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Economic and Social Effects of Labour Migration in Ukraine

1. Introduction

This article examines the economic and social impacts of labour migration. The migration process has become increasingly complex due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, financial constraints, and a significant influx of people within the European Union countries hosting migrants. Ukraine has long been seen as a transit route for seeking employment in the European Union. Recently, it has also become a refuge for various communities, attracting internally displaced individuals, asylum seekers, and international students. The annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the full-scale Russian invasion in 2022 prompted people to leave their homes, leading to changes in migration routes and decision-making. By combining theoretical concepts with practical observations, this article aims to provide a deeper understanding of migration and address the urgent challenges that it is creating in Europe.

The article offers a theoretical overview of the key theories of migration and their applications. Contemporary migration theories provide detailed, multidisciplinary, and context-aware explanations of how economic, social, political, and emotional factors influence decision-making.

Consideration of the factors and causes that influence people's decisions to relocate or remain in the country enables one to describe the behaviour of various individuals.

The methodology adopted is based on an interdisciplinary approach. It includes the integration and synthesis of information from other disciplines through cooperation and interaction. This synthesis leads to a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena relating to the decision-making processes of migrants. It expands the horizon of understanding of the problem and allows us to find ways to solve it. An interdisciplinary approach enables the study of migration processes and offers new methods for regulating migration policy. Migration impacts demography, labour markets, and industries. This approach is based on a qualitative review of existing literature and secondary data. The selection

criteria for the studies reviewed are based on data from international organisations and academic research. These sources were analysed with regard to statistical indicators characterising the inflow and outflow of people from the country. Potential gaps in secondary data exist due to the inability to estimate irregular migrant flows.

The limitation of this research lies in the lack of a standardised approach explaining migration and the decision-making process as interconnected phenomena. There is a lack of theories offering mechanisms for managing these processes during migration crises.

This paper examines theoretical approaches, migration-related issues, and the economic and social effects of labour movements in both origin and host countries.

2. Literature review (theoretical background)

Migration theories explain the causes and effects of people being forced to migrate in search of work opportunities, better living conditions, and income. Labour migration influences industries, global development, labour markets, and demographics.[1] While classical migration theories identify the factors that drive migration, they do not explain the process of relocation between countries with similar levels of economic growth. They also do not provide answers to questions regarding the number of migrants moving from one country to another. Irina Ivakhniouk (2016) focused "on the new international migration situation in the Euro-Asian region that resulted from the collapse of the USSR and integration of the newly independent states into the world migration flows".[2] The author emphasises that the resulting policy stands in contradiction to the openness underpinning globalisation and limits migratory flows. Labour migration positively impacts the host countries' economies. Most economic studies view border controls as trade barriers and show that increased migration can boost the global GDP more than trade liberalisation.[3] Thanh Thai and Turkina (2013)[4]

1 Olga Nosova, "A Review of the Impact of Labor Migration and Structural Changes on the Global Crisis", *CES Working Papers* 16, no. 2 (2024), pp. 158–180.

2 Irina V. Ivakhniouk, "Development of Migration Theory in the Context of Globalization", *Century of Globalization* no. 1–2 (2016), pp. 36–51.

3 Faiçal Belaid and Anja Slany, "Exploring the Relationship Between Migration and Structural Transformation: An Empirical Analysis", Background Paper, UNCTAD, *Economic Development in Africa Report* (2018), pp. 5–8.

4 Mai Thi Thanh Thai and Ekaterina Turkina, "Entrepreneurial Migration: Characteristics, Causes and Effects", *Journal of Enterprising Communities People and Places in the Global Economy* 7, no. 3 (2013), pp. 188–195, https://ssrn.com/abstract=2314780, accessed 23 Aug. 2013.

and Silva et al. (2025)[5] explored the effects of migration on entrepreneurial and business development. These studies examine the relationship between economic performance and entrepreneurial activity, as well as the impact of migrants on the social and economic well-being of host countries.

The decision-making approach differs from other kinds of migration theory in that it considers the decision process taking place at the individual or household level. Most migration theories explain behaviour at the macro or meso-levels of refugees. Table 1 lists modern migration theories and summarises their features, strengths, and weaknesses.

In migration studies, a trajectory describes the route or pathway a migrant takes during their journey. This concept encompasses migrants' movements across locations (such as origin, transit, and destination) and changes in their legal, social, or economic status. Trajectories are not always straightforward; they may include detours, extended stays, or additional moves. Personal choices, external restrictions, and broader societal factors, including conflicts, policies, and borders, influence these decisions. Logical factors determine economic opportunities and security, while emotional or cultural factors, such as family ties, fears, and societal pressure, also shape the process. The availability of information, perception of risk, access to resources, and logistical or legal barriers further affect this trajectory.

Migrants are unique individuals with their own identities, cultures, and preferences. They have different education and skills. Migrant labourers are credited with increasing production and driving innovation through their direct productivity and the spillover effects of their work with native-born collaborators. Destination countries often have similarly complex cultures with a wide range of constituents, interests, and decision-making processes, some of which may compete. Remittances from migrants influence the decision-making process because they enable low-income households to pay for housing, basic consumer goods, and their children's education and medical care. They may also fund small enterprises and entrepreneurial endeavours in wealthier households. The decision-making process provides options for when, where, and how to move, and includes the assessment of various factors.

The *migration trajectory model* explains why people migrate and considers the whole process of evolution from beginning to end, including causes, stages, and consequences. "Migration is a process that passes through several separate but related stages throughout time, including departure, transit, settlement, and,

5 Barbara G. Silva, Nicholas C. Andriese and James G. Combs, "Return Migrant Entrepreneurship: A Systematic Review and Future Research Agenda", *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* (2025), doi.org/10.1177/10422587251322402, accessed 12 Mar. 2025.

Table 1. Comparative analysis of migration theories

Theory	Content	Strengths	Weaknesses	Application
Migration trajectories	The theory describes "how" migration changes over time, including shifting objectives, situations, and routes.	Focuses on how the migration process has changed in time. Recognises the stages of migration.	The lack of a cohesive system of analysis and the need for connection with other models.	The example of Ukrainian migration during the war.
Decision-making process in migration	Migration decision-making models are based on the notion that migration entails a series of choices and motivations. Each element includes family dynamics, economic opportunities, and perceived risks.	Explains the original choice to migrate and provides knowledge of the reasons behind migration.	Focus on the short-term decisions to migrate made by individuals or households.	Families may strategically allocate labour by placing one member overseas to earn money while the others remain at home.
The New Economics of Labour Migration	Migration is viewed as a means of reducing the risks associated with operating a firm and increasing the predicted individual income.	One of the family members may be sent to work abroad to cover a labour market gap and provide remittances to the family.	It provides a biased explanation of migration's causes, considering the "sending party" while ignoring the "receiving party". It fails to explain migration between countries with similar economic conditions.	Describes how international labour migration works and its effects.
Social network theory	Migration reflects in social relationships. Social networks reduce risks and expenses and encourage others to migrate.	Provides information on route selection, support mechanisms, and methods of relocation.	Initial migration is not adequately explained by networks, which might exacerbate reliance or inequity.	Refugees seek to live in countries where they already have family or a community.

Source: Author's own compilation.

occasionally, return or re-migration."[6] Policy regimes, individual resources, and external events (such as conflict escalation) all affect migration trajectories.

Decision-making theory substantiates individual behaviour, choice, emotion, and family dynamics. The theory investigates the social, economic, psychological, and decision-making aspects of household or individual migration. Hein de Haas (2011) notes that "understanding the nature and evolution of migration policies, as well as their effects on the volume, direction, timing, and migratory movements, is made easier by integrating qualitative and quantitative methodologies".[7] Migration decision-making theory tries to explain how and why people or households choose to migrate. The lack of broader social and emotional information, in particular cases of decision-making by migrants, limits the application of the theory.

Affective/emotional models reflect behaviours driven by feelings, psychological responses, and impressive events. The choices individuals make, along with emotional factors and family dynamics, have been studied using affective and emotional models. These models explain the reasons, factors, decision-making processes, and consequences of migration. When faced with danger or risks, people act irrationally and are emotionally driven to escape. Emotions reflect the preference to behave as rational actors under the influence of family-based or trauma factors. Basem Mahmud (2021) asserted that embodied and inherited cultural capital reflects the emotions and values of migrants.[8] People choose modes of behaviour based on their motivations, circumstances, and psychological state. The theory is limited by the subjective assessment of the migrant environment and the absence of critical thinking about threats and risks.

The *New Economics of Labour Migration theory* assumes that the decision-making process is collective, involving all family members. The theory of the New Economics is based on benefit and cost analysis and justifies the benefits resulting from migration. Aleksandr Grebenyuk (2016) writes that "an individual's decision to migrate for work is often made in conjunction with other family members, rather than alone, based on the theory of the new economics of migration".[9] The theory differs from others in its choice of subject of analysis: not an

6 Heaven Crawley and Dimitris Skleparis, "Refugees, Migrants, Neither, Both: Categorial Fetishism and the Politics of Bounding in Europe's 'migration crisis'", *Journal of Ethnic and Migrant Studies* 4 (2018), pp. 48–64, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1348224#abstract, accessed 19 Dec. 2025.

7 Hein de Haas, "The Determinants of International Migration: Conceptualizing Policy, Origin and Destination Effects", *IMI Working Paper* no. 32 (2011), pp. 1–35.

8 Basem Mahmud, "Refugees and Asylum Seekers' Emotions in Migration Studies", *Revista Internacional de Estudios Migratorios* 11, no. 1 (2021), pp. 27–58.

9 Aleksandr A. Grebenyuk, "Teoreticheskie podkhody k izucheniiu mezhdunarodnoi trudovoi migratsii", *Migratsiia i sotsialno-ekonomicheskoe razvitie* 1, no. 1 (2016), pp. 17–38, https://istina.msu.ru/publications/article/87077871/, accessed 19 Dec 2025.

individual, but the family. Jutta Günther, Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast, Udo Ludwig and Hans-Jürgen Wagener (2024) find that, in fact, the elite of East Germany's residents with West German migratory backgrounds grew by a third between 1990 and 2010.[10] However, this theory does not explain migration from countries with similar economic conditions and political stability factors. Further research on the relationships between migrants and residents has been conducted through network analysis, information dissemination, and socialisation.

The *social networking theory* considers the impact of social relationships on migration. Networks reduce migrants' risks and expenses and encourage others to follow. A system of networks provides an interplay between the exchange and co-creation of trading social relationships. It makes it feasible to study the collective dynamics of migrants. Those who produce social and economic innovations also make economic concerns more complex. The theory does not adequately justify networks, which might exacerbate reliance or inequity, nor is it made clear how networks operate in the global world.

A *people-centric approach* justifies the distinction of migration through investments in human capital at the micro level. This theory substantiates the labour-market variables and how these factors affect individual human behaviour. Huiping Chu (2024) states that to create an environment where guests feel secure in their own culture, when migrants face bias and discrimination, a person-centred approach is used.[11] This concept helps address conflicts between the first and second generations of migrants. People's decisions to cross borders have an impact on the well-being of both the countries of origin and destination. This approach is limited to the quantitative assessment of diversity and dignity in decisions to migrate. It does not explain the causes, factors, or results of migration.

The modern migration theories analyse networks, households, institutions, and emotions. Migration concepts outline the external and internal factors of individual behaviour. The existence of socio-economic inequality in society encourages people to migrate to countries with higher incomes. The New Economics and social network theories provide a clearer explanation of uneven, recurrent, and multifaceted trends. Theories differ in their subject of analysis. The decision-making approach focuses on individual choices. In the New Economics theory, it is the family. The affective/emotional models have limitations in focusing on emotions, trauma, and partial information. They contrast with rational

10 Jutta Günther et al. (eds.), *Roadblocks to the Socialist Modernization Path and Transition. Evidence from East Germany and Poland*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2024, https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-37050-2, accessed 27 Sept. 2024.

11 Huiping Chu, "Migrant and Person-Centered Approach", in Intakhab Alam Khan et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the 2024 2nd International Conference on Language, Innovative Education and Cultural Communication (CLEC 2024)*, Dordrecht: Atlantis Press, 2024, https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-263-7_11, accessed 3 July 2024.

choice models, which assume explicit cost–benefit analysis. The groups selected for examination, based on such factors as age, demographic division, and geographic region, are of different kinds depending on the theory. A single explanation is insufficient to capture the complexity of migration behaviour.

This theoretical adaptability supports the development of humane and flexible migration policies that focus on structural analysis, independent thinking, and the lived experiences of migrants. Most theories conclude that migration benefits global economic growth. Migrants encourage cultural exchange, foster skill development, and facilitate the sharing of ideas. The review of migration-related ideas demonstrates that refugee movements can be controlled in times of uncertainty and crises, and migrant flows can be forecast. The comparison of the migration theories leads to the research objective and methodology.

3. Research objective, hypotheses, and methodology

The aim of this study is to increase understanding of the economic and social effects of labour migration. It includes an analysis of the personal, social, and economic factors influencing refugees, labour migrants, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and circular migrants. The hypothesis is that labour migration impacts the economic and social development of the host country. The study offers policy and practical recommendations for managing migration flows in the job market, including employment, wage trends, and social benefits. The best method for examining migration trends – especially in cases involving forced or mixed migration – is an interdisciplinary approach that combines economic, psychological, social, and political aspects. Interdisciplinarity involves applying knowledge from multiple fields. The theoretical migration concepts explain the behaviour of refugees and define the factors that influence the decision-making process of migrants.

Socioeconomic disciplines examine why people migrate and how they find work in the labour market. Psychological theories explore the trauma related to displacement and how it influences a family's decision to stay or move. An interdisciplinary approach supports a positive shift in understanding system change as a process and its mechanisms.[12] It enables governments to study the migration process and suggests ways to regulate it. This article employs quantitative research methods and draws on data from the International Organization for

12 Olga Nosova, "System Transformational Changes in Ukraine: Problems and Development", in Valerii Kopiika, Anton Filipenko and Oleksii Toporkov (eds.), *Interdisciplinarity in International Relations: Theory, Methodology, Evidence*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2024, pp. 122–150 (123).

Migration, UNHCR reports, and statistical data from Ukraine's State Statistics Service. It also includes qualitative online interviews conducted by the author, as well as the Gradus Company, the Centre for Economic Strategy, and the European Agency for Asylum. When migrants decide to move, they weigh the advantages and disadvantages of relocating within their own country or to another country.

Patterns among different demographic groups are analysed using descriptive statistics. The study specifically focuses on two groups: internally displaced persons (IDPs) and Ukrainian migrants (refugees) who have relocated to other countries.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Economic and social effects of migration

The number of people forced to leave their homes has reached ten million since the start of the full-scale war in Ukraine on 24 February 2022. This figure includes 5.6 million who have moved abroad and 3.8 million who are internally displaced within Ukraine. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the internally displaced population within Ukraine has risen to about eight million. Two-thirds of the respondents have an advanced (tertiary) level of education.[13]

Surveys by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) confirm that by the start of 2025, major push factors, including the danger of occupation and risks to life, will continue to be the basic reasons for migration.[14] Nevertheless, in spite of the continuing threats, fighting, and economic worries, most people (71% of respondents) say that they intend to remain in Ukraine after the war's active phase is over. Thirteen percent of interviewees in 2025 planned to leave Ukraine in the next six months.[15]

Migration's economic implications include its effects on employment, incomes, productivity, regional development, and government budgets. There is evidence from analysis and a review of studies showing that the GDP and budgets of host nations benefit from the substantial number of Ukrainian migrants. The positive economic consequences for the host economy are reflected in

13 ILO Brief, "The Impact of the Ukraine Crisis on the World of Work", 2022, https://www.ilo.org/europe/publications/WCMS_844294/lang--en/index.htm, accessed 11 May 2022.

14 "Surveys with Arriving Migrants from Ukraine, Thematic Report: Movements and Returns", 2024, https://euaa.europa.eu/publications/surveys-arriving-migrants-ukraine-movements-and-returns-report, accessed 4 Dec. 2024.

15 EUAA, "Anticipating Displacement: EUAA Looking into Migration Trends in Ukraine", 21 July 2025, https://www.euaa.europa.eu/news-events/anticipating-displacement-euaa-looking-migration-trends-ukraine, accessed 21 July 2025.

remittances, which account for 8% to 10% of Ukraine's GDP. Remittances include both short-term employee income transfers (personal remittances) and inflows from migrants.

According to World Bank data, Ukraine had record high inflows of $18.2 billion in 2021, making it the largest beneficiary of remittances in Europe and Central Asia before the Russian invasion in 2022.[16] However, compared with the monthly average in 2020–2021, the National Bank of Ukraine observed a 10% decline in the volume of private remittances transferred to Ukraine from January to July 2023. The lowest quarterly amount of remittances was $1,218.00 million in the first quarter of 2010. The growing sum of remittances in Ukraine averaged $2,247.99 million between 2008 and 2025. This emphasises their crucial role as a reliable source of external funding, particularly in times of crisis. Remittances reached a peak level of $3,671.00 million in the fourth quarter of 2021. In the first quarter of 2025, their amount declined.[17] Polishchuk et al. (2023) affirmed that "the Ukrainian market for digital remittances is primed to rebound. Forecasts assume that transaction values will gradually stabilise, with an average of $1,750 per user by 2024 and a steady growth rate of users, and that the number of users will reach 26,680 by 2028".[18] Remittances are a valuable financial source for economic recovery, contributing significantly to GDP growth. Economists consider that the amount of money transferred from the European Union to Ukraine could increase from 15% to 20% if the situation in the Ukrainian labour market stabilises. The International Labor Organization estimates that 2.75 million of the total number of refugees are of working age. Of these, 43.5% (1.2 million) were employed before the crisis began and either left or lost their jobs during the conflict. An estimated 410,000 previously employed refugees are currently living in Poland, including 200,000 high-skilled, 146,000 medium-skilled, and 64,000 low-skilled workers. Employment rates for Ukrainian refugees have increased significantly since 2023 in destination countries, rising by nine percentage points annually at the regional level to reach 64%. Employment among refugees is increasing, with new workers entering the labour force. This has resulted in a drop in unemployment, which fell to 9% from the 13% recorded in the previous fifteen years. In Lithuania, the 2024 labour force participation rate was 70%, nearly matching the 73% figure for the host nation itself.[19] The Deloitte survey (2025)

16 "Remittances to Reach $630 billion in 2022 with Record Flows into Ukraine. Press Release", 12 May 2022, https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/05/11/remittances-to-reach-630-billion-in-2022-with-record-flows-into-ukraine, accessed 12 May 2022.

17 "Ukraine Remittances. Trading Economics", 2025, https://tradingeconomics.com/ukraine/remittances, accessed Sept. 2025.

18 Yevheniia Polishchuk et al., "Global Support at the Click of a Button: How Digital Remittances Help Ukraine During Crises", *Geopolitics under Globalization* 5, no. 1 (2023), pp. 57–67 (61).

19 "Lithuania Socio-Economic Insight Survey, Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation", 2024, https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/114716, accessed 27 Feb. 2024.

proves that Ukrainian migrants contribute to labour productivity in Poland. The net effect of Ukrainian refugees on Poland's GDP in 2024 was 2.7%.[20]

Migration compels people to study and acquire new skills abroad. When they return to their home country, migrants can apply their knowledge and abilities across various industries. They use these skills to innovate and increase productivity in Ukraine. Migrants also return to their host countries with new business experience. Ukraine's position in the skill ranking presented in the Global Skills Report has worsened: it dropped from 15th place in 2023 to 70th in 2025. The results show that business, technology, data science, and AI maturity indices in Ukraine are average compared with those of the other 109 countries covered by the Global Skills Report.

Table 2. Regional skill ranking

Regional rank	Global rank	Country	Business	Technology	Data science	AI maturity index
1	1	Switzerland	100%	99%	100%	3
2	2	Netherlands	99%	96%	99%	7
3	3	Sweden	97%	97%	98%	8
4	5	Finland	95%	98%	97%	5
5	6	Denmark	96%	91%	95%	2
6	7	Norway	94%	94%	94%	9
7	8	Luxembourg	94%	94%	92%	6
8	9	Germany	93%	93%	94%	14
12	20	Estonia	78%	95%	73%	11
15	24	Latvia	81%	83%	67%	30
18	28	Hungary	77%	77%	69%	44
19	29	Lithuania	72%	82%	79%	26
20	30	Czech Republic	74%	68%	77%	27
21	31	Italy	73%	67%	75%	29
22	32	Croatia	66%	73%	72%	38
23	34	Poland	63%	71%	74%	36
34	70	Ukraine	42%	44%	22%	58

Source: Based on data from the Global Skills Report 2025. Coursera.

20 "Poland: Analysis of the Impact of Refugees from Ukraine on the Economy of Poland", 2nd edition (June 2025), https://data.unhcr.org/es/documents/details/116621, accessed 29 May 2025.

Due to economic activity in the host countries, two out of three (66%) Ukrainian refugees were employed, indicating a comparatively satisfactory outcome in terms of their integration into the labour market.[21] Migration relieves labour market pressure and reduces unemployment in rural or economically depressed areas. The United Nations estimates that there are roughly 6.92 million Ukrainian refugees worldwide. Almost 4.3 million are registered in the European Union member states. The number of Ukrainian refugees rose by 100,000 in 2025. A net population loss continued until the end of 2025, despite the lack of a significant intake of new refugees during the winter of 2025–2026. In Ukraine, there are 4.62 million officially recognised internally displaced persons. Kyiv, Kharkiv, Donetsk, and Dnipropetrovsk are home to many displaced people. A recent non-governmental study estimates that as of January 2026, the unemployment rate in Ukraine is roughly 15.8%, reflecting a labour supply and demand imbalance that continues to put strain on the economy. Labour migration has positive and negative consequences for migrants' countries of origin. Remittances play a significant role in increasing income in those countries. However, the outflow of labour force and skilled workers to destination countries aggravates the situation in the country of origin. Migrants face various challenges, including social adaptation issues, cultural incompatibilities, and a lack of education.

Employment decreased after the war started in Ukraine. The employment structure shifted during the war, with fewer people working in trade and services. The decline in employment in Ukraine is related to a 21% decrease in the number of businesses not receiving governmental funding. The number of employees of non-state-funded companies shrank by 15%, or 6.7 million individuals, while those employed by individual business owners declined by 28%, or approximately 604,000 people.[22]

The number of people willing to switch careers and accept lower pay has increased in Ukraine. Research by the National Bank of Ukraine indicates that most businesses are unable to guarantee salaries at pre-war levels. Private sector salaries have seen a decline of between 25% and 50% since before the war. A growing number of businesses in the energy, services, transportation, and trade sectors have reduced employee remuneration by 10–50%.[23] In terms of both supply and demand, the Ukrainian labour market is currently 10–15% less active than it was

21 Danish Trade Union Development Agency, *Labour Market Profile Ukraine 2025/2026*, 2025, p. 11, https://www.ulandssekretariatet.dk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Ukraine-LMP-2025-final1.pdf, accessed 5 Dec. 2025.

22 Ibid., p. 12.

23 Olga Nosova, "Labor Market Organization in Ukraine: Challenges and Perspectives", in Larisa Ivascu, Alin Artene and Marius Pislaru (eds.), *Monetary Policies and Sustainable Businesses*, IntechOpen, 2023, p. 5, https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/88554, accessed 9 Nov. 2023.

before the full-scale war. Not all workers who stayed in Ukraine have the skills necessary to meet the country's evolving economic demands.

The research findings support the idea that the development of a favourable and secure economic, social, and cultural environment in a nation is a precondition for the emergence of factors that motivate individuals to return to their home country. Governments must implement measures to encourage residents to stay in their homeland by enhancing work opportunities, training programmes and skill development, and providing social and cultural activities for them.

4.2 Employment problems in Ukraine

Migration leads to the emigration of talented young people from the migrants' countries of origin. The emigration of skilled workers and the decline in the population worsen those countries' economic performance. Ukraine's industry, services, and agricultural sectors are all experiencing labour shortages. A significant share of the decline in employment has occurred in the industrially developed regions. The number of businesses not supported by the state budget has decreased by 21% due to the economic decline. The Ukrainian Ministry of Economics projects that to revive the country's economy over the next ten years, 4.5 million foreigners will need to be attracted.

The negative effects of war have impacted the education sector, including the safety of children and staff, as well as students in conflict zones, occupied territories, or living abroad, mostly engaging in online learning. UNICEF reported that 5.3 million children faced barriers to accessing education, including 3.6 million children directly impacted by school closures.[24] Emigration and low birth rates exacerbate the problem of Ukraine's ageing and declining population, while the outflow of young families and working-age individuals contributes to the country's demographic decline. Family separation, emotional stress, and social adaptation issues in unfamiliar places impact the psychological well-being of migrants. Urbanavice (2025) states that "women have a higher likelihood of mental health disorders, since most of the people who left Ukraine were women with children".[25]

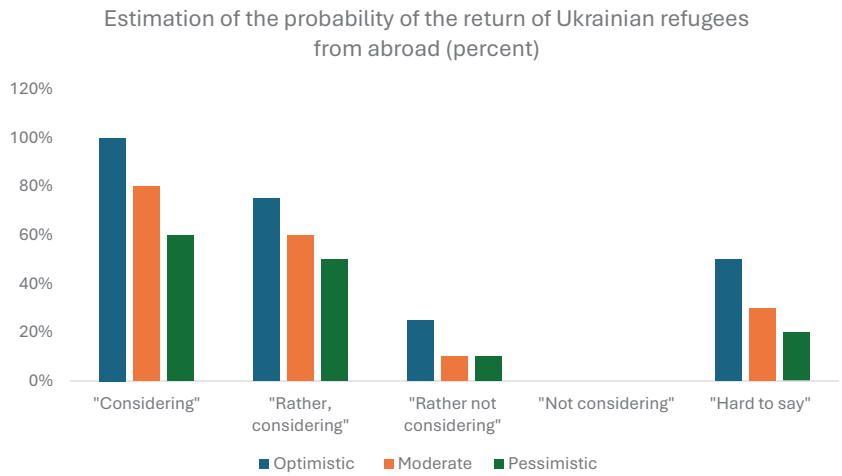
The Centre for Economic Strategy (CES) conducted a survey to determine the factors, attitudes, and effects of migration. The fundamental condition for citizens to decide to remain in the country is the preservation and guarantee of

24 ILO Brief, "The Impact of the Ukraine Crisis" (as cited in note 13).

25 Rita Urbanavičė, *The Physical and Mental Health of Asylum Seekers and Refugees and the Correlation with Traumatic Events, Social and Demographic Factors*. Doctoral Dissertation, Vilnius University, 2025, p. 161, https://epublications.vu.lt/object/elaba:240502584/240502584.pdf, accessed 25 Nov. 2025.

their safety. Military and economic barriers to repatriation are the primary obstacles. Among the main reasons deterring refugees from returning to Ukraine are the country's continuing threats to life, uncertainties, destruction of homes, low living standards, and difficulties obtaining work. The CES proposes three scenarios for Ukrainians who want to return to the country from abroad (see Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Estimation of the probability of return of Ukrainian refugees from abroad (percent)



Source: Based on data from Ukrainian Refugees After Three Years Abroad, 2025.

According to the results, more than half of the respondents plan to return to the country after the war ends. Only a quarter answered that they would rather not consider coming back to Ukraine. Accordingly, Ukraine's overall economic losses would be 5.14% of its pre-war GDP under the optimistic scenario, 6.83% under the moderate scenario, and 7.75% under the pessimistic scenario. In contrast, the overall economic losses in January 2025 would be 3.9% in the optimistic scenario, 5.41% in the moderate scenario, and 6.31% in the pessimistic scenario. Just 13.5% of "quasi-labour" migrants and 86% of "patriotic" refugees intend to return.[26] Guarantees of the safety of citizens remain the basic factor encouraging Ukrainian refugees to return from abroad. The results enable us to ascertain the effects of a range of factors on labour migration. The importance of each factor is also contingent upon the immigration source nation, labour costs, and

26 Centre for Economic Strategy, "Ukrainian Refugees after Three Years Abroad. Fourth Wave of Research. Human Capital", 3 Mar. 2025, https://ces.org.ua/en/refugees-fourth-wave, accessed 3 Mar. 2025.

socioeconomic circumstances. The effects of remittances on a recipient country's economic progress are ambiguous. They can weaken the competitiveness of remittance-receiving countries in international markets by increasing the consumption of non-tradable products, raising world prices, appreciating the real interest rate, and reducing exports.

Positive effects on migrant recipient countries include population growth, improved education, and enhanced cultural diversity. Employment growth is linked to the inflow of young people, skills improvements, and demographic and cultural enrichment in these countries. Migrants contribute to cultural convergence and the diffusion of traditions, languages, and historical events. They disseminate cultural norms and values from their host nations back to their home countries, these often being referred to as cultural remittances.

Future research on migration will be based on empirical data on migrants applied to host countries. Such analysis can provide more complete information about the inflows and outflows of migrants.

5. Conclusions

The study results support the theory that positively influencing the decision-making process that drives people to return home is crucial in regulating labour migration flows. The establishment of a safe and attractive social, cultural, and economic environment in the country is necessary for this.

Governments can encourage their citizens to remain in their countries by offering training programmes, growing economic opportunities, promoting skill development, and organising social and cultural activities.

This paper offers a critical review of the literature, emphasising the gaps and inconsistencies in current theories. The research suggests a direction for future studies that may include original data analysis and policy proposals.

Economic and Social Effects of Labour Migration in Ukraine

This paper explores the economic and social effects of labour migration. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has increased the geopolitical risks for the global economy. The large outflow of Ukrainian refugees abroad challenges the decision-making processes of migrants in both the short and long term. Fundamental research questions concern the identification and assessment of the urgent capital and labour market needs of the host countries and Ukraine. The analysis examines the impact of migration flows on employment, wage trends, and social sustainability. The article confirms that increased labour migration creates a need for job creation and entrepreneurship opportunities. Employing the labour force is a crucial task for the global community. Learning from the global crisis experience, policymakers are urged to develop new migration governance frameworks and to emphasise international cooperation and the rule of law.

Wirtschaftliche und soziale Folgen der Arbeitsmigration in der Ukraine

Die Arbeit untersucht die wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Folgen der Arbeitsmigration. Der russische Einmarsch in die Ukraine hat die geopolitischen Risiken für die Weltwirtschaft verschärft. Der Massenabfluss ukrainischer Flüchtlinge ins Ausland stellt die Entscheidungsprozesse der Migranten kurz- und langfristig vor Herausforderungen. Grundlegende Forschungsfragen betreffen die Ermittlung und Abschätzung des dringenden Kapital- und Arbeitsmarktbedarfs der Aufnahmeländer und der Ukraine. Gegenstand der Analyse sind die Auswirkungen der Migrationsströme auf Beschäftigung, Lohndynamik und soziale Nachhaltigkeit. Der vorliegende Beitrag bestätigt, dass aufgrund der zunehmenden Arbeitsmigration ein Bedarf nach Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen und unternehmerischen Möglichkeiten besteht. Die Beschäftigung von Arbeitskräften ist eine der wichtigsten Aufgaben der Weltgemeinschaft. Die Erfahrungen aus der globalen Krise zwingen politische Entscheidungsträger, neue Rahmenbedingungen für die Migrationssteuerung zu entwickeln und die internationale Zusammenarbeit sowie die Rechtsstaatlichkeit zu fördern.

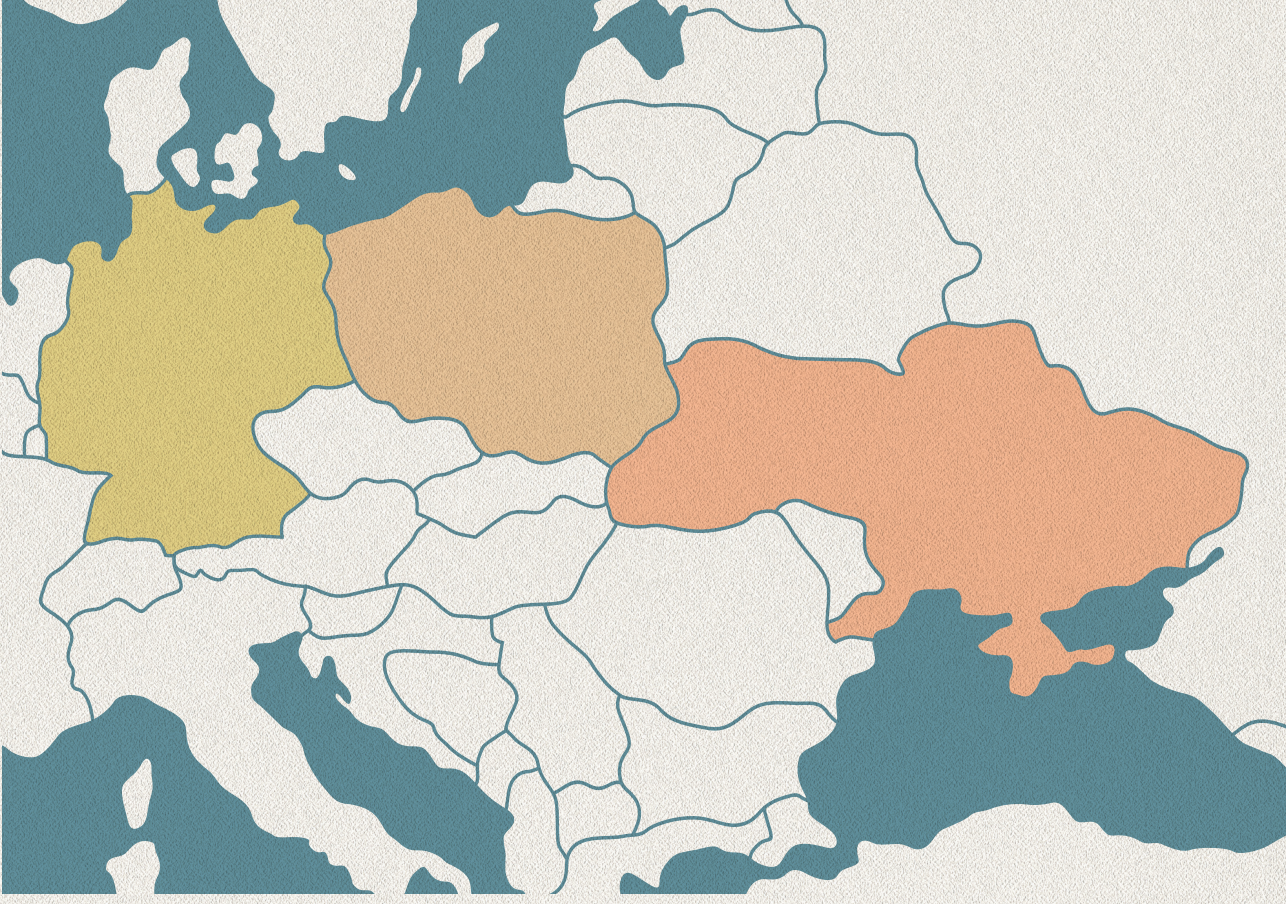
Gospodarcze i społeczne skutki migracji zarobkowej na Ukrainie

Artykuł analizuje ekonomiczne i społeczne konsekwencje migracji zarobkowej. Rosyjska inwazja na Ukrainę zwiększyła zagrożenia geopolityczne dla gospodarki światowej. Masowy odpływ ukraińskich uchodźców za granicę stanowi wyzwanie dla procesów decyzyjnych migrantów w perspektywie krótko- i długoterminowej. Podstawowe pytania badawcze dotyczą określenia i oszacowania pilnych potrzeb krajów przyjmujących i Ukrainy w zakresie rynku kapitałowego i rynku pracy. Przedmiotem analizy jest wpływ przepływów migracyjnych na zatrudnienie, dynamikę płac i zrównoważony rozwój społeczny. Artykuł potwierdza, że wzmożona migracja zarobkowa rodzi potrzebę tworzenia miejsc

pracy i rozwoju przedsiębiorczości. Zatrudnienie siły roboczej jest jednym z kluczowych zadań dla społeczności światowej. Wnioski z doświadczenia globalnego kryzysu zmuszają decydentów politycznych do opracowania nowych ram zarządzania migracją oraz położenia nacisku na współpracę międzynarodową i praworządność.

Економічні та соціальні наслідки трудової міграції в Україні

У статті розглядаються економічні та соціальні наслідки трудової міграції. Російське вторгнення в Україну загострило геополітичні ризики для світової економіки. Масовий відтік українських біженців за кордон створює проблеми для процесів прийняття рішень мігрантами у короткостроковій та довгостроковій перспективах. Фундаментальні дослідницькі питання включають визначення та задоволення нагальних потреб у капіталі та ринку праці країн-реципієнтів та України. У дослідженні аналізується вплив міграційних потоків на зайнятість, динаміку заробітної плати та соціальну стійкість. У статті підтверджується, що через зростання трудової міграції існує потреба у створенні робочих місць та можливостей для підприємництва. Зайнятість робочої сили належить до важливих завдань світової спільноти. Вивчення досвіду глобальної кризи спонукає політиків розробляти нові рамкові умови для управління міграцією та сприяти міжнародній співпраці і верховенству права.



Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast, Sławomir Kamosiński, Konrad Walerski (eds.)

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Photo on the back cover: A4 motorway near the Polish–Ukrainian border (2022)
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