a significant increase in 2016, but mainly in 2017. But it is worth noting that, in terms of immigrants coming from Ukraine, this is already a second high point in the examined decade. Since, between 2009 and 2011 the figures are still close to the data of 2015 and 2016, while after 2012 the numbers collapse and only start to rise after the 2014 crisis (*Table 8*).

Table 8. Immigrating Ukrainian citizens

| Country | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Ukraine | - | - | 1887 | 1619 | 1280 | 859 | 558 | 717 | 1143 | 1202 | 6325 | - |

The number of Ukrainian citizens emigrating from Hungary is relatively stable between 2009 and 2016; an average of 400-500 people left the country each year (*Table 9*). This number only started to rise sharply in 2017, when 1312 people emigrated from Hungary, 1000 more than in the previous year. Although we do not have accurate information on this, it can be assumed that as a result of growing labour shortage, these Ukrainian citizens moved to one of the Western EU Member States in the hope for better working conditions and higher wages.

Table 9. Ukrainian citizens emigrating from Hungary

| Country | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Ukraine | - | - | 564 | 432 | 455 | 474 | 327 | 477 | 469 | 439 | 1312 | - |

The number of Ukrainian citizens who have gained Hungarian citizenship also shows interesting fluctuations between 2009 and 2017 (*Table 10*). The number of citizenships issued was steeply rising until 2011, and 2189 Ukrainians acquired Hungarian citizenship in this year. The decline started in 2012, then in 2013 and 2014 this figure was virtually halved (894 and 858 people), then collapsed starting in 2015 (386 people), while lastly in 2017 only 186 people appear in the report. One could conclude that the Hungarian citizenship became less attractive to Ukrainian citizens during the last few years. But it should be noted HSCO citizenship statistics is not full, as many Ukrainian citizens from Transcarpathia gained Hungarian citizenship after 2011 Law on citizenship, having become bipatrides. Their number was estimated in over 90 thousand in 2015⁸³.

⁸³ <https://www.stopfake.org/en/manipulation-ukraine-losing-transcarpathia/>

Table 10. Formerly Ukrainian citizens granted Hungarian citizenship

| Country | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Ukraine | - | - | 558 | 646 | 2189 | 1765 | 894 | 858 | 386 | 365 | 186 | - |

Finally, the data described above should be compared with the number of work permits issued to Ukrainian workers between 2013 and 2017 (*Table 11*). It can be seen from the table that the number of issued work permits halved between 2013 and 2014 and then began to steadily decrease. Based on currently available data, the decline reached its lowest point in 2017, with only 950 work permits issued for Ukrainian workers working in Hungary this year.

Table 11. The number of work permits issued to Ukrainian workers in Hungary between 2013 and 2017 ⁸⁴

| Country | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Ukraine | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2078 | 1145 | 1145 | 1413 | 950 | - |

The results of *Table 11* require a more in-depth analysis. HCSO also showed a significant change in the distribution of work permits in the case of certain groups of countries in recent years. On the one hand, the inflow of labour from neighbouring countries has dropped significantly in Hungary, while the number of third country nationals on the labour market has greatly increased. In the case of neighbouring countries, the decline is due to the fact that most Serbian and Ukrainian citizens were employed with seasonal employment contracts of no more than 90 days. Also worth noting that Hungarian law treats the EU Blue Card separately from the individual work permit's group because of its special situation.

The other reason is that the Ministry of National Economy has allowed Serbian and Ukrainian citizens to work in the country without labour market tests for certain shortage of jobs.

The number of workers coming from neighbouring countries, primarily from Serbia and Ukraine, has fallen among the licensed workers due to the easing of the past period. Because of seasonal employment not exceeding 90 days, more than 3000 Ukrainians and 600 Serbian citizens were reported by employers. Ukrainian and Serbian workers were more prevalent in Central Hungary and the Transdanubian region.⁸⁵

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⁸⁴https://nfsz.munka.hu/Lapok/full_afsz_kozos_statisztika/stat_kulf_munkavall_mo-on.aspx

⁸⁵https://nfsz.munka.hu/Lapok/full_afsz_kozos_statisztika/stat_kulf_munkavall_mo-on/content/stat_kulf_mvall_mo_adatok_2017.pdf

5. REALITIES OF UKRAINIAN LABOUR MIGRATION TO SLOVAKIA

The problems of migration became one of the focal points in Slovak politics since the European Migration Crisis begun in 2015. During the last general election of 2016 and in the discourse since then, as well as during the current presidential election campaign, this topic has proven to be an important discussion point. The author of this contribution would even argue it has become a full political cleavage around which the party positions and society are divided.

This holds true despite only tens of migrants were placed in Slovakia through the system of mandatory redistribution of asylum seekers. Because of the economic growth, Slovak economy is nowadays actually in a growing need of additional workforce, as the lack of thereof is slowing the economic growth already. The government has therefore already put into practice measures to attract more economic migration, focused mainly on the third, non-EU, yet Slavic countries such as Serbia and Ukraine.

In the following pages, we will provide main statistical data showing the full extent and framework in which labour migration from Ukraine to Slovakia exists. However, as the opinions of the public regarding migration have become very heated in the last few years, even labour migration of this kind sometimes leads to tensions. We will therefore explore in a simple discursive analysis what are the main terms which are connected to Ukraine, Ukrainians and Ukrainian workers in Slovakia and explore the most common misconceptions about them.

5.1. Review of the political and social context

As noted above, the attitudes of society and politicians towards migration in Slovakia is openly hostile, with the relationship of negative attitudes between politicians and society being mutually reinforcing. The migration and migration crisis were crucial topics of the last general election campaign of 2016. This has led to the decrease of support for SMER-SD (party in power before the election) and was at the same time probably one of the factors that brought more extreme-right and populist parties such as fascist Kotleba-ĽSNS and populist Sme Rodina (“We are family”). The attitudes of these politicians have not changed much since. Moreover, migration was also a crucial topic in the presidential election campaign of 2019 before the first round, mostly prominent in the campaigns of Marián Kotleba and Štefan Harabin. We are currently awaiting second round of the election and the candidate with the support of SMER-SD, European Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič, has started to use anti-immigration rhetoric as well.

It should be noted that when discussing migration, Slovak politicians mainly refer to the refugees from Muslim and African countries, sometimes openly declaring that they “will not allow formation of Muslim community in Slovakia”⁸⁶. However, the labour migration from Serbia has also already led to some tensions⁸⁷.

⁸⁶ <https://domov.sme.sk/c/20070758/fico-musime-zabranit-vzniku-ucelenej-moslimskej-komuniti-na-slovensku.html>

⁸⁷ <https://dennikn.sk/blog/951671/ked-inspektori-prace-zazvonja-v-seredi-na-brane-srbi-utekaju-z-fabriky-zadnym-vchodom/>

However, Slovak economy does need more workforce. The unemployment rates are the lowest in history. According to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the SR, the unemployment rate in January 2019 was only 5,26%⁸⁸.

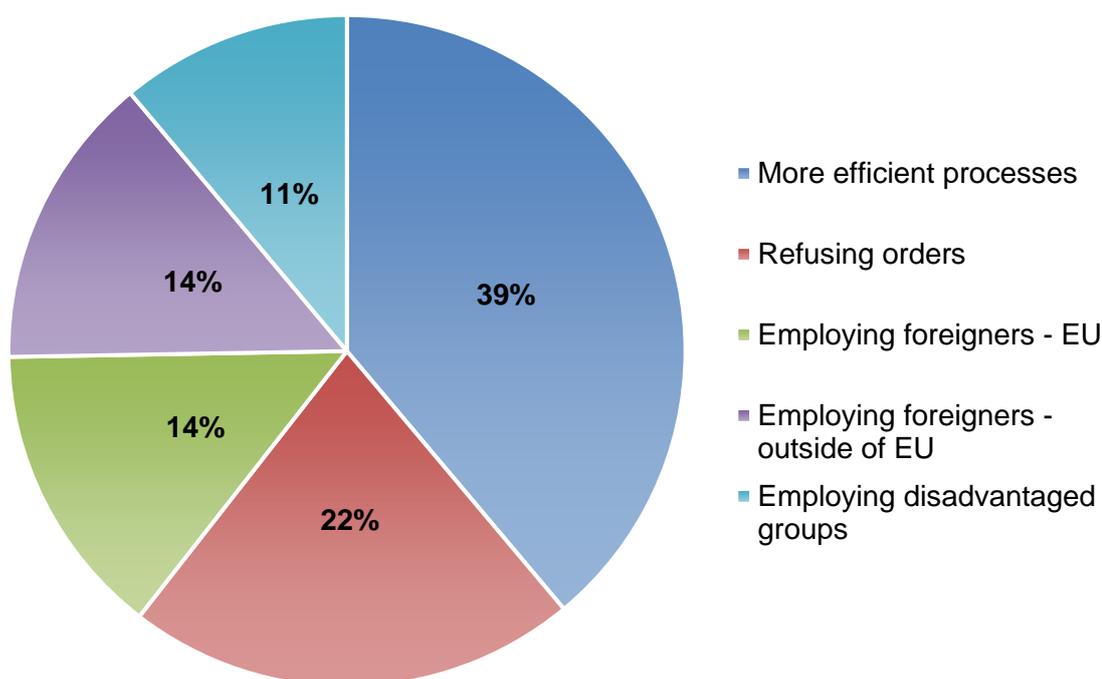
The number of vacant job positions in Slovakia has been steeply rising and as of March 2019, it has reached 95 000⁸⁹. This partly shows demand for workers from abroad. The highest demand is for operators and installers of machinery and equipment (42%) and qualified workers and craftsmen (22%)⁹⁰.

The number of valid residencies (temporary and permanent combined) in Slovakia at the end of 2018 was 24 913 for Ukrainians, 10 970 for Czechs, 10 608 for Serbians, 8 503 for Hungarians and 7 420 for Romanians⁹¹.

According to the survey conducted by Slovak Business Association, 50% of employers have acute lack of workers and other 35% feel less acute, but still lack of workers. Also, 41% of businessmen stated that they had to refuse some orders due to lack of workers.

Slovak economy-oriented NGO Institute INEKO organized a workshop regarding the topic of whether Slovak economy needs more migrants and found that Slovak employers are already economically loosing as potential growth is stopped because they are forced to refuse opportunities due to the lack of workforce.

Figure 4. How do Slovak employers deal with lack of workforce?



Source: Opinion poll PAS and INEKO, April 2018

⁸⁸ https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/buxus/generate_page.php?page_id=855042

⁸⁹ <https://www.istp.sk/volne-pracovne-miesta>

⁹⁰ <https://www.finreport.sk/ekonomika/slovensky-trh-prace-potrebuje-pomoc-zo-zahranicia-no-slovaci-o-migrantov-nestoja/>

⁹¹ https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/policia/hranicna_a_cudzinecka_policia/rocniky/rok_2018/2018-rocnika-UHCP-SK.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1OKG-2luQ0vVHVFKdrEQqomYSWa3V-lzwmkWhDCs3NFc3zmK3IZCE20IA

As a reaction to these changes, Slovak government has introduced some changes to the legal framework in order to attract more labour migration from the third, non-EU countries.

First was the novelisation of the Law on Employment Services⁹², approved on 1 May 2018, which introduced following changes to the process of employing foreign citizens in Slovakia: the time limit during which the position needs to be listed and available for Slovak citizens at the Office of Labour was shortened by 10 days from 30 to 20 days⁹³.

There are also new conditions that employers have to fulfil to be eligible to employ foreigners, especially regarding the ban on illegal employment. The employer, to be eligible, must prove he had not broken this condition for at least 2 years before he requests granting of the temporary stay for a foreign worker who will work for him/her. Before, it was 5 years.

The novelisation also introduced an institute of “professions in short supply”. In certain professions and in precincts with less than 5% unemployment rate, the employers are not requested to inform in writing the local Office of Labour about the free spot before they employ a foreigner. This however only applies if no more than 30% of the employees of the employer are already non-Slovaks.

In November 2018, the Slovak Government also agreed to additional changes to the laws regarding employment services and the stay of foreign citizens in Slovakia, in order to simplify employing third country citizens. The most important of these changes (in effect since 1 January 2019) was shortening the period for administration of the request for granting the temporary stay (address) from 90 to 30 days in cases of employment in one of the sectors with workforce shortage. Also, the amount of necessary documents for these requests and surrounding bureaucracy was cut⁹⁴.

5.2. The reality regarding Ukrainian migration to Slovakia

At the end of 2018, 24 913 Ukrainian citizens had a valid stay in Slovak republic, 20 543 of them were temporary and 4 369 permanent, according to the data of the Presidency of Slovak Police⁹⁵. This makes them the largest non-EU group living in the country. These numbers grew significantly during 2018, because in this year, 14 235 new temporary and 682 permanent stays were given to Ukrainians (together 14 917, in 2017 it was 8 036⁹⁶. It is unknown how many stays were cancelled during these years though).

When it comes to Visa, since June 2017, Ukrainian nationals do not need visas for entering EU for less than 90 days, therefore we experienced a sharp drop in both the requests and granted numbers. In 2018, Slovak republic granted 1 530 Type C and 219 Type D Visas to Ukrainian citizens⁹⁷.

Ukraine is the only non-EU and non-Schengen neighbouring country of Slovakia, yet, the exchange across the border is quite intensive. Thousands of people cross the border between the two countries daily.

⁹² <https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2004/5/20190101>

⁹³ <https://www.podnikajte.sk/zakonne-povinnosti-podnikatela/zamestnavanie-cudzincov-1-5-2018>

⁹⁴ <http://www.vssr.sk/clanok-z-titulky/jednoduchsi-prichod-pracovnikov-z-tretich-krajin-odobil-aj-prezident-spravodajstvo-12-2018.htm>

⁹⁵ https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/policia/hranicna_a_cudzinecka_policia/rocenky/rok_2018/2018-rocenka-UHCP-SK.pdf

⁹⁶ Ibid

⁹⁷ Ibid

Table 12. The number of valid stays of UA citizens in Slovak republic as of 31.12.2018⁹⁸

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Together</i> | <i>Temporary</i> | <i>Permanent</i> | <i>Tolerated</i> |
|-------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 2018 | 24 913 | 20 543 | 4 369 | 1 |
| 2017 | 16 102 | 12 135 | 3 923 | 44 |
| 2016 | 13 024 | 9 398 | 3 582 | 44 |
| 2015 | 10 706 | 7 297 | 3 365 | 44 |

Table 13. The number of stays granted per years⁹⁹

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Together</i> | <i>Temporary</i> | <i>Permanent</i> | <i>Tolerated</i> |
|-------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 2018 | 14 917 | 14 235 | 682 | - |
| 2017 | 8 036 | 7 455 | 548 | 33 |
| 2016 | 5 808 | 5 315 | 466 | 27 |
| 2015 | 6 103 | 5 524 | 550 | 29 |

Таблиця 14. Overview of persons crossing the border between SR and UA legally¹⁰⁰

| <i>Border crossing / YEAR</i> | <i>2018</i> | <i>2017</i> | <i>2016</i> | <i>2015</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Ubl'a | 667612 | 631733 | 580193 | 522942 |
| Vyšné Nemecké | 1740954 | 1567368 | 1343294 | 1110859 |
| Maťovské Vojkovce | 12159 | 12204 | 12256 | 12206 |
| Veľké Slemence | 246667 | 231001 | 194418 | 175720 |
| Čierna nad Tisou | 38824 | 37745 | 33300 | 30900 |
| Together | 2706216 | 2480051 | 2163461 | 1852627 |

There is also a big number of Ukrainian citizens living and studying in Slovakia. In the academic year of 2016/2017, 1 258 students from Ukraine were studying in Slovakia, most of them at the University of Prešov (328) and the Technical University of Košice (304), probably because of the geographic closeness to the border. These are followed by the the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica (131), Comenius University in Bratislava (86) and the University of Economics in Bratislava (59). Ukrainian students are mostly interested in studying Slovak language and culture, Social sciences, but also Information technologies, Biology and Ecology¹⁰¹.

⁹⁸ https://www.minv.sk/swift_data/source/policia/hranicna_a_cudzinecka_policia/rocenky/rok_2018/2018-rocenka-UHCP-SK.pdf

⁹⁹ Ibid

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

¹⁰¹ https://www.mzv.sk/web/kyjev/spravy/-/asset_publisher/qUcjGk6Falrh/content/I-parizek-slovensko-je-susedom-ktory-ma-uprimny-zaujem-o-prosperitu-a-mierovu-buducnost-ukrajiny-/10182?p_auth=xy17HSq3

In 2018, there were 11842 Ukrainians working in Slovakia, both with and without work permit¹⁰². Ukrainian (or other) person can work in Slovakia even without working permit in specific situations, for example when he or she has a “foreign Slovak” status and a temporary stay in SR. In this case, the person/employer only needs to fill in so called “information card” to notify the Central Office of Labour of a new working situation within 7 business days¹⁰³.

By far the most Ukrainians (5757) worked in the field of Machinery and equipment operators and installers. Second place (2041) is Qualified workers and craftsmen, third, then Assistant and unqualified workers (1371). Then there are Specialised workers (999) and Workers in services and commerce (758). Average brutto monthly salary in these fields was in 2018 as follows: 1005€ for Machinery and equipment operators, 1078€ for Qualified workers and craftsmen, 650€ for Assistant workers, 1418€ for Specialised workers and 775€ for Services and Commerce¹⁰⁴.

Table 15. The number of Ukrainians working in Slovakia in 2018, sorted by fields¹⁰⁵

| | <i>ALL</i> | <i>0 - Army</i> | <i>1 - High managerial personnel</i> | <i>2 - Specialists</i> | <i>3 - Technicians</i> | <i>4 - Administrative</i> |
|---|--------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ukrainians employed with the working permit | 8473 | 0 | 79 | 648 | 165 | 153 |
| Ukrainians employed with the information card | 3369 | 0 | 30 | 351 | 105 | 121 |
| Together | 11842 | | 109 | 999 | 270 | 274 |

| <i>5 - Services and sale</i> | <i>6 - Qualified in agriculture</i> | <i>7 - Qualified workers and craftsmen</i> | <i>8 - Machinery operators</i> | <i>9 - Unqualified</i> | <i>N/A</i> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| 271 | 114 | 1589 | 4841 | 613 | 0 |
| 487 | 47 | 452 | 916 | 758 | 102 |
| 758 | 161 | 2041 | 5757 | 1371 | 102 |

¹⁰² https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/statistiky/zamestnavanie-cudzincov-statistiky/zamestnavanie-cudzincov-na-uzemi-slovenskej-republiky-za-rok-2018.html?page_id=772215

¹⁰³ <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/uvod/informacie-cudzinci/ukraina.pdf>

¹⁰⁴ https://www.mzdovecentrum.sk/clanok-z-titulky/zakladne-mzdove-ukazovatele-3--kvartalu-2018-ai_mc-12-2018.htm

¹⁰⁵ https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/statistiky/zamestnavanie-cudzincov-statistiky/zamestnavanie-cudzincov-na-uzemi-slovenskej-republiky-za-rok-2018.html?page_id=772215

5.3. Perceptions of the Ukrainian migrant workers in Slovakia

Right from the start of this part, it needs to be stated, that the expectation that migrant workers from Ukraine would be connected with certain level of animosity, mainly as a side effect of general reluctance to any migration between the politicians and population, has not fulfilled. We ran a simple discourse analysis using the Slovak National Corpus¹⁰⁶ - which is an on-line electronic database of most of the texts that are published in Slovak language and allows search in multiple databases based on key words. We have been using the database web-4.0, as it contains not only official publications and periodicals, but a huge sum of online texts, such as blogs, too. Therefore, it does not only show us what is the official discourse in the Slovak media, but also to some degree the attitudes of the population, at least the part that is capable of using the internet.

We checked the results for the key words “Ukrainian”, and “migrant” to check for any connections between the two terms. If there was connection, we would continue exploring what is the context of that connection (i.e. what kind of “migrant” is “Ukrainian migrant” in Slovak discourse?). However, we have found strong evidence of the opposite – that Ukraine and Ukrainians are not part of the migration-related discourse in Slovakia.

As stated above, we searched for concordances of terms “Ukrainian” and “migrant”. The electronic engine automatically searches for all the forms of the word, so searching for “Ukrainian” – “Ukrajinec”, shows the results for all the variations of the basic word, like “Ukrajinci, Ukrajincov, Ukrajincov,” etc. To find out, what are the most common connections with these terms in the Slovak discourse, we then ran an electronic search for the collocations in the area of +/- 3 words, which shows the most common words that are used in the language together with the term.

From the results it can be stated that Ukraine and Ukrainians are not connected with the topic of migration in Slovakia. The best way to assess the relevance of collocation is the logDice score, which is the value of the frequency of collocation in the set context / the frequency of both words in the whole set. The maximum logDice value is 14 (maximum collocation) to minus infinity.

For the Key Word “Ukrainian”, the highest logDice value 9.773 was for the word “Ruthenian”, followed by other eastern European nationalities, as there is a huge number of texts which are focused on them together (such as “The common festivities of Slovak national minorities of Ruthenians and Ukrainians were held at...”). The first relevant politically charged term was “Maidan” at the 24. Place with logDice value of 5.842. For labour migration relevant terms, it was “employing” at the 494. Place with logDice value 3.074, which means the collocation is relevant, yet the relevance is by far not strong and there are many other terms which are more commonly associated with Ukrainians than their perception as labour migrants¹⁰⁷.

When it comes to the key word “migrant”, the look at the words most usually connected to it in Slovak discourse is indeed very interesting and reflects the expectations and it does confirm the idea of migration is strongly connected to the idea of economic migration and labour just as much as it is with refugee crisis, which is to the great deal connected with the political discourse which framed all the migrants as economical ones, who are only trying to act like refugees to gain economic benefits. Only Ukraine related collocation was on 361. Place. The logDice value suggests substantial connection, however, again, in comparison to the strength of the discourse of migration connected with other terms (and nationalities), this is unimportant.

¹⁰⁶ <https://korpus.sk/>

¹⁰⁷ Full dataset available on request at madlenak@sfa.sk

Therefore we conclude, that Ukraine, Ukrainians and Migration are not connected in Slovak discourse and therefore, even though the topic of economic migration proves to be very toxic and a breeding ground for conspiracies and myths, no myths could be created around the Ukrainian labour migration so far. This might however change in the near future with greater numbers of Ukrainians coming to Slovakia to search for work after the government made the employment of third part nationals easier in Slovakia.

Table 16. The values of first colocations for “migrant” versus the values of first Ukraine-related colocation¹⁰⁸

| | <i>Number of colocations</i> | <i>Frequency of colocation</i> | <i>logDice</i> |
|-----------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| nelegálnych | 972 | 31.173 | 9.363 |
| utečencov | 1330 | 36.455 | 9.123 |
| ilegálnych | 596 | 24.411 | 8.816 |
| prílev | 409 | 20.219 | 8.164 |
| azyl | 486 | 22.036 | 8.159 |
| migrantov | 535 | 23.115 | 8.062 |
| ekonomickí | 318 | 17.831 | 7.968 |
| ekonomických | 659 | 25.646 | 7.945 |
| prichádzajúcich | 368 | 19.177 | 7.933 |
| Ukrajiny | 63 | 7.849 | 4.493 |

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¹⁰⁸ Full dataset available on request at madlenak@sipa.sk

UKRAINIAN LABOUR MIGRATION LABOUR MIGRATION EXPERTS AND DATA SOURCES

To open the database, scan the QR code or go to the link:
<https://english.europewb.org.ua/labour-migration-experts-and-data-sources/>



europewb.org.ua