

ЗВОРОТНА МІГРАЦІЯ У ПЕРІОД ПОВНОМАСШТАБНОЇ ВІЙНИ ПРОТИ УКРАЇНИ: ЧИННИКИ ТА ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ

RETURN MIGRATION DURING THE FULL-SCALE WAR AGAINST UKRAINE: FACTORS AND PROSPECTS

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АНОТАЦІЯ

Стаття присвячена розгляду особливостей, тенденцій, чинників і наслідків міграції у період повномасштабної війни проти України. Спираючись на методологічні підходи до визначення поняття і видів міграції, а також на представлені міжнародними організаціями і українськими аналітичними установами дані про кількість українських мігрантів і їх соціальні профайли, дослідження сфокусоване на зворотній міграції, мотиваціях і прагненнях тих шукачів притулку, які вирішили повернутись в Україну до завершення воєнних дій. Тему розкрито з врахуванням безпекових і соціально-економічних чинників переміщення громадян України за кордон, можливостей приймаючих країн задовольнити їхні потреби та створити умови для соціальної інтеграції. Зокрема, з акцентом на правових аспектах отримання тимчасового захисту у країнах Європейського Союзу, визначено перспективи такої інтеграції у довгостроковому періоді. Також у статті вказано на економічний ефект зовнішньої міграції. Відповідно, автором враховано наслідки зовнішньої та зворотної міграції, як для країн ЄС, так і для відновлення і повоєнної відбудови України.

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Ключові слова: повномасштабна війна проти України; Європейський Союз; міграція; тимчасовий захист; шукачі притулку; репатріанти; повоєнна відбудова; соціально-економічний статус; економічні наслідки міграції; освіта.

ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to consideration of trends, factors and consequences of the migration during the full-scale war against Ukraine. The author applies methodological approaches to defining the concept and types of migration and uses data on the number of Ukrainian migrants and their social profiles presented by international organizations and Ukrainian analytical institutions. The research is focused on return migration, motivations and needs of those asylum seekers who decided to return to Ukraine before the end of hostilities, despite the ongoing war and security risks. The topic also covers security and socio-economic factors of the migration flows of Ukrainians abroad, the possibilities of the host countries to meet the needs and create conditions for social integration of asylum seekers. With an emphasis on the legal aspects of obtaining temporary protection in the European Union, the prospects of such integration in the long run are mentioned as well. In this context the economic effect of migration is evaluated. Focusing on this review, the author takes into account the consequences of external and return migration for the EU and for the recovery and post-war reconstruction of Ukraine.

Key words: full-scale war against Ukraine; European Union; migration; temporary protection; asylum seekers; returnee; post-war reconstruction; socio-economic status; economic effect of migration; education.

I. INTRODUCTION

A full-scale war in Ukraine caused an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in all regions of the country and, as a result, triggered a migration crisis. At the first year of the full-scale war, starting on 24 February 2022, the number of displaced people amounted to 14,8 million. As it is mentioned in World Migration Report by *International Organization for Migration* (IOM), the russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 “resulted in one of the largest and fastest displacements in Europe since the Second World War”¹. So, Germany hosted 1,126 million of Ukrainians², Poland — 957 000, Czech Republic — 373 000, Spain — 186 000, Italy — 169 000, the Netherlands — 136 000 and Slovakia — 113 000³. Outside the European Union, the largest countries in terms of the number of Ukrainians hosted

¹ McAuliffe M., Oucho L.A. (eds.) (2024). World Migration Report 2024. Geneva: International Organization for Migration (IOM). URL: publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2024.

² Nowadays Germany hosts the largest number of refugees in Europe: 7 % of all refugees in the world (See: McAuliffe M., Oucho L.A.).

³ Богдан Т. (2024). Статус українських біженців у ЄС лише на три роки. Що далі? *Економічна правда*. URL: www.epravda.com.ua/columns/2024/01/12/708597/

since the beginning of the full-scale invasion are the USA (280 000 people), Great Britain (253 200) and Canada (210 200)¹.

At the same time, it is worth considering that the process of migration involves the movement of citizens both from and to their home country. Therefore, the trends are as follows. According to the *UN Refugee Agency*, as of December 2023, there were 6,335 million displaced persons from Ukraine abroad (while the *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (UNHCR) indicates that further 5,974,800 people were displaced abroad²), including 5,931 million displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection status registered in the EU³. At that time, IOM estimates that around 3,689 million people remained internally displaced in Ukraine⁴. Due to data from January 2024, approximately 4,9 million Ukrainians were abroad due to the war⁵. As of the end of March 2024, according to Eurostat, 4,2 million people who left Ukraine due to the full-scale invasion had the status of temporary protection in EU countries⁶. It is worth noting that according to relevant data, 46,7% of Ukrainian citizens who received this status, are women, 35,3% are children, and 18% are adult men⁷.

Given the fact that the security situation was the main factor in the migration flow to the West, it is clear that migration flows from Eastern and Southern regions, as well as the North, prevail. The vast majority of residents of other regions remained at their permanent place of residence during the

¹ Вишлінський Г., Михайлишина Д., Самойлюк М. та ін. (2024). Українські біженці. Майбутнє за кордоном та плани на повернення. Третя хвиля дослідження. URL: ces.org.ua/ukrainian_refugees_third_wave_research/

² IOM (2023a). Ukraine — Returns Report — General Population Survey Round 15. URL: <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-returns-report-general-population-survey-round-15-november-december-2023?close=true>

³ Богдан Т. (2024). Статус українських біженців у ЄС лише на три роки. Що далі? *Економічна правда*. URL: www.epravda.com.ua/columns/2024/01/12/708597/

⁴ IOM (2023a). Ukraine — Returns Report — General Population Survey Round 15. URL: <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-returns-report-general-population-survey-round-15-november-december-2023?close=true>

⁵ Вишлінський Г., Михайлишина Д., Самойлюк М. та ін. (2024). Українські біженці. Майбутнє за кордоном та плани на повернення. Третя хвиля дослідження. URL: ces.org.ua/ukrainian_refugees_third_wave_research/

⁶ Укрінформ (2024). Половина українських біженців готові повернутися з Європи додому. URL: www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/3863614-polovina-ukrainskih-bizenciv-gotovi-povernutisa-z-evropi-dodomu.html

⁷ Богдан Т. (2024). Статус українських біженців у ЄС лише на три роки. Що далі? *Економічна правда*. URL: www.epravda.com.ua/columns/2024/01/12/708597/

war (due to the data collected by *Gradus Research*, 84% of respondents in the Western region and 78% in the Central region didn't flee)¹.

At the beginning of the war, both among internally displaced people and among those who did not leave their homes, more than a third of respondents (35%) noted that they do not want to leave their families even in the event of an aggravation of the situation. Almost a quarter of respondents (17%) say that they do not have money to move, 15% didn't relocate due to the age reasons or physical disabilities, 14% have shelters or believe it's safe to stay, 9% mentioned that they will not adapt to new conditions, 5% do not move to keep a job².

However, those who had to flee their habitual place of residence were guided by a number of reasons, when the conduct of hostilities and the threat of shelling were of primary importance. But individual motivations (in addition to external factors, revealing the intentions of migrants to return or integrate into new communities) also determine the effect of two directions migration, both for the host countries and for Ukraine.

II. PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study is to find out how the socioeconomic status of migrants (in line with the security situation) and covering of their needs by hosting countries, affect their intentions to return to Ukraine or, on the contrary, integrate into the host communities. At the same time, the difficulties and advantages of the integration of Ukrainian refugees for the EU countries are taken into account.

From the point of view of migration law, migration is defined as the movement of people for various purposes across the borders of certain territorial entities aimed at permanent or temporary change of residence³ or in other words, permanent or temporary settling at a new location. A similar definition is proposed in the manuals and reports of international organizations that focus on global migration processes. The essential note

¹ Gradus (2022). Українці повертаються до роботи і додому — опитування компанією Gradus Research. URL: https://gradus.app/documents/248/Ukrainians_returning_home_and_getting_back_to_work_lIWZE4i.pdf

² Кудряшова В. (2022). Кожен третій вважає, що покидати Україну під час війни неприйнятно — опитування. *The Village*. URL: www.the-village.com.ua/village/city/city-news/325209-kozhen-tretiy-vvazhae-scho-pokidati-ukrayinu-pid-chas-viyni-nepriynyatno-opituvannya

³ Безуглий П. (2018). Теоретичні засади дослідження міграційних процесів. *Політичне життя*. 2018. № 1. С. 6.

is that such human patterns of movement impact the cultural landscapes of both the places people leave and the places they settle¹.

A review of migration flows in the period from February 2022, and the corresponding official data on the number of migrants, show the variability of number on Ukrainians outside home state, that is caused by significant number of return migrants. So, we should also not forget when interpret the data to take into account those people who left during the full-scale war, but have already returned. Considering the issue of this research, their socioeconomic status and individual motivations are essential.

Definitely, from the methodological point of view, we study forced migrants as military migrants. But surveying the social portrait of Ukrainian asylum seekers and their motivations prove the significant role of factors not closely related to the security situation in Ukraine. Therefore, it makes sense to study the motivations of some migrants using the neoclassical theory of migration, which presents migrants as rational individuals who make decisions about migration based on a comparison of expected benefits and expected costs. It is also possible to apply the theory of spatial self-organization of the population for explaining the choice of host country. To explain the consequences of asylum seekers' integration into the host communities, it is worth emphasize the methodological value of the theory of migration networks for explaining how such networks simplify the migration process for the next waves of migrants. It can be also applied for examining the factors of the choice of the host country and also for studying the factors of integration into the host community.

To examine return migration it is worth to use the terms of pull and push factors, developed by S. Stouffer, who went beyond the purely economic interpretation of the motives of migration processes and argued that the number of people who move is directly proportional to the pulling factors, the prospects, and inversely proportional to the number of pushing factors (local legislation, information provision, attitude of the local population, as well as economic ones).

When considering Ukrainian migration, the terms of refugees, displaced persons, asylum seekers, and forced migrants are used simultaneously. Therefore, it is necessary to take into account the legal norms that regulate

¹ Simmons C.R. (2024). Introduction to Human Migration. URL: education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/introduction-to-human-migration/

the status and determine the rights of Ukrainians who are in the host countries. The majority of those who fled to the EU received temporary protection. At the same time, Ukrainians mostly don't intend to receive formal refugee status that makes return or pendulum migration difficult. Orientation to the appropriate "mobility" is a specific feature of Ukrainian migrants. In this context, theoretically the concept of migration is also defined as the result of the movement of the population, while the process of movement itself is migration mobility¹. So, in the article, when we use the word migration, we mean both the process and its consequences.

A number of research on the topic emphasize the fact that migration is one of the forms of population movement, in which the change of place of residence for a more or less significant distance and duration is accompanied by socially significant economic, social, demographic and other consequences (positive and negative, overt or hidden, current or long-term, etc.)². Therefore, when studying returnees, the issue is not only their motivations, but also the consequences of the appropriate choice for the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine and the economies of the EU countries.

The empirical basis for the study of the factors and prospects of return migration are statistical data and information of international organizations (such as *UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe, International Organization for Migration, Europe without barriers*), Ukrainian information and analytical institutions (*Ukrinform, VoxUkraine, Center for Economic Strategy, Ukrainian Economic Platform*), and survey data (conducted by *Info Sapiens, Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, Gradus Research, The Village*).

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE OBTAINED RESULTS

Due to *International Organization for Migration*, the variation in refugees' intentions to return varies according to their demographic profile, by region of origin, by household composition, by proximity of host countries to Ukraine and by length of displacement³. IOM defines returnees "as those who are currently in their place of habitual residence, who indicate they have returned following a minimum of 2 weeks in displacement due to the

¹ Безуглий П. (2018). Теоретичні засади дослідження міграційних процесів. *Політичне життя*. 2018. № 1. С. 6.

² Ibid.

³ IOM (2023b). Ukraine Returns Report (16 — 23 January 2023). Displacement Tracking Matrix. URL: dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-returns-report-16-23-january-2023

war (since February 2022)”¹. According to the data of the all-Ukrainian nationally representative Omnibus survey, conducted in March 2022, only 12% of Ukrainians who went abroad due to the war at the time of the survey wanted or planned to reside there². In May 2022 57% of respondents reported their intention to return from abroad at the first opportunity, and 19% have not yet decided³. As of January 2023, due to the survey of *International Organization for Migration*, of all respondents currently in their place of habitual residence, 16% fall within the returnee definition (estimated 5,56 million returnees). Even so, the authors mentioned that it’s difficult to determine whether returns are permanent or temporary, because 80% of them indicate they are planning to remain in their homes (4,4 million), and 85% have been in their homes for a period longer than one month. In February 2023 12% of respondents reported plans to return permanently in the next three months, but the majority considered the situation in their places of origin in Ukraine “as not conducive to ensure a sustainable return home for the time being”. Thus, 65% expressed an overall desire to return to Ukraine one day, 18% undecided about return in the mid or long-term and 5% decided not to return⁴. According to the calculations of the Ukrainian Center for Economic Strategy, made in 2024, from 1,4 to 2,3 million Ukrainians may remain outside Ukraine under various scenarios⁵. In particular, according to the data of the *Kyiv International Institute of Sociology*, obtained in April 2024, half of the Ukrainians hosted in Poland, Germany and the Czech Republic probably do not intend to return to Ukraine⁶.

¹ Ibid.

² Волосевич І. (2022). 80% біженців задоволені умовами перебування в Польщі і Німеччині, але тільки 62% — умовами перебування в Італії. URL: www.sapiens.com.ua/ua/socpol-research-single-page?id=229

³ Gradus (2022). Українці повертаються до роботи і додому — опитування компанією Gradus Research. URL: https://gradus.app/documents/248/Ukrainians_returning_home_and_getting_back_to_work_lIWZE4i.pdf

⁴ IOM (2023b). Ukraine Returns Report (16 — 23 January 2023). Displacement Tracking Matrix. URL: dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-returns-report-16-23-january-2023

⁵ Вишлінський Г., Михайлишина Д., Самойлюк М. та ін. (2024). Українські біженці. Майбутнє за кордоном та плани на повернення. Третя хвиля дослідження. URL: ces.org.ua/ukrainian_refugees_third_wave_research/

⁶ Грушецький А. (2024). Опитування українських біженців у Німеччині, Польщі та Чехії: задоволеність життям за кордоном, повернення в Україну, інтерес до ситуації в Україні. URL: kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=1408&page=1#_ftnref1

In this context the following data on refugees' ties with Ukraine are meaningful. According to answers to questions about getting information about Ukraine, 56% of respondents answered that they receive such information, 11% said "it is difficult to answer" (which, in particular, is a form of evasion from socially disapproved behavior), and 34% directly answered that they are not interested in information about Ukraine. At the same time, among 56% of respondents, 42% receive information from Ukrainian sources, and 14% rely exclusively on foreign ones. If parliamentary elections were announced in Ukraine, 31% of Ukrainian refugees would vote, 33% are not sure, the rest would not vote¹. In addition, 7% of respondents claim that they already have citizenship of another state, 12% have submitted documents and are waiting for a decision on obtaining citizenship. 45%, although they did not submit documents, would generally prefer to obtain the citizenship of another country². So, return migration to Ukraine will significantly depend on the conditions in which asylum seekers are and the opportunities provided to them by host countries.

So that, comprehensive study of return migration first of all requires consideration of motivations and needs of relocants. Regarding the factors of relocation abroad, the *Info Sapiens* provides the following data. Conduct of hostilities or bombing the settlement was the reason to flee for 26% (only 13% said that their settlement was relatively safe); fighting near settlement — 18%; shelling of settlement — 25%; shelling of nearby settlements — 13%; other factors (the settlement was safe) — 13%³.

When asking external migrants a question about the reasons for choosing a country, the following distribution of answers was obtained: presence of friends, partner, acquaintances in selected countries — 31%; family in the chosen country — 27%; foreign friends, acquaintances from the chosen country — 14%; availability of benefits for Ukrainians during the war — 14%; the presence of a large Ukrainian diaspora — 6%; knowledge of the language or the similarity of the language of the chosen country with the

¹ Ibid.

² Укрінформ (2024). Половина українських біженців готові повернутися з Європи додому. URL: www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/3863614-polovina-ukrainskih-bizenciv-gotovi-povernutisa-z-evropi-dodomu.html

³ Волосевич І. (2022). 80% біженців задоволені умовами перебування в Польщі і Німеччині, але тільки 62% — умовами перебування в Італії. URL: www.sapiens.com.ua/ua/socpol-research-single-page?id=229

Ukrainian one — 2%; random selection — 2%; employment opportunity — 2%; territorial closeness to Ukraine — 2%; relocation of the campaign involving respondents — 2%; available free or low-cost housing — 1%; medical assistance — 1%; educational opportunities — 1%. Despite the fact that the majority of Ukrainians who left for those countries where they had friends, acquaintances or relatives, 14% focused on benefits (among refugees in Germany, twice as many).

The demands of the refugees are notably determined by households' composition and their socio-demographic features. In other words, these needs, as well as the reasons for migration and choosing host state, are significantly revealed by the social status of displaced persons and the region of their origin. The share of refugees who need help in the host country is lower among people without children (77%), and also among refugees from Kyiv (76%) and the North (78%) of Ukraine. Generally, they primarily require financial support (50%) and employment assistance (39%). Most of the refugees from the South, West, North and East of Ukraine expect financial support. The problem with employment is also most common among refugees from the East and South of Ukraine¹. Commonly, migrants emphasize access to healthcare and work opportunities in host countries as key factors influencing their intentions².

Therefore, in addition to the constant security risks in Ukraine and specific circumstances in their places of origin, the intentions of refugees are primarily determined by the level of access to basic needs and rights in the host countries, as well as the access to the labor market, educational opportunities, integration into local communities.

In April 2024, the *Kyiv International Institute of Sociology* conducted a survey of Ukrainian refugees, according to which 28% of them are completely satisfied with the conditions, 38% are rather satisfied³. Certainly, the request of displaced persons for employment is significant. 53% of adult refugees found a job abroad, 9% work online for a Ukrainian company. At the same time, a lot of refugees from Ukraine, who are currently working,

¹ Ibid.

² UNHCR (2023). *Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees from Ukraine*. URL: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

³ Грушецький А. (2024). Опитування українських біженців у Німеччині, Польщі та Чехії: задоволеність життям закордоном, повернення в Україну, інтерес до ситуації в Україні. URL: kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=1408&page=1#_ftnref1

have low-skilled jobs and almost 30% say that their job abroad is less qualified than their job was in Ukraine¹. But considerable percentage of migrants who is working in the informal sector caused some information gaps on accessing the labour market².

The issue of return factors is gradually becoming researched in social sciences. For instance, based on the approach of S. Stouffer, I. Solohub provided the results of several regression models that allow for correlation between different return factors for Ukrainian migrants³. Model 1 describes returnees staying in Ukraine versus migrants staying abroad. So, the author named:

- demographic factors, such as: single/unmarried persons; emigrated together with a spouse,
- pull factors: longing for family and home; desire for children to study in Ukraine; better employment opportunities in Ukraine; availability of real estate in Ukraine; information from the Ukrainian government,
- push factor: financial difficulties abroad.

Model 2 describes migrants staying abroad and planning to return versus those staying abroad and not planning to return. Relevant factors are:

- demographic factors: planned to emigrate before the war; left in February-March 2022; persons with refugee status; have not visited Ukraine since February 2022;
- pull factors: improvement of the security situation; longing for family and home; desire for children to study in Ukraine; better employment opportunities in Ukraine; desire to participate in the restoration of Ukraine;
- push factor: higher living standards abroad⁴

As it was shown above, intention to return is more likely among older persons, being undecided about return is more likely among those living alone and those with less proximity to their place of origin, no intention to return is more likely among “certain demographic groups, smaller households, males, young adults with vocational or technical education and

¹ Sologoub I. (2024). Return or stay? What factors impact the decisions of Ukrainian refugees. URL: voxukraine.org/en/return-or-stay-what-factors-impact-the-decisions-of-ukrainian-refugees

² UNHCR (2023). Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees from Ukraine. URL: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

³ Дубровський В., Черкашин В., Вахітова А., Гетман О. (2024). Воєнні мігранти: світовий досвід та українські особливості. URL: iset-ua.org/images/Policy-war-migranti-final.pdf

⁴ Ibid.

those with specific displacement patterns (i.e. left during the first months of the war, originating from the North, hosted in countries not sharing a border with Ukraine and/or without spouse or children still there)”¹.

The most common reasons for the refugees’ intention not to return are linked to the situation in their place of origin and their living conditions in the host countries. It is clear that the main reason is security concerns or temporary military occupation (almost 50% of respondents cited this reason). At the same time, among the main factors related to conditions in the place of origin, the respondents indicated lack of work (31%), lack of basic services (16%) or adequate housing (12%). The reasons related to the conditions of their stay in the host country are finding or having a stable job (19%), attending school (13%) and feeling integrated in the host country (11%)².

When considering the return or intention to return in the near future, even to areas heavily affected by the war, it’s worth to mention that the slight majority of returnees are residents of large cities (56%), or the suburbs of large cities (10%). However, relatively few families had returned to rural areas (7%)³. In 2024 a substantial portion of areas of return (104 communities, or 37% of assessed communities) witnessed the return of 40-60 % of people displaced from these communities since February 2022. The highest return rates were observed in Kyiv, Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolaiv regions⁴.

At the same time, returnee often reside in settlements with very few or no residents; where all or most residents have reduced the quality and quantity of basic necessities and foodstuffs up to household consumption; where there were frequent power outages; where some children do not have access to education due to damage to school buildings and/or the impact of power outages on the online learning process; where a significant part of the housing stock has been damaged or destroyed as a result of the war; where mines and/or unexploded ordnance are known; in settlements

¹ UNHCR (2023). *Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees from Ukraine*. URL: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

² Ibid.

³ IOM (2023b). *Ukraine Returns Report (16 — 23 January 2023)*. Displacement Tracking Matrix. URL: dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-returns-report-16-23-january-2023

⁴ IOM (2024). *Ukraine — Conditions of Return Assessment Factsheet — Round 7*. URL: dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-conditions-return-assessment-factsheet-round-7-may-2024?close=true

where residents are partially or very concerned about tensions in their communities.

An essential aspect which concerns returnees' intentions is the ability to rely on a regular salary as the primary source of household. It's less common among returnees in the Northern, Eastern and Southern regions.

International Organisation for Migration emphasizes that returnees should be supported alongside other affected groups through early recovery programs, including the reconstruction of basic infrastructure such as water, electricity, health and education services, and access to housing solutions for those, whose houses were damaged or destroyed, or for those who cannot return to their places of habitual residence. IOM mentions that "livelihood opportunities and employment conditions are an important factor for returns: a notable share of returnees faced challenging employment conditions upon return, with Key Informants (KIs) reporting up to 56 per cent of locations experiencing unemployment, whereby only some, few, or no residents seeking work could find suitable job opportunities. Of the affected locations, an estimated 26 per cent of returnees resided"¹.

By the data of UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe, among those hoping to return, a higher proportion of displaced people was found among the following groups: households composed only by one adult with dependents (69%) (compared to those only composed by adults without dependents), households who were living in the South of Ukraine (71%) (compared to those from the West and Kyiv city (61-62%)), households hosted in countries neighbouring Ukraine (75%) (compared to those in other countries in Europe (59%)), (which could explain in part their decision to stay close to Ukraine). The vast majority refugees planning to eventually return indicated their return would happen "when the situation allows" when many of their places of origin are still being bombed, contaminated by landmines or in cases where their houses have been destroyed².

According to the survey conducted by *Info Sapiens*, the following factors might encourage migrants to return: end of the war — 51,2%, absence of hostilities or air strikes in the territory of residence — 34,1%, decent paid job in Ukraine — 28,3%, higher standard of living in Ukraine — 20,7%,

¹ Ibid.

² UNHCR (2023). Lives on Hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees from Ukraine. URL: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

restoration of infrastructure in home region — 17,7, end of the temporary asylum — 17,4%¹.

Therefore, in 2024 as a reason for returning to Ukraine, Ukrainians mention the normal functioning of critical infrastructure (34%) and security (34%)². In May 2024, 26% named the resolving of housing issue, as well as the end of a full-scale war by 26%. Slightly fewer respondents mentioned the possibility of finding a job (16%) and the conditions for children to attend school/kindergarten (13%)³.

Due to the law understanding, there is a large number of international organisations (*International Organisation for Migration*, the *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*, and also *World Bank*, *UNICEF*, *WHO*, etc.), government agencies, international and local NGOs, and commissions at the level of local community governments that deal with the problems of returnees. Often, assistance is provided by host countries interested in returning migrants, the European Commission, and international aid agencies of individual countries, such as *USAID*, *SIDA*, *UKAID*, etc.⁴

But obviously, the solution depends not so much on international organisations as on the policy of the country itself and its security situation⁵. In general, experts believe that intentions to return will depend on the post-war reconstruction of the affected regions; development of public-private partnership; increasing resources for communication with compatriots abroad through diplomatic missions; simplifying the reintegration of children to study in Ukrainian schools and the admission of Ukrainian graduates of foreign schools to Ukrainian universities⁶ (it's worth to mention

¹ Дубровський В., Черкашин В., Вахітова А., Гетман О. (2024). Воєнні мігранти: світовий досвід та українські особливості. URL: iset-ua.org/images/Policy-war-migranti-final.pdf

² Грушецький А. (2024). Опитування українських біженців у Німеччині, Польщі та Чехії: задоволеність життям закордоном, повернення в Україну, інтерес до ситуації в Україні. URL: kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=1408&page=1#_ftnref1

³ Укрінформ (2024). Половина українських біженців готові повернутися з Європи додому. URL: www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/3863614-polovina-ukrainskih-bizenciv-gotovi-povernutisa-z-evropi-dodomu.html

⁴ Дубровський В., Черкашин В., Вахітова А., Гетман О. (2024). Воєнні мігранти: світовий досвід та українські особливості. URL: iset-ua.org/images/Policy-war-migranti-final.pdf

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Волосевич І. (2022). 80% біженців задоволені умовами перебування в Польщі і Німеччині, але тільки 62% — умовами перебування в Італії. URL: www.sapiens.com.ua/ua/socpol-research-single-page?id=229

that about a half of school-age children, along with studies in a foreign school also attend a Ukrainian school online. For some of them a Ukrainian school online was the only form of study¹).

If note that according to the IOM methodology, a return is considered “sustainable” if further migration is a matter of free decision — that is, the living conditions of migrants meet at least basic standards in terms of security, material conditions, healthcare, etc.², so, we can talk about stable return conditions when these standards are ensured, which both requires the efforts of the state and the returnees themselves, and undoubtedly depends on external circumstances.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

As migration studies and opinion polls show, in addition to the security situation in Ukraine, the intention of displaced persons to stay or leave the place of temporary residence is influenced by their financial status, meeting of needs, as well attitude towards them from host communities, availability of access to the labor market, educational opportunities including language learning for asylum seekers, conditions for admission to universities, access to school education. Simultaneously, these factors determine the possibilities of social integration (temporary or long-term) for both those who intend to return to Ukraine after the stabilization of the security situation and for those who want to inhabit in a current place of residence.

Therefore, it's necessary to take into account not only the factors of external and return migration, but also the consequences.

In the pre-war period, migration from Ukraine certainly had an economic effect, because it reduced the supply of labor within Ukraine, and therefore reduced unemployment and shadow employment, accordingly increased wages, but probably held back GDP growth³. Regarding the economic effect of current forced military migration, migrants' integration into the labor markets of most countries, despite increasing the financial burden on the states' budget to support them, created a positive effect and allowed to revive national economies (both due to the growth of consumer demand and the

¹ Sologoub I. (2024). Return or stay? What factors impact the decisions of Ukrainian refugees. URL: voxukraine.org/en/return-or-stay-what-factors-impact-the-decisions-of-ukrainian-refugees

² Дубровський В., Черкашин В., Вахітова А., Гетман О. (2024). Воєнні мігранти: світовий досвід та українські особливості. URL: iset-ua.org/images/Policy-war-migranti-final.pdf

³ Ibid.

job creation, as well as due to the tax revenues from relocants' activities). Consequently, Ukrainians revived the economy of the EU member states. The effect was that many Ukrainians quickly adapt to new living conditions, search for work, create jobs and pay taxes to the budgets of the countries in which they temporarily settle. This can be reflected as a very favorable factor for the integration of migrants into local communities. In this context economists say that "if Ukrainians remain abroad, then European countries will receive a direct economic benefit; however, if they return, there will be an indirect benefit for the EU"¹, due to reducing the burden on the social services. So, some states that are interested in the integration of Ukrainian migrants offer better access to the labor market and language courses at a professional level, simplify the recognition of skills and diplomas, create opportunities for professional development, provide information and access to social care (taking into account the needs of adults with dependents). Such factors as creating advantageous conditions for business development, grants and financing projects are also favorable for relocation. At the same time, the consequences for the public, social, socio-cultural situation in the host communities are not unambiguous. In general, there is a benevolent attitude towards the relocators because of linguistic and cultural differences, the attitudes towards expectations and meeting the needs.

The economic consequences of current forced military migration for Ukraine are quite clear. Huge migration flows are taking a heavy toll on the domestic economy due to decreasing household spendings which affects economic growth. As experts note "depending on how many Ukrainians do not return home after the end of the war, economic losses due to the decline in production and consumption may range from 2,6 to 7,7% of GDP per year"². In addition, during and after the war it will be difficult to increase export-oriented production and develop more complex and technological production because of the lack of highly qualified employees. So, the return migration will strengthen Ukraine's economy and allow it to invest more in security and reconstruction. To activate this, state initially has to provide reforms, invest in the restoration of infrastructure. But it's also necessary to emphasize that under certain conditions, the return of

¹ Vinokurov Y. (2023). If millions of Ukrainians leave the country definitively, this will have a significant impact on the economy. How can Ukraine avoid the worst possible scenario? *Ukrainska Pravda*. URL: <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/articles/2023/09/11/7419258/>

² Ibid.

war migrants not only have a positive effect, but also can cause a range of problems for returnees, lead to re-migration or “make them long-term clients of social services or international aid”¹.

When considering the economic effect, it is worth evaluating not only the consequences of military migration for the post-war development of Ukraine, but also the risks related to the outflow of highly qualified labor after the end of the war. This may be caused by unfavorable conditions for conducting business, IT industry, the attempts of draftees to avoid conscription.

All mentioned aspects require the close attention of the state, a responsible attitude of Ukrainian citizens to the available opportunities and, of course, depend on the individual motivations of both external migrants and returnees.

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¹ Дубровський В., Черкашин В., Вахітова А., Гетман О. (2024). Воєнні мігранти: світовий досвід та українські особливості. URL: iset-ua.org/images/Policy-war-migranti-final.pdf

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