The living and economic situation of Ukrainian migrants in Poland - the impact of the pandemic and the war on the nature of migration in Poland

Report of the questionnaire survey
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# Table of contents

Summary of key findings .................................................. 3  
Introduction ........................................................................ 5  
1. Socio-economic characteristics of migrants from Ukraine .... 7  
   2.1. Labour market situation ........................................... 13  
   2.2. Integration of Ukrainian migrants on the Polish labour market .................................................. 17  
   2.3. The economic situation, benefits and assistance received by migrants ........................................... 20  
3. Further plans of migrants ................................................. 23  
   3.1. Planned continued stay in Poland ............................... 23  
   3.2. Family situation and migrants’ residence plans .......... 25  
   3.3. Factors supporting and facilitating the adaptation process of migrants from Ukraine. ...................... 26  
4. Cash and in-kind aid for Ukraine ...................................... 29  
   4.1. Propensity to transfer money .................................... 29  
   4.2. Characteristics of remittances ................................... 30  
   4.3. In-kind aid ............................................................. 32  
5. Impact of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine on the situation of migrants staying in Poland ................. 33  
6. Selected elements of regional diversification of migrants from Ukraine in Poland ........................................... 39  
7. Annex. Description of the survey method ........................ 44  
Index of figures .................................................................... 45
Summary of key findings

This report presents the results of a survey conducted among migrants from Ukraine in November 2022 - both refugees and those who came to Poland before the war. The most important conclusions of this survey are as follows:

- **There are big differences in the demographic structure, the labour market situation and plans to stay in Poland between migrants who arrived in Poland before the outbreak of the full-scale war and refugees.** Adult refugees in Poland are much more often women (80% versus 54% among pre-war migrants). Most of the Ukrainian migrants hold university degrees. The percentage of people aged over 60 among refugees visibly declined compared to the beginning of the war. On the other hand, pre-war migrants could speak Polish much better and were more frequently in employment (94% of respondents versus 65% among refugees). Moreover, pre-war migrants declared much more frequently that they wanted to stay in Poland permanently (55% versus 19% among refugees).

- **Converting temporary stays into long-term ones and plans to stay in Poland for longer were much more frequent among people who came to Poland before the war, which was caused not only by the war, but also by the COVID-19 pandemic and the regulatory changes introduced in Poland in 2020-2021.** The regulatory changes have significantly facilitated longer stays in Poland even for people who were not initially interested in doing so (circular migrants). On the one hand, the COVID-19 epidemic reduced mobility between Poland and Ukraine, and on the other hand, it relatively deteriorated the economic situation in Ukraine compared to Poland. The migrants who had arrived in Poland before the outbreak of the war planned to settle in Poland permanently more frequently. One of the contributing factors was the arrival of their family members. Most of the war refugees remaining in Poland did not have any definite plans for the future, although, compared to the results of the survey carried out just after the outbreak of the war, the percentage of those interested in remaining in Poland permanently had also increased in this group.

- **In the period of nine months since the outbreak of the war, the integration of Ukrainian refugees in the Polish labour market and their economic independence improved significantly.** Still, approximately 20 per cent of them are living “from day to day” in Poland. A comparison of the results of the November and May 2022 survey indicates that a considerable number of refugees quickly mastered the basics of Polish. Integration in the labour market was also progressing rapidly, with a 65% employment rate among refugees in November vs. 28% in the May survey. As a result, most refugees quickly became independent in terms of accommodation (the percentage of people renting accommodation on their own increased from 33% to 54%). Nevertheless, about 20% of refugees were still a challenge for the welfare system as
they were in the worst financial situation and were living in collective accommoda-
tion or in properties made available free of charge is.

- **Migrants most commonly worked in industry and services that do not require high qualifications.** Among refugees, on the other hand, persons providing services to households represented the largest group. The percentage of people working in services requiring high qualifications was also relatively high compared to earlier migrants. Work upon arrival in Poland was, for a large part of the immigrants, different from their previous work in Ukraine. About one third of pre-war migrants and 46% of refugees had a feeling that they were working below their qualifications in Poland.

- **Command of the Polish language was strongly correlated with the ability to find employment.** This was particularly visible among refugees - 50% of those who did not speak Polish had jobs whereas the percentage among those who spoke the language well was 82.

- The progressive process of adaptation of Ukrainian citizens to living and working in Poland would be facilitated by assistance consisting in: organising Polish language courses, easier legalisation of their stay, simplification of the procedure of recognition of diplomas and assistance in finding jobs.

- **Migrants support their relatives in Ukraine.** Those who arrived before the war have not changed their inclination to send money abroad (more than 60% of them transfer money), thus, the hypothesis that remittances will cease to exist with a more settled character of migration has not been confirmed yet. Instead, the average amount of remittance decreased significantly while the frequency of remittances increased. The percentage of refugees transferring money to Ukraine is significantly lower than in case of pre-war migrants (28%), but if they transfer money, they do so very frequently.

- A considerable regional diversification occurs in Poland both in terms of the number of migrants from Ukraine in relation to the local population and in terms of the characteristics of migrants. Refugees from Ukraine settled relatively most often in Mazowieckie and Dolnośląskie Voivodeships. On the other hand, the highest percentage of working migrants was found in Pomorskie and in the Dolnośląskie Voi-
vodeship.
Introduction

The outbreak of the war in Ukraine resulted in a huge influx of war refugees to entire Europe, but mainly to Poland. Irrespective of refugees, a large group of pre-war migrants from Ukraine, who started arriving in Poland on a bigger scale from 2014 onwards, have stayed and continue to stay in Poland. According to the PESEL registers, in November 2022 approximately 560 thousand adult refugees from Ukraine and approximately 460 thousand children were staying in Poland. In addition, data published by Statistics Poland (GUS) indicated that the number of migrants from Ukraine residing in Poland at the end of 2019 was approximately 1.3 million\(^1\). Although this number probably decreased during the pandemic and since the beginning of the war because some of the men staying in Poland returned to their country and some, due to the circular nature of migration, remained in Ukraine, “pre-war” migrants still constituted a significant population group in Poland.

Narodowy Bank Polski conducted two surveys of migrants from Ukraine in 2022. The first survey which took place between 13 April 2022 and 13 May 2022, covered a sample of 3,165 refugees arriving in Poland due to Russia’s attack on Ukraine on 24 February 2022\(^2\). The second survey, conducted in the autumn between 26 September 2022 and 18 November 2022, covered both refugees arriving in Poland after 24 February 2022 and migrants arriving before that date (hereafter referred to as pre-war migrants) whose motives for coming to Poland can be interpreted as labour migration. A total of 3,934 interviews were carried out in all voivodeships in Poland. The aim of the autumn round of the survey was to diagnose the situation of war refugees a few months after the outbreak of the war, to assess the current situation of pre-war migrants, including the assessment of their economic activity and to determine the current scale and characteristics of remittances made by migrants from Ukraine.

As far as the most important issues are concerned, this report shows the results in two contexts. First of all, it compares refugees now and in the first months after the outbreak of the full-scale war, and secondly it compares refugees with pre-war migrants. The first comparison concerning refugees in the period from April to May 2022 and in the current survey allows us to determine how the labour market situation for refugees changed in about six months, how their integration into the Polish society proceeds, what kind of problems they are facing and what their plans for the future are. On the other hand, the second comparison, which comprises refugees and pre-war migrants, shows the diversified characteristics of successive waves of migration, their labour market situation and their plans to stay in Poland as well as their related economic behaviour.

\(^1\) Source: GUS (2020) Population of foreigners in Poland during the COVID-19 pandemic
\(^2\) A report on this survey is available on the NBP website
In the figures presented in the Report, the following expressions are used in relation to migrants from Ukraine who entered Poland at different periods of time:

- **pre-war migrants** - Ukrainian citizens who arrived in Poland before Russia’s attack on Ukraine on 24 February 2022, surveyed by NBP between 26 September and 18 November 2022;
- **refugees in November 2022** - Ukrainian nationals who arrived in Poland after 24 February 2022, surveyed by NBP between 26 September and 18 November 2022;
- **refugees in May 2022** - Ukrainian nationals who arrived in Poland after 24 February 2022, surveyed by NBP between 13 April and 13 May 2022;
- **Ukrainian migrants from the 2020 survey** - Ukrainian nationals surveyed in the NBP survey conducted in late 2019 and early 2020.

Due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, it is difficult to determine unequivocally how the fate of Ukrainian citizens currently residing in Poland will develop. Therefore, the statements and conclusions presented regarding the future should rather be treated as certain indications.
1. Socio-economic characteristics of migrants from Ukraine

Migrants from Ukraine staying in Poland are mostly women - almost 70% of the total respondents. Women predominate among refugees (around 80%) but also among pre-war migrants (around 54%). Compared to May 2022, i.e. the initial phase of the war in Ukraine, the percentage of men among the refugees has increased (from 10% to 19%).

The dominant group among both groups of migrants are those aged 27 - 44 (Figure 1). A noticeable difference between refugees and pre-war migrants relates to persons over 60 who are more numerous among refugees (8%). However, if the refugee population in May 2022 and November 2022 is compared, it can be seen that the percentage of people over 60 has decreased from almost 15%, some of the oldest people may have left Poland.

Figure 1. Pre-war migrants and refugees from Ukraine in Poland by age

Migrants come from all regions of Ukraine. However, among pre-war migrants, people from western Ukraine (34%) and central Ukraine (25%) predominate (Figure 2). People from eastern and southern Ukraine are significantly less represented. Among refugees, such noticeable differences in proportions do not exist. On the other hand, a decline in the percentage of people from northern Ukraine is visible compared to last spring (from 26% to 20%), which can probably be explained to a large extent by their return to Kiev.
Figure 2. Regions of origin of pre-war migrants and refugees from Ukraine

Most of Ukrainian nationals arriving in Poland from both groups come from urban areas. Only 16% of them lived in rural areas immediately prior to their coming to Poland. Among refugees, a more numerous group than among pre-war migrants are those who lived in Ukraine's largest cities, which include Odessa, Kiev, Dnipro, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Zaporozhye, Lviv and Kryvyi Rih (Figure 3), which may be due to fears of bombardment, attacks on critical infrastructure, supply difficulties.

Figure 3. Place of residence in Ukraine before arrival in Poland

The structure of the respondents’ answers makes it possible to assess changes in the composition of migrant families in Ukraine and in Poland in relation to the pre-war situation. In particular, the percentage of pre-war migrants who were staying in Poland with their life partner reached at least 40% (Figure 4). The outbreak of the war motivated about 8% of pre-
war migrants to bring their life partners to Poland, while 14% declared that they would stay in Ukraine. The remaining 38% of responses included both those who were not in a stable relationship and refusals to respond. In case of refugees, 6% declared that their life partner had been staying in Poland before the war, another 15% said that they had come to Poland because of the war, as did the respondents, while 31% declared that they had stayed behind in Ukraine. The percentage of non-response to this question was relatively high, as the question referred to sensitive information due to the ongoing war.

The respondents’ parents in most cases remained in Ukraine both before and now, during the war (Figure 5). In this respect, the differences between pre-war economic migrants (52%) and war refugees (47%) are relatively small. Moreover, the respondents in each group brought their parents to Poland with similar frequency (10-11%) after the outbreak of the war. The diversification of both groups of immigrants is a result of the fact that some of the parents of the pre-war refugees had already arrived in Poland before the war (9%) while in the case of war refugees, this figure reached only 3%.

One of the most visible demographic characteristics of refugees arriving in Poland is the high proportion of minor children among migrants. Survey data confirm these observations.
As a result of the outbreak of the war, at least 30% of refugees and 12% of those already staying in Poland before the war brought their children to Poland. This difference is a consequence of the fact that the children of earlier migrants very often had already come to Poland before the war (declared by 23% of respondents). Only approximately 5-6% of migrants declared that their children had remained in Ukraine.

Additional questions asked about the children provided more detailed information about the place of stay of migrant children at the time of the survey (Figure 7). Approximately 36% of refugees and 33% of previous migrants declared that all their minor children were residing in Poland. Therefore, the difference is insignificant. The structure is also similar for responses indicating no children (9-10%), children remaining in Ukraine (4-5%) and families where some children were staying in Poland and some in Ukraine (1-2%). The remaining half or so of the respondents did not provide an answer to the question allowing them to be classified, so it is difficult to indicate to which of the above categories they belonged.

Of those who arrived before the outbreak of the war, 84% rented or owned a dwelling and further 12% were living in employer-provided accommodation (Figure 8). The other options represented the margin of responses. Among the refugees surveyed in November 2022, 52% rented accommodation, which means a significant change in relation to the percentage observed as recently as May 2022 (33%). The percentage of housing options that are linked to the vulnerability of immigrants clearly decreased. The percentage of refugees living with other Ukrainian migrants for free fell from 19% to 6%. The percentage of refugees living for free with the Poles who were helping them also decreased from 18% to 6%. The decline was only smaller in the case of collective accommodation, from 20% in May to 19% in November 2022.
Approximately 13% of the respondents declare that they do not speak Polish (Figure 9). Others speak Polish well or understand it to a limited extent. Better language skills are declared by pre-war migrants but there is a noticeable improvement in the Polish language skills among refugees. The percentage of those who declare that they do not speak Polish has fallen from 46% to 21%. It may be claimed that some people who do not speak Polish have returned to Ukraine, while others learn the language quickly when taking up employment or staying in Poland.

Most people in each group of migrants have either university or secondary education (Figure 10). There are no significant differences in education between pre-war migrants and refugees. Compared to May 2022, the percentage of refugees with primary and vocational education...
has increased (from 15% to 20%). This group of refugees in the May survey was less likely to declare an intention to return to Ukraine soon than refugees with university education.

**Figure 10. Level of education of migrants from Ukraine**

![Level of education of migrants from Ukraine](image)

According to the data gathered by the Border Guard, the largest wave of refugee inflow to Poland took place in March 2022. This is reflected in the structure of refugees according to the month of arrival (**Figure 11**).

**Figure 11. Structure of refugees according to the month of arrival in Poland**

![Structure of refugees according to the month of arrival in Poland](image)

Pre-war migrants started arriving in Poland on a larger scale from 2014. Initially, they were predominantly circular economic migrants staying in Poland for a short period of time. Over time, this migration began to take on a settlement nature. Currently, the average estimated length of stay for pre-war migrants is 4.5 years. This issue is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, *The impact of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine on migrants staying in Poland*. 

The living and economic situation of Ukrainian migrants in Poland
2. The economic situation of migrants from Ukraine in Poland

The economic situation of migrants from Ukraine in Poland in 2022 was very diversified, with two populations of migrants who ended up in Poland for very different reasons staying side by side. On the one hand, economic migrants who arrived before the outbreak of the full-scale war already constituted a significant part of Poland’s labour supply before 2022. Their economic situation was relatively good and their stays in Poland became gradually longer. On the other hand, the outbreak of the war caused a sudden inflow of refugees (forced migrants) who, despite their declared willingness to take up employment, knew little about the Polish labour market and very often did not speak Polish either. The November 2022 survey indicates, however, that the majority of refugee job seekers quickly found a job. Nevertheless, the percentage of unemployed people is still relatively high among them and their average economic situation is relatively worse than that of earlier economic migrants.

2.1. Labour market situation

The dynamic changes in the number of Ukrainian immigrants in Poland and the reasons for their arrival pose a challenge for determining the labour activity of all the Ukrainian citizens staying in Poland. Those already staying in Poland before 24 February 2022 were most often economic migrants who often already had experience of previous stays in Poland. Hence, the vast majority of them (94% in total) had a job in Poland (Figure 12), with 83% of such immigrants describing their job as permanent employment, 3% running their own business and the remainder said they were working on various types of less permanent contracts (e.g: 5% - seasonal work, 2% - other type of work). Among those persons, the percentages of remote workers and those employed abroad were marginal.

People who arrived in Poland after 24 February 2022 were mostly forced to move to Poland because of the war and their primary purpose was not gainful employment. Nevertheless, these people were also very active in the labour market in Poland. About 65% of them had jobs, about 24% were looking for a suitable job (unemployed) and only 11% were economically inactive. For the sake of reference, according to the Population Economic Activity Survey covering the same period, about 65% women with Polish citizenship at working age (15-64 years) were working, about 2% were looking for a job and 33% were economically inactive. The relatively short period that elapsed since the refugees’ arrival in Poland means that their forms of employment were much less stable than those of previous economic migrants and Polish citizens. Only about 38% described their employment as a permanent job, 14% were working on a temporary or seasonal basis and 7% were employed on other terms. Interestingly, about 4% of refugees were working remotely while being employed outside Poland and about 2% had already established businesses in Poland.
The refugees who remained in Poland quickly adapted to the realities of the Polish labour market, as evidenced by the comparison of their employment status in May 2022 (previous survey addressed only to refugees) with the results of the current survey completed in November 2022 (Figure 13). It has been found that although immigration after 24 February 2022 was mostly forced, by May 2022 a large part of refugees (28%) had already managed to find a job while approximately 50% declared that they would like to find a job in Poland. The November 2022 survey shows that most of the refugees who remained in Poland managed to find a job (65%), the percentage of full-time job seekers fell from 30% to 12% and the percentage of part-time job seekers fell from 20% to 12%. In turn, the proportion of the economically inactive people fell from 22% in May to 11% in November.

Figure 12. Labour market situation of refugees and pre-war migrants

Economic migrants already working in the Polish labour market before 2022 generally spent significantly more hours per week at work than the average working Polish citizen, who was most often employed on a full-time basis (Figure 14). The November 2022 data, on the one hand, confirm this relationship - immigrants who arrived before the outbreak of the war in 2022 were clearly more likely to work more than 40 hours per week than Polish workers. On the other hand, the refugees who arrived after the outbreak of the war made a very diversified group. Some of them worked, on average, only slightly less per week than earlier economic migrants. However, a significant proportion worked part-time due to the need for childcare.

Figure 13. Economic activity of refugees in May and November 2022.
Differences between pre-war immigrants and refugees are visible when it comes to employment sectors (Figure 15). Among pre-war immigrants, 28% were working in industry and they worked significantly more hours per week on average than in other sectors. Taking this fact into account indicated that almost one-third of the hours worked by pre-war immigrants in the Polish economy were hours worked precisely in industry.

Figure 15. Structure of migrant workers according to employment sector in Poland

On the other hand, if we focus on refugees only (a vast majority of whom were women), only about 19% of them were working in industry. Similarly, much smaller percentages of
refugees were working in construction and transport, which are also on average much more male-dominated industries. Working female refugees were much more likely to be employed in sectors such as hotels and restaurants or personal services. On average, they were also significantly more likely to respond that they provided services directly to households. There was also a slightly higher percentage of refugees working in Poland in occupations requiring qualifications usually associated with university education (healthcare, education, culture and arts) than among other immigrants.

As indicated above, refugees and pre-war migrants are diversified in terms of their status on the Polish labour market, sectors of activity and average hours worked. This diversification clearly affects the differences in the monthly incomes of both groups, which mainly comprises salaries and wages (Figure 16). Refugees most often had relatively poorly paid jobs, very often part-time ones. The most common answer to the question about their net income was between PLN 2 and 3 thousand. On the other hand, the most common answer to this question among earlier migrants was a net income of PLN 3-4 thousand. Pre-war migrants were relatively more likely to receive higher wages for their work. The considerable income differences between earlier immigrants and refugees in the Polish labour market are also confirmed by the relationship between the median income and the labour market status as well as the sector of activity (Figure 17).

The most visible differences were observed among the people declaring that they were unemployed at the time of the interview. In the case of the earlier immigrants surveyed, the number of such people was not so high, while those who answered the question seemed to have secured income to the extent that the median response was above PLN 2,500. In the case of unemployed refugees, the median value of income was approximately PLN 600. The highest wages that migrants could count on in the sectors analysed were in transport, where the gap between earlier migrants and refugees was the smallest. Immigrants employed in the construction sector could count on relatively high monthly earnings, although in this case
The gap between the two immigrant groups was very pronounced. The difference between the middle (median) income of refugees employed in this sector and economic migrants was well over PLN 1,000. Overall, the results of the wage comparison indicate the role of the length of time spent in the Polish labour market in identifying the qualifications of immigrants.

The relatively low wages that immigrants can expect in agriculture in the autumn and winter months of the year may be a factor explaining the relatively lower interest in employment in this sector by immigrants coming to Poland.

2.2. Integration of Ukrainian migrants on the Polish labour market

From the point of view of both foreigners and the Polish economy, making the fullest possible use of their human capital is a beneficial phenomenon. However, there are many reasons why migrants may find it difficult to use the skills they have acquired in their country of origin. Demand for work in a new country may simply require a different set of qualifications to that possessed by immigrants. Nevertheless, even if immigrants have the desired qualifications, their recognition, formal acknowledgement (many professions require certification, recognition of diplomas, etc.) and training employees in the standards of operation of companies in Poland is a lengthy and costly process. Moreover, employers may find it difficult to verify the actual skills of immigrants. Nevertheless, the process of integration of immigrants on the labour market is one of the most important aspects of immigrant labour market integration, while the experience of the USA and Western Europe shows that the monitoring of immigrant labour market integration is one of the most important topics of immigration research. In the survey conducted by NBP, the main question addressed to immigrants and related to their human capital was about the nature of their work in Poland compared to their work in Ukraine (Figure 18). Approximately 30% of the respondents, both refugees and previous economic migrants, answered that there were no major differences. A closer analysis, however, indicates that this was mainly the response by young people with relatively limited or no previous work experience in Ukraine. Among refugees, it was clearly more common than among economic migrants to respond that the current job in Poland was below their qualifications (46% among refugees, 33% among earlier economic migrants), and pre-war migrants were more likely to rate their job in Poland as different from that in Ukraine, but not below their qualifications.

The perception of work in Poland depends on the formal level of education achieved in Ukraine (Figure 19). About 50% of immigrants with tertiary education, 31% of immigrants with secondary education and 36% of those with vocational education declared that they had a job below their qualifications in Poland. Similar to the breakdown by date of arrival, the level of education also did not differentiate the answer “no major differences” as it was provided by those who were only weakly connected to the labour market in Ukraine. In the case of people with a university degree, 28% thought that there were no major differences
between the work done in Poland and in Ukraine, while 25% assessed that the work in Poland was different from that in Ukraine, but not below their qualifications.

**Figure 18. Differences between work in Ukraine and work in Poland**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>29%</th>
<th>32%</th>
<th>39%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugees November 2022</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-war migrants</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Migrants and refugees were economically active in Ukraine, as declared by about 85% in both groups (Figure 20). The gender structure to some extent determined the structure of the industries in which they worked in Ukraine. In both groups of migrants, representatives of different professions can be found. Among refugees, the group of workers in education and culture and the sector of personal services was more numerous. On the other hand, among pre-war migrants, a higher percentage of people worked in construction, transport and industry in Ukraine.

**Figure 19. Differences between work in Ukraine and in Poland according to education**

**Figure 20. The workplace of pre-war migrants and refugees in Ukraine**
The information contained in the questionnaire makes it possible to identify differences in the employment sector in Poland and Ukraine and thus to infer in a more objective manner the potential problems arising from the need for retraining of immigrants upon arrival in Poland.

A comparison of the detailed information from the questionnaire shows that relatively most frequently the work in the same sector in Poland and Ukraine was performed by people working in construction (Table 1). Out of every 100 immigrants previously working in this sector in Ukraine, 55 (55%) also worked in construction after arriving in Poland, 18% found a job in industry, 6% each in transport and services, 10% provided household services and only 4% did not work (unemployment or inactivity).

Table 1. Summary information on activity in the labour market in Ukraine (in rows) and in Poland (in columns)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status in Ukraine (100%)*</th>
<th>Economic activity in Polish labour market</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed or inactive</td>
<td>Unemployed or inactive</td>
<td>Work - agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work - agriculture</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work - industry</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work - construction</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work - transport</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work - Services</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work - for households</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The figures read in rows indicate the percentage of immigrants with a given economic activity in Ukraine that moved to the sectors in Poland listed in the columns (the percentages in rows add up to 100%).

Percentages calculated in a similar way according to the labour market status in Ukraine indicate that people with Ukrainian experience in industry and transport (approximately 50%) could expect a similar job in Poland as in Ukraine. Individuals who used to work in Ukraine in those three sectors were was less likely than others not to have a job in Poland or worked providing services to households (only approximately 10% in each case). Apart from those with previous experience of working in agriculture or not employed at all in Ukraine, immigrants generally sought employment in Poland in sectors where they had experience of working in Ukraine, since approx. 40% of people previously working in various types of services ended up in more or less similar sectors in Poland. However, it should be noted that those working in services in Ukraine relatively often also found work in Poland in industry or services provided directly to households, while 15-20% of them did not work at all. Those
working in agriculture in Ukraine were more likely to work in industry or household services than in agriculture after arriving in Poland.

The immigrants’ ability to speak Polish is positively correlated with employment (Figure 21). On the one hand, people who can speak at least a little Polish coped much better with finding a job on their own and were perceived as better prepared and more communicative at work. On the other hand, over time, employment to some extent forces an employee to learn the employer’s language at least at a basic level.

**Figure 21. Employment rates of migrants according to the date of arrival and command of Polish**

These relationships are particularly visible in the case of the most recent immigration of war refugees. While the difference in the employment rate in the case of economic immigrants residing in Poland before the war between those who did not speak Polish (83%) and those declaring that they spoke it very well (94%) was 11 percentage points, in the case of refugees the difference was 32 percentage points (employment rates of 82% and 50%, respectively). These observations confirm that an important determinant of refugees’ labour market activity is their command of the language of the country they have entered.

### 2.3. The economic situation, benefits and assistance received by migrants

One of the ways to assess the economic situation of immigrants in Poland is to compare what portion of their total income is allocated to covering the costs of living in Poland. People whose current expenses in Poland account for a relatively lower percentage of their total income may set aside savings for a specific purpose, create a financial “cushion” for the risk of loss of income or unexpected expenses or send money to family abroad. In this respect, the migrants who arrived before the outbreak of the war differ from the ones who came afterwards (Figure 22). Approximately 36% of migrants who had arrived before February 2022 and 28% of refugees declared that they allocated 50% of their monthly income or less to current expenses in Poland. The most common answer among economic migrants was 70-80% and it was also the second most common answer among refugees. People spending more, i.e.
80-100% of their current income accounted for 19% among pre-war migrants and as much as 34% among refugees.

Figure 22. Percentages of refugees and pre-war migrants according to the part of the total income allocated for living in Poland

The status in the labour market is the key factor influencing housing opportunities. According to the immigrants’ declarations, almost half of them did not receive any social benefits (Figure 23). Approximately 40% of immigrants received child benefits from the “Family 500+” scheme. Approximately 4% received other social benefits than those related to children and 1% received unemployment benefits. Moreover, 1% of immigrants received a pension while 3% received another monetary benefit, other than mentioned in the previous answers.

Figure 23. Total social benefits received by migrants

Figure 24. Use of in-kind aid and income among refugees and pre-war migrants

percentages do not add up to 100% as the respondent could have declared more than one benefit.
In addition to financial benefits, Ukrainian immigrants also received aid in kind for themselves or for their children (Figure 24). As the results of the survey indicate, it was frequent in case of the poorest immigrants (income up to PLN 2,000) while those with a higher current income used it quite rarely.
3. Further plans of migrants

3.1. Planned continued stay in Poland

The results of the current round of the survey indicate a strong increase in interest in staying permanently in Poland among Ukrainian citizens residing here. Although the results differ significantly depending on whether pre-war immigrants or refugees answered this question, as a general rule, in both groups, the percentage of those thinking of living permanently in Poland has increased compared to previous surveys. Among pre-war immigrants it now amounts to over 50% while among refugees - to approx. 20% (Figure 25). Particularly in the case of the former, one may speak of a change in the nature of immigration from circulatory to settlement.

*the 2020 survey did not include such a cafeteria response

As far as the plans of pre-war immigrants are concerned, the best reference survey showing the change in the nature of this immigration is the survey also carried out by the NBP Regional Branches in late 2019 and early 2020 (referred to below and in the figures as the 2020 survey). In that survey, only about a quarter of the respondents declared the intention to stay in Poland permanently, whereas today more than a half of such people make such a declaration. On the other hand, the percentages of those planning to stay in Poland for more than a year but not permanently and those planning to leave within a year has decreased significantly.

Interestingly, at the time of the survey, around 60% of the pre-war immigrants had been staying in Poland since 2019 or longer, which is not insignificant in terms of developing an emotional and economic ties with Poland. Therefore, the length of their stay in Poland so far may be one of the factors influencing their future plans. The events of recent years, such as the COVID-19 epidemic and the outbreak of the war, which had a tremendous impact on the...
possibility and willingness to move between Poland and Ukraine and the introduction of a number of legal solutions enabling Ukrainian citizens to stay legally in Poland for a long time, have probably also played a major role.

As far as refugees are concerned, the percentage of those wishing to stay permanently in Poland was around 20%. In comparison, refugees asked about their plans in the spring of 2022 were less likely to provide such an answer (16%). And although in this case the change may not be so clear, it is worth noting that those who came to Poland in connection with the outbreak of the war have much less definite plans for their stay in Poland. Almost half of them were unable to say how long their stay here would last.

It is also worth noting that among both pre-war immigrants and those who arrived after the outbreak of the war, there are virtually no people interested in leaving Poland for the West.

The respondents were additionally asked whether they would return to their country if hostilities ended soon (Figure 26). More than a half of the refugees confirmed that they would return to their country under such circumstances while approximately 25% of pre-war immigrants, would do so. In most cases, such answer was provided by those who answered “hard to say” when asked about future plans. However, also among those planning a longer stay in Poland, there were some people who would change their plans if the war ended in the nearest future.

**Figure 27. Reasons for contemplated departure from Poland**
(more than one answer possible)

The most frequently reported reason for the willingness to return to Ukraine was homesickness and longing for family, indicated by both a half of pre-war immigrants and refugees (Figure 27). Another equally important argument was the belief in a quick end to the war. For a certain number of respondents, mainly refugees, the stabilisation of the war situation in the region they come from and the desire to educate their children in their country of origin were the main arguments for leaving Poland. For this group of people, the lack of work in Poland was also a problem, while pre-war immigrants hardly indicated this answer.
3.2. Family situation and migrants' residence plans

Immigrants' plans for their future stay in Poland were naturally linked to their family situation and especially to the presence of other family members in Poland. The outbreak of the war forced immigrants to make quick decisions to relocate their entire families, especially children. Family members residing in Poland make a big difference in further plans of immigrants who came to Poland before the war (Figure 28). Among the total number of immigrants, 55% declared their intention to stay in Poland permanently. However, if one narrows this group down to only those whose life partner is or was already in Poland before the war, the percentage increases to 64%, a similarly higher percentage is associated with parents (68%) or children (68%) staying in Poland. If, on the other hand, only full families with children residing in Poland were considered, 72% of them declared that they would stay permanently. At the same time, it should be noted that in the category of pre-war immigrants, percentage of those declaring a return to Ukraine within less than a year was marginal.

The situation is different for refugees who arrived in Poland in 2022 (Figure 29). In their case, irrespective of family members residing in Poland, the uncertainty about future plans was very high (“hard to say” accounts for almost 50% of all answers). The presence of family members in Poland, especially if one of them is a life partner, slightly increases the number of declarations concerning permanent stay. The presence of the respondents' parents in Poland is also associated with slightly more clearly defined plans to stay longer than a year. However, the differences between the declarations of refugees with different family situation in Poland are not significant, which may reflect the fact that, in most cases, migration to Poland was the result of war-related compulsion rather than a desire to arrange the rest of their lives in another country.
3.3. Factors supporting and facilitating the adaptation process of migrants from Ukraine.

The significant increase in the percentage of people declaring their intention to stay longer in Poland and the actual extension of the average length of migrants’ stay in Poland means that Ukrainian citizens play an increasingly important role on the Polish labour market and as a part of the Polish society.

The earlier presence of pre-war migrants from Ukraine seems to be a factor that makes it easier for entrepreneurs to employ refugees. They were able to learn about their way of working, the difficulties involved in managing teams of employees of different nationalities and the ways of overcoming them. In addition, at least passive knowledge of Russian among some adult Poles (they had to learn it at school) facilitates the employment and adaptation of Ukrainian citizens.

A cyclical survey of companies conducted by NBP at the end of 2022 (the so-called Annual Survey) indicates that almost half of the companies that employ Ukrainian citizens increased their employment after the outbreak of the war.

The most frequent answers of entrepreneurs regarding state aid for Ukrainian citizens in Poland included: organisation of Polish language courses, improvement of job placement for Ukrainian citizens and assistance in diploma recognition (Box 1).

Figure 30. The most important forms of assistance that would facilitate the stay in Poland
(more than one answer possible, results do not add up to 100)
These indications partially match the assessment of the migrants themselves (Figure 30), for whom Polish language courses are one of the key expected forms of assistance. Pre-war migrants primarily point to legalisation of residence (41% of indications) as the most significant barrier. For refugees, the highest number of indications in November 2022 referred to Polish language courses (43%) and assistance in finding a job (35%). Comparing the responses of refugees from May and November 2022, one can see a decrease in indications in most categories. Exceptions include the assistance in recognition of diplomas and broadly understood support in official matters.
Additional information from the December 2022 “NBP Annual Survey”.

A valuable supplement to the information from the immigrant survey is the alternative source in the form of questions concerning pre-war migrants and refugees employed by companies, included in the cyclical survey of companies in December 2022. This survey was conducted on a sample of approximately 2,000 companies in all voivodeships.

According to this survey, slightly more than 30% of companies declared that they employed Ukrainian citizens. 47% of those companies increased their employment of immigrants after the outbreak of the war, while only 11% decreased their employment of immigrants (Figure 31).

Figure 31. Change in the number of Ukrainian workers in Polish companies after the outbreak of the war

Source: Own calculations based on NBP Annual Survey data, December 2022

Entrepreneurs identified the organisation of Polish language courses (Figure 32) as the primary form of support for migrants to facilitate their employment and integration. The assistance of the relevant state institutions in matching job offers with labour supply (e.g. the creation of a central database of refugee jobseekers) and facilitating the recognition of diplomas are also important factors. It is worth noting that a considerable number of companies (around 37%) indicated that existing solutions were sufficient.

Figure 32. Entrepreneurs’ opinions concerning the expected forms of state assistance for Ukrainian citizens in Poland (maximum 2 answers could be provided)

Source: Own calculations based on NBP Annual Survey data, Warsaw, December 2022

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3 The question was answered by both entrepreneurs employing Ukrainian citizens and entrepreneurs not employing any (about half of them answered the question).
4. Cash and in-kind aid for Ukraine

4.1. Propensity for making remittances

The survey made it possible to analyse once again the important issue of remittances from Poland by immigrants. It is particularly important since the remittances by Ukrainian nationals account for 80% to 90% of remittances from Poland by immigrants from all countries. As far as amounts are concerned, for several years they have been at a similar level to the remittances flowing into Poland from emigrants working abroad, or even slightly exceeded them (Figure 33). The assessment of this issue and, in particular, the assessment of the impact of the war on the remittance flow model seem particularly significant.

Figure 33. Migrants’ remittances in the balance of payments

Source: Poland’s balance of payments

The last available survey results from the period before the outbreak of the war concerning remittances from Poland to Ukraine come from a survey also carried out by NBP Regional Branches in late 2019 and early 2020. According to the results of this survey, approximately 60% of the respondents made remittances to Ukraine. The current edition of the survey showed, in the case of the pre-war immigrant group (i.e. the group comparable to the group surveyed in 2020), no significant change in the percentage of remitters (Figure 34).
Interestingly, the percentage of remitters is very stable regardless of the year of arrival in Poland (Figure 35), which contradicts the theory of dwindling remittances over time. In this case, irrespective of the length of stay in Poland, between 60% and 70% of respondents consistently declare that they are remitting money back home. One explanation for this situation may be the increased desire to support relatives in difficult situation faced by families remaining in Ukraine.

4.2. Characteristics of remittances

The motivation related to the ongoing war in Ukraine and the difficult economic situation in the country would be supported by an increase in the frequency of remittances. In the current survey, half of the respondents declared making remittances at least once a month, while in the 2020 survey 45% of respondents made a remittance at least once a month, while 30% - less frequently than once a quarter (Figure 36).

In terms of the amounts remitted (Figure 37), the opposite trend is observed, i.e. a decrease in the amount of a single remittance. In the 2020 survey, approx. 60% declared sending amounts of up to PLN 1,000, with the remaining 40% making remittances of a higher value. At present, less than 25% those of residing in Poland before the outbreak of war, remit amounts higher than PLN 1,000; others remit lower amounts, mostly not exceeding PLN 500. Generally, the amount of a single remittance in 2020 was approx. PLN 1,300, in the current survey, it is approx. PLN 1,000.

The refugee situation is still different in terms of remittances. Although this is a group that itself often needs aid due to an unstable financial situation and employment status, 27% of them admit remitting money to Ukraine (Figure 34). Moreover, when they do it, the frequency of these remittances is the highest among all the groups compared, indicating their strong ties to the home country and the family left there. On the other hand, their difficult living situation is reflected in the amounts remitted. 30 per cent of refugees declared that the
last remittance they made was not higher than PLN 200. Overall, almost 90% sent amounts of less than PLN 1,000.

**Figure 36. Frequency of remittances**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Pre-war migrants</th>
<th>2020 survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>at least monthly</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>every 2-3 months</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very rarely</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both pre-war migrants and those who arrived after the outbreak of the war provided very convergent answers as far as the recipients of their remittances are concerned (Figure 38). In almost 90% of cases, these are the immediate family members remaining in Ukraine. More than 20% of respondents in both groups additionally identified charities. Definitely the lowest number of persons remit funds for their own purposes or address them to still other recipients.

To remit money, both refugees and pre-war migrants are most likely to use official channels (Figure 39) such as a bank accounts or a payment cards (approx. 50% of refugees and more than 40% of pre-war migrants). However, pre-war migrants, perhaps more experienced in remittances, also often use various online services or specialised companies.
4.3. In-kind aid

In addition to financial aid, Ukrainian citizens residing in Poland also send in-kind aid to Ukraine (Figure 40). This is done by 57% of pre-war immigrants and 30% of refugees. Aid is most often addressed to family members, but the support is also provided to charities, occasionally to other entities.

Figure 40. In-kind aid provided to other people in Ukraine

Immigrants do not limit their aid to just one form. Almost 40% of pre-war immigrants provide both financial and in-kind aid at the same time (Figure 41). Among refugees with a lower capacity to provide aid, such a phenomenon is also observed, where the percentage amounts to 14%.

Figure 41. Percentage of people providing various forms of aid
5. Impact of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine on the situation of migrants staying in Poland

Since 2014, the number of economic migrants from Ukraine in Poland has gradually increased. There were many factors that contributed to this state of affairs. These undoubtedly included the difficult economic situation in Ukraine, resulting in a lack of work or low wages, the legal regulations in Poland allowing migrant labour and the existing demand for migrant labour, as well as the war - Russia's seizure of Crimea and attack on the Donbas.

Migration after 2014 was initially mainly circular, among others, due to migration regulations applicable in Poland. Ukrainians often worked in Poland for no more than 6 months, then returned to Ukraine and after a few months re-entered Poland. However, this migration also gradually took on a settlement character and the length of stay of Ukrainian citizens in Poland became longer.

In the last two years, two major events occurred that significantly affected the nature of migration of Ukrainian citizens. The first one was the pandemic and the second one - Russia’s attack against Ukraine on 24 February 2022.

According to estimates of Statistics Poland of June 2020, approximately 1.3 million Ukrainian citizens were staying in Poland before the outbreak of the pandemic. The nature of the stay of some of them was circular, so at the same time a smaller number of migrants were staying in Poland. The main constraint caused by the pandemic were the restrictions on movement. Closed border crossings, the need to be quarantined after crossing the border or to show a negative Covid-19 test result reduced people's mobility. For some time, lockdowns significantly restricted the activities of some businesses.

The study carried out in 2020 in Wrocław by NBP showed that the pandemic had inhibited the inflow of new migrants, but that those with previous migration experience had mostly remained in Poland. In its report on “Population of foreigners in Poland during Covid-19”, Statistics Poland presented how the size of some subpopulations of foreigners changed in the period from February to June 2020, i.e. the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic. As far as Ukrainian nationals are concerned, a decline of 160.0 thousand people, i.e. approximately 11.5% was recorded in this period.

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5 Statistics Poland. Population of foreigners in Poland at the time of Covid-19, 4 June 2020. The estimate was prepared on the basis of 9 administrative records. The data show the number of Ukrainian citizens registered in these records. This does not mean that actually so many people were staying in Poland at that time.
In the survey carried out in the autumn of 2022, the respondents who had first come to Poland for economic purposes before the outbreak of the pandemic were asked whether the nature of their stays in Poland had changed due to the Covid 19 epidemic (Figure 42). More than a half responded that nothing had changed, while 19% of the respondents observed changes that indicated a reduction in circular migration and an increase in the length of their stay in Poland.

Interestingly, the region of origin of the migrants did not have a significant impact on the distribution of responses regarding the impact of the pandemic on the nature of migration. On the other hand, women were more likely to admit the impact of the pandemic on the nature of their stay in Poland than men.

**Figure 42. Structure of the answers to the question: “Has the pandemic changed the nature of your stay in Poland?”**

Additional information on the impact of the pandemic on the nature of migration is provided by an analysis of the structure of migrants in terms of the date of their arrival in Poland (Figure 43). The percentage of migrants who came to Poland for the first time during the pandemic period (2020 and 2021) and stayed with us after the outbreak of the war on 24 February 2022 is lower compared to previous years.
Factors other than the pandemic, such as the depletion of the pool of people inclined to migrate in search of work, may also have been a reason for this state of affairs. However, the pandemic as a global event must have had an impact on the attitudes of those who decided to migrate. They undoubtedly took into account the fact that they would not be able to return home due to closed borders, or that their return would be hindered by mandatory quarantine. It should also be remembered that a number of travel restrictions had been introduced not only in Poland, but also in Ukraine.

The analysis of the length of respondents’ stay in Poland shows that some of them had been harbouring longer-term plans for the future associated with our country from the beginning of their stay in Poland (Figure 44). The percentage of people who have stayed and worked in Poland continuously since their first arrival exceeds 50% in each year (as of 2013). To some extent, this stay structure explains why more than 50% of the respondents concluded that the pandemic had not changed the nature of their stay in Poland.

What is also noteworthy is that after a decline in 2018, a noticeable increase was seen in the following years in the percentage of migrants who have stayed continuously in Poland since their first arrival.

---

8 In the survey, pre-war migrants were asked about two things. The first concerned the date when their current stay in Poland had began (i.e. staying in Poland without breaks longer than two weeks or going home for holidays). The second question was a request to state the year of the first arrival in Poland for a purpose other than tourism and leisure.
Figure 44. Pre-war migrants who have stayed in Poland continuously since their first arrival as a percentage of all migrants who arrived in a given year

When trying to explain the above data and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the nature of the stay of Ukrainian nationals in Poland, it is necessary to take into account the changes in the legal regulations concerning foreigners introduced in Poland. Shortly after the outbreak of the pandemic in March 2020, certain laws were amended to allow foreigners to stay longer in Poland legally\(^9\). In January 2022, legislation came into force that included solutions to facilitate the legalisation of residence and work in Poland, among other things extending from 6 to 24 months the possibility to work on the basis of a so-called declaration\(^10\). Thus, the legal solutions adopted fostered the extension of the length of stay in Poland of Ukrainian nationals and the transformation of circular migration into settlement migration.

After February 2022, it became clear that the pandemic was not the most important event for Ukrainian citizens, revising their plans (Table 2). The war forced them to significantly change their behaviour and plans for the future. The war amplified the change in the nature of migration from Ukraine to settlement caused by Covid-19 and the new regulations, making circular migration impossible. Some of the pre-war circular migrants, mainly men, remained in Ukraine. The war continues to affect the lives of Ukrainian citizens in many ways. In the survey, migrants were asked about the impact of the war on the nature of their stay in Poland.

\(^9\) Act of 2 March 2020 on specific solutions related to preventing, counteracting and combating COVID-19, other infectious diseases and crisis situations caused by them (Journal of Laws, item 374 as amended)

\(^10\) Act of 17 December 2021 amending the Act on foreigners and certain other acts (Journal of Laws of 2022 item 91)
Table 2. Structure of an answer to the question: “Does or could the outbreak of the war in Ukraine affect your stay in Poland?"11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of the impact of war on the residence in Poland</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Difficult to say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For security reasons, I will stay longer in Poland</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For economic reasons I will stay longer in Poland</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due to a change in the regulations allowing me to stay longer in Poland, I will not return to Ukraine as planned</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will return to Ukraine sooner</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have brought/ will bring my family to live with me</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition has appeared on the labour market due to the inflow of refugees</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due to the problem of border crossing, I will stay in Poland longer</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The highest percentage of pre-war migrants (73%) declare that they will stay in Poland longer than previously planned for economic reasons. Ukraine has been largely destroyed, there are no jobs available and so it is difficult to make a living. In its October 2022 Quarterly Inflation Report, the National Bank of Ukraine projected that Ukraine’s GDP in 2022 would fall by more than 30% due to the war and that unemployment would reach about 30%, leaving around 5 million people unemployed12.

Therefore, economic factors are of key importance in formulating plans for the future. These are obviously complemented by safety issues (67%).

More than 40% of pre-war migrants have brought or will bring their family to Poland because of the war. These factors, together with the regulations in force offering a possibility of staying longer in Poland, regardless of the further course of the war, are likely to drive further transformation of circular migration into settlement migration.

A risk factor for pre-war migrants is the labour market situation and competition from refugees, which is perceived by 42% of respondents and not perceived by only 28%. The remaining respondents answered “hard to say”. Naturally (due to the gender structure of the refugees), a higher percentage of women than men indicate this development in the labour market. However, men also feel it, since only a minority, 34%, reports lack of competition from refugees.

Changes in the nature of the stay of migrants from Ukraine driven first by the pandemic and then by the war affect the average length of their stay in Poland. The average length of

11 Respondents were asked to rate the impact of the war on their situation in all 7 aspects. The assessment was made by selecting one of three responses: “Yes”, “No”, “Difficult to say”.
migrants’ stay in Poland, counting from the year in which their current stay started, is approximately 4.5 years.

The war has resulted in an increase in the average length of stay of Ukrainian citizens in Poland and has significantly reduced their contacts with Ukraine. 84% of pre-war migrants have not visited Ukraine since 24 February 2022 (Figure 45). Refugees (76%) have also not travelled to Ukraine since the outbreak of the war. Both groups, if they decided to travel to Ukraine, did it mostly once to visit family.

Figure 45. Structure of the answers to the question: “Have you travelled to Ukraine at least once since the outbreak of the war on 24 February 2022”?
6. Selected elements of regional diversification of migrants from Ukraine in Poland

The phenomenon of migration from Ukraine to Poland has been and continues to be experienced differently in different regions of Poland. This concerns both the number of migrants who arrived in different parts of our country, but also to their situation in the local labour markets, further intentions and needs. Data on the number of refugees registered in Poland indicate that the largest inflow and the highest proportion of the number of refugees from Ukraine to the local population were observed in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship and in second place, in the Dolnośląskie Voivodeship (Figure 46). It can also be seen that voivodeships with large urban agglomerations have attracted most migrants. In addition to the previously mentioned voivodeships, they were Małopolskie, Śląskie, Wielkopolskie and Pomorskie. Apart from the Mazowieckie and Dolnośląskie voivodeships, the proportion of migrants accounted to the local population is relatively high in the voivodeships in western Poland (Figure 47).

Figure 46. Voivodeships in Poland according to the size of refugee inflow (as % of total inflow)

Figure 47. Refugees in voivodeships in relation to the population (in %)

Source: Information on PESEL numbers assigned to refugees from Ukraine as of November 2022.
When settling in Poland, pre-war migrants from Western Ukraine and Kiev most often chose the Mazowieckie Voivodeship. Migrants from other Ukrainian regions were noticeably more likely to settle in the Dolnośląskie Voivodeship. On the other hand, refugees, as mentioned above, irrespective of the region they came from, most often chose the Mazowieckie Voivodeship. Refugees from Western Ukraine and Kiev were clearly more likely to make such a decision, which can be explained to some extent by the fact that it was also the most popular province among pre-war migrants from these regions.

The structure of the origin of refugees and pre-war migrants may have an influence on their plans related to their future in Poland and on the pace of the integration process in the Polish society. The war affects eastern and southern Ukraine to a greater extent than the remaining parts of the country. People from these regions of Ukraine, as shown in the May 2022 NBP survey, had less contacts with Poland and a weaker knowledge of Polish. Therefore, their adaptation to the life in Poland may be more difficult and longer.

Pre-war migrants as well as refugees settled in all voivodeships, although in different proportions (Figure 48 and Figure 49). As a consequence, individual voivodeships differ in terms of the region of origin of the Ukrainian citizens residing there. This is important since the respondents asked about their plans to move to Poland mostly answer that they were not planning to move (82% of pre-war migrants and 76% of refugees, respectively).

Figure 48. Pre-war migrants from Ukraine according to the region of origin and voivodeship where they currently live in Poland
Refugees are distributed more evenly across all voivodeships. It is noteworthy that 33% of the refugees in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship come from eastern Ukraine. On the other hand, 31% of refugees in the Dolnośląskie Voivodeship and 30% in the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship fled from southern Ukraine. In the Podkarpackie voivodeship, the largest group of refugees comes from Western Ukraine, which may result from the fact that they want to stay relatively close to their home.

Figure 49. Refugees from Ukraine according to the region of origin and voivodeship where they currently live in Poland

The situation of pre-war migrants on the Polish labour market was generally good (see: Figure 13). Besides Świętokrzyskie, Opolskie and Lubelskie Voivodeships, the employment rate was close to or exceeded 90%. On the other hand, the situation of refugees who ended up in different voivodeships in Poland was much more diversified (Figure 50).

The refugees who ended up in the Pomorskie Voivodeship and regions located in the west of Poland (Zachodniopomorskie, Dolnośląskie, Lubuskie) were most likely to find work quickly. This may be related to the high demand for workers in these voivodeships regardless of their qualifications. On the other hand, a relatively high percentage of unemployed or inactive migrants was associated with voivodeships relatively close to the border with Ukraine (Lubelskie, Podkarpackie) or provinces with relatively low labour demand and without large urban agglomerations (Świętokrzyskie, Podlaskie, Kujawsko-Pomorskie).
Compared to the first months after the outbreak of the war, the percentage of people declaring that they will return to Ukraine as soon as hostilities have ended has decreased and become equal between the voivodeships (Figure 51). This is linked, on the one hand, to a change in the situation on the front line - some of those declaring a desire to return quickly may have done so when the combat area began to be limited only to eastern Ukraine. On the other hand, refugees residing in Poland could increasingly perceive their situation not as temporary, but as requiring planning of their stay in Poland, which would preclude a very fast return to Ukraine. Interestingly, it was relatively rare both in May and in November 2022 for refugees from the Dolnośląskie and Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeships to declare their intention to return quickly.
Figure 51. Declared readiness to return to Ukraine within 3 months after the end of hostilities according to voivodeships
7. Annex. Description of the survey method

The survey took place in the period from 26 September to 18 November 2022. It involved adult migrants from Ukraine, both pre-war migrants (people who arrived in Poland before 24 February 2022) and refugees. It was assumed that the representation in each group would be minimum 40%. In order to ensure a better representativeness of the survey, the field interviews were conducted in 16 voivodeship cities of Poland as well as in smaller towns (1 to 2 smaller towns in each voivodeship).

The diversification in the location of the interview and the way of recruiting respondents was intended to include different groups of migrants in the survey. Interviewers were tasked with ensuring a diversity of the respondents by avoiding the so-called snowball effect, i.e. avoiding interviewing people who were staying together or knew each other. Field interviews were conducted, among others, in companies employing migrants, public administration offices providing services to migrants, places of collective accommodation, directly - on a random basis (e.g. in the street), in places where foreigners gathered (e.g. language schools). The interviews were conducted using questionnaires prepared in Ukrainian, Russian or Polish. A total of 3,934 questionnaires were completed.

Due to the high probability of the sample being materialised in a different way than the proportions of refugees according to selected characteristics, it became necessary to weigh the results obtained so that the regional proportions reflect the knowledge available from the published data on the number of migrants registered in the PESEL system. It was assumed that the proportions of people the total population containing refugees who had not registered in the PESEL system were the same as the proportions of people by province, age and gender in the PESEL system.

The construction of the analytical weights was based on the equation:

$$w_i = \frac{N_i}{n_i}$$

where \(N_i\) was the size of the population of a given group of \(i\) refugees identified by voivodeship, \(n_i\) was the size of the group \(i\) in the realised sample, while \(w_i\) is the weight - the multiplier by which the raw survey results should be multiplied in order to obtain results representative of the refugee population.
Index of figures

Figure 1. Pre-war migrants and refugees from Ukraine in Poland by age ........................................7
Figure 2. Regions of origin of pre-war migrants and refugees from Ukraine .................................8
Figure 3. Place of residence in Ukraine before arrival in Poland ...................................................8
Figure 4. Structure of migrant families in Poland and Ukraine - husband/wife/partner ...............9
Figure 5. Structure of migrant families in Poland and in Ukraine - parents/parents-in-law ...9
Figure 6. Structure of migrant families (children) according to the moment of arrival ........9
Figure 7. Place of children’s stay according to the moment of arrival .......................................9
Figure 8. Accommodation of various migrant groups .................................................................11
Figure 9. Command of Polish among migrants from Ukraine .....................................................11
Figure 10. Level of education of migrants from Ukraine .............................................................12
Figure 11. Structure of refugees according to the month of arrival in Poland .........................12
Figure 12. Labour market situation of refugees and pre-war migrants ......................................14
Figure 13. Economic activity of refugees in May and November 2022 ..................................14
Figure 14. Structure of the total number of hours worked per week ......................................15
Figure 15. Structure of migrant workers according to employment sector in Poland ..............15
Figure 16. Median monthly net income according to the labour market status and the sector of work .................................................................16
Figure 17. Differences between work in Ukraine and work in Poland ......................................18
Figure 18. Differences between work in Ukraine and in Poland according to education ......18
Figure 19. The workplace of pre-war migrants and refugees in Ukraine ................................18
Figure 20. Employment rates of migrants according to the date of arrival and command of Polish ..........................................................20
Figure 21. Percentages of refugees and pre-war migrants according to the part of the total income allocated for living in Poland ........................................................21
Figure 22. Total social benefits received by migrants .................................................................21
Figure 23. Use of in-kind aid and income among refugees and pre-war migrants ..................21
Figure 24. Planned continued stay in Poland ..............................................................................23
Figure 25. Declared readiness to return to Ukraine within 3 months if the war ends ..........23
Figure 26. Reasons for contemplated departure from Poland ...............................................24
Figure 27. Pre-war migrants’ planned length of stay in Poland depending on the declared family in Poland ..........................................................................................25
Figure 28. Refugees’ planned length of stay in Poland depending on the declared family in Poland ..........................................................................................25
Figure 29. The most important forms of assistance that would facilitate the stay in Poland 26
Figure 30. Change in the number of Ukrainian workers in Polish companies after the outbreak of the war ..............................................................................28
Figure 32. Entrepreneurs’ opinions concerning the expected forms of state assistance for Ukrainian citizens in Poland (maximum 2 answers could be provided) .................................................................28
Figure 33. Migrants’ remittances in the balance of payments .............................................................29
Figure 34. Percentage of persons making remittances to Ukraine depending on selected groups of migrants.........................................................................................................................30
Figure 35. Percentage of persons making remittances to Ukraine among pre-war migrants depending on the year of beginning of the current stay in Poland ..............................................................30
Figure 36. Frequency of remittances ........................................................................................................31
Figure 37. Amount of the last remittance made ......................................................................................31
Figure 38. Beneficiaries of remittances....................................................................................................31
Figure 39. The most common remittance methods ..................................................................................31
Figure 40. In-kind aid provided to other people in Ukraine .....................................................................32
Figure 41. Percentage of people providing various forms of aid..............................................................32
Figure 42. Structure of an answer to the question: “Has the pandemic changed the nature of your stay in Poland”? ..................................................................................................................34
Figure 43. Pre-war migrants according to the year of the first arrival in Poland ........................................35
Figure 44. Pre-war migrants who have stayed in Poland continuously since their first arrival as a percentage of all migrants who arrived in a given year ........................................................................36
Figure 45. Structure of the answers to the question: “Have you travelled to Ukraine at least once since the outbreak of the war on 24 February 2022”? .............................................................................38
Figure 46. Voivodeships in Poland according to the size of refugee inflow (as % of total inflow) .............................................................................................................................39
Figure 47. Refugees in voivodeships in relation to the population (in %) .................................................39
Figure 48. Pre-war migrants from Ukraine according to the region of origin and voivodeship where they currently live in Poland ........................................................................................................40
Figure 49. Refugees from Ukraine according to the region of origin and voivodeship where they currently live in Poland ...............................................................................................................41
Figure 50. Economic activity of refugees in November 2022 according to voivodeships .........................42
Figure 51. Declared readiness to return to Ukraine within 3 months after the end of hostilities according to voivodeships .................................................................................................................43