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## THE INFLUENCE OF THE LABOR POTENTIAL OF THE UKRAINIAN POPULATION'S MIGRATION TO THE EU COUNTRIES DURING THE WAR

The influence of the migration of the Ukraine's population to the countries of the European Union on their labor potential during the Russian Federation's military aggression against Ukraine has been studied. It has been established that since the beginning of spring 2022, Ukrainian war refugees represent a highly educated workforce for a number of European countries. The paper has assessed the labor potential of Ukrainian war refugees, which consists mainly of the economically active population, highly educated people, scientists, employees, young people with higher education, with prevailing share of women with children. Currently, the EU countries consider the prospect of a transition to a climate-neutral economy, which will influence such sectors as construction, energy, manufacturing and transport that, in turn, will require additional labor force with new skills. It is the significant intellectual component of the labor potential of Ukrainian war refugees that contributes to the rapid transition of the EU countries to a green and digital economy, which requires economic restructuring and transformation of labor markets. It has been proven that the massive migration flow of Ukrainian war refugees to the EU countries during the war will have a positive effect on the labor potential and economic development. This is indicated by factors such as unemployment decrease and per capita GDP growth in the EU countries. It has been proved that there is a need for labor in the host countries. The study of political issues will enable migrants to live profitably in areas with a large number of representatives of the same ethnic group. The positive influence of the labor potential of the migration movement of the Ukraine's population on the labor market of European countries has been proved. This will result in the improvement of the economy and increase in the relatively high employment rates among the mono-ethnic population. Therefore, it is important to monitor the situation closely to avoid any potential problems at the local labor level or in specific occupations.

**Keywords:** *migration, labor potential, Ukrainian population, a war refugee, European Union*

**JEL:** *E00, F22, J11, J61*

Проведено дослідження впливу міграційного руху українського населення до країн Європейського Союзу під час військової агресії з боку Російської федерації на їх трудовий потенціал. З'ясовано, що значна кількість українських воєнних біженців є високоосвіченою робочою силою для низки європейських країн вже з весни 2022 року. Проведено оцінювання трудового потенціалу українських воєнних біженців, який складається, у більшій мірі, з економічно активного населення, високоосвітян, науковців, інтелігенції, молоді з вищою освітою, серед яких переважно жінки з дітьми. Наразі країни ЄС орієнтовані на перспективу переходу до кліматично нейтральної економіки, яка впливає на такі сектори, як будівництво, енергетика, обробна промисловість та транспорт, що вимагатиме додаткової робочої сили і нових навичок. Саме значна інтелектуальна складова трудового потенціалу українських воєнних біженців сприяє швидкому переходу країн ЄС до зеленої і цифрової економіки, що вимагає реструктуризації економіки та трансформації ринків праці. Доведено, що масовий потік міграційного руху українських воєнних біженців під час війни до країн Європейського Союзу, позитивно вплине на його трудовий потенціал та економічний розвиток країн ЄС. Про це вказують показники зменшення безробіття в країнах ЄС та зростання ВВП на душу населення серед країн Європейського Союзу. Доведено, що в приймаючих країнах є потреба в робочій силі. Дослідження політичних питань надасть мігрантам змогу вигідно жити в районах з великою кількістю представників однієї етнічної групи. Доведено вплив трудового потенціалу міграційного руху українського населення на ринок праці європейських країн, який покращить економіку та підвищить відносно високі показники зайнятості серед одноетнічного населення. Виникає потреба уважно стежити за ситуацією, щоб уникнути будь-яких потенційних проблем на місцевому рівні праці або в конкретних професіях.

**Ключові слова:** міграція, трудовий потенціал, українське населення, воєнний біженець, Європейський Союз

**JEL:** E00, F22, J11, J61

**Introduction.** Russia's large-scale aggression against Ukraine, which began on February 24, 2022, triggered a historic mass exodus of people fleeing conflict unseen in Europe since World War II.

Moreover, the overwhelming majority of newcomers are women with children and the highly educated population of Ukraine, among whom are quite young people, that is, the economically active population. Following the Temporary Protection Directive in practice, the EU will continue to welcome people fleeing the war in Ukraine and support their integration into the labor market as a priority. Their arrival in the EU does not preclude the need to lay the foundations for a sustainable and comprehensive approach to labor migration in order to meet the EU's long-term skills needs.

But the European Commission claims that the Russian aggression against Ukraine creates significant obstacles to the development of the continent's socio-economic component after the end of hostilities, because the interaction of social and economic components requires

achieving justice when distributing material goods among people and providing targeted assistance to the poor sections of society and military refugees.

**The purpose of this article** is to analyse statistical data of the member states of the European Union and Ukraine to determine the impact of the labor potential of the migration movement of the Ukrainian population to the EU countries in wartime, that consists, to a greater extent, of the economically active population, highly educated, scientists, intelligence, young people with higher education, including mainly women with children. Also, the article is aimed to justify the need to closely monitor the situation in order to avoid possible problems at the local level of labor or in specific professions.

**Analysis of recent publications.** A lot of recent studies focus on labor mobility of the population in conditions of regional integration [12]. Also, there has been numerous studies to investigate the latest trends in the geographical mobility of workers in the European Union countries [7]. Several studies have analysed the impact of the war in Ukraine and migration flows to

Poland [4; 9], migration among regions [10], the role of regional advanced sectors of the economy, employment opportunities, and regional productivity [1]. In addition, there exists a considerable body of literature on the influence of the population, the Human Development Index and economic growth of the region [14].

A closer look to the literature on the labour potential of the migration movement of the Ukrainian population, however, reveals a number of gaps and shortcomings.

The study of political issues will enable migrants to live profitably in areas with a large number of representatives of the same ethnic group. If the representatives of one ethnic group are well educated, employed in well-paid jobs, then the level of employment in the ethnic community is high. Therefore, the labor potential of the migration movement of the Ukrainian population will affect the labor market of European countries, improve the economy, and increase relatively high employment rates among the same ethnic population.

**Information base and research methods.** The study was based on data analysis, literature review and case studies to create a comprehensive picture of the migration movement of the Ukrainian labor force to the EU countries during the war and its main benefits, risks and challenges.

Data collection was carried out in parallel with using European statistics and information from recent research. The main databases used were:

- Eurostat (European labour force survey);
- International Labour Office (ILO);
- EU survey.

The data on expats from the EU and migrant workers from the EU were mainly obtained from the European labor force survey. The data on accommodated employees were taken from country newsletters. The in-depth literature review was mainly based on:

- EU rules and the Directive;
- European opinions, reports and research;
- academic research papers.

**Research results.** The social component is focused on the development of

society, on maintaining stability of social and cultural systems, on reducing the number of conflicts in society. The human being should not be viewed as an object, but rather the subject of development. People should participate in the processes of shaping their lives, making and implementing decisions.

The economic component is responsible for using effectively limited resources and applying nature-, energy- and material-saving technologies to create a flow of aggregate income, which makes an impact on preserving (not reducing) aggregate capital (physical, natural or human), raised to generate aggregate income. At the same time, the transition to the information society leads to a change in the structure of aggregate capital in favor of human capital by increasing intangible flows of finance, information and intellectual property. Even now, these flows exceed the volume of material goods movement by seven times [16]. The development of a new, “weightless” economy is stimulated not only by the scarcity of natural resources, but also by the growth of information and knowledge.

Since the period of stay of Ukrainian war refugees in the EU host countries is not defined, it is essential to study the potential labor force of the Ukrainian migration movement to EU countries during wartime and determine its impact on the EU countries’ economic development.

The term “war refugees” is used in a brief summary to refer to people fleeing Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine who have received certain international protection, including not only official refugee status (according to the Geneva Convention), but also additional temporary protection [4].

On 1 July 2022, the Czech Republic took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the next six months. In this status, it replaced France, then was followed by Sweden in January 2023. Together, these countries form the current Chairing Trio, which sets long-term goals and a common agenda for 18 months. At the same time, each country

has its own priorities for accommodating war refugees [2].

During its presidency, the Czech Republic focused on five closely interrelated priority areas:

- refugee crisis management and post-war reconstruction of Ukraine;
- energy security;
- strengthening of Europe’s defense capability and cyber security;
- strategic stability of the European economy;
- reliability of democratic institutions.

During the Russian aggression against Ukraine, for the first time since its inception, the European Union is facing one of the most difficult tests due to the deteriorating economic situation of the Europeans and the energy crisis. The economic crisis in Europe is caused by mistakes and own initiatives of the European Union regarding anti-Russian sanctions. But European countries are demonstrating unity and solidarity like never before. Already 44 European countries condemn Russian aggression and support Ukraine.

UNHCR data indicate that the number of border crossings from Ukraine was particularly high during the first month of the conflict, involving more than 150,000 people every day for almost two weeks from the end of February to the beginning of March.

Since the end of March, the number of border crossings from Ukraine has averaged about 50,000 people per day, while the number of people returning to Ukraine has gradually increased, reaching an average of 30,000 people per day since May 2022 [17].

The number of refugees from Ukraine registered for temporary protection or in similar national protection schemes in Europe reached 4,183,000 on September 30, 2022, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) [8].

Data on Ukrainian refugees who crossed the borders of European countries by the end of October 2022 are given in Table 1.

Based on the results of data consideration, it was found that the largest increase in Ukrainian was refugees in October 2022 was registered in Poland (almost 56,000), Germany (about 39,000), the Czech Republic (about 15,000), Great Britain, Romania and the Netherlands (about 11,000). However, in case of the Netherlands, this change was tracked within two months (Germany and Czech Republic – OON).

New Russian missile attacks on Ukraine and Russian mobilization have led to more and more Ukrainians coming to European countries in search of safety. Among them are those who arrived immediately after the beginning of the Russian invasion, returned

Table 1

Countries featured in the Refuge Response Plan (2022) [17]

Country	Date	Refugees from Ukraine registered for Temporary Protection or similar national protection schemes	Refugees from Ukraine recorded in country	Border crossings from Ukraine*	Border crossings to Ukraine**
Bulgaria	25.10.22	142806	55257	Not applicable	Not applicable
Czech Republic	25.10.22	452911	453103	Not applicable	Not applicable
Hungary	25.10.22	31290	31290	1628968	Data not available
Poland	25.10.22	1469032	1469032	7113589	5090535
Republic of Moldova	25.10.22	Not applicable	95728	670158	313078
Romania	23.10.22	76155	86206	1426392	1120077
Slovakia	25.10.22	98572	98770	883374	620527
Total		2270766	2289386		7144217

to the Motherland, and are now leaving again for the countries that provide shelter. The number of Ukrainian war refugees in countries farthest from Ukraine has been increasing. Therefore, it is essential to examine existing data on the integration of refugees in the labor market and determine who will be active and employed in European countries by the end of 2022.

In order to minimize possible external risks, it is necessary to diversify the flows of external labor movement to other countries, since providing high-paying jobs for the entire volume of the growing labor force, including the growing number of the unemployed population, is unrealistic both in the short and medium and (to some extent) in the long run.

Although there is no systematic data on the socio-economic characteristics

of countries, especially from Ukraine's neighboring EU countries, some information is available for individual host countries.

A survey of Ukrainian war refugees conducted in Germany by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community Affairs in the third week of March 2022 showed that among all adults surveyed, 73% had a higher education, 19% had a secondary education and 7% had an incomplete secondary education. Among the working population of Ukraine in 2020, 56% of women and 43% of men had higher education (Fig. 1).

In Spain, 61% of all registered adult Ukrainian war refugees have a higher education diploma, 11% have a high education, and 25% have a vocational qualification, while less than 1% have no education (Fig. 2).

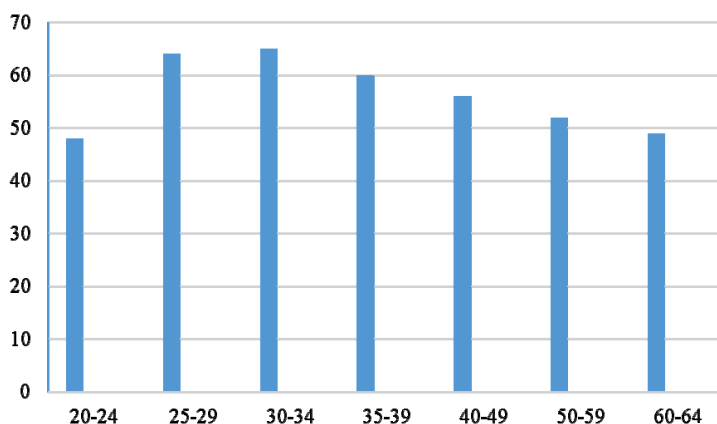


Fig. 1. Percentage of people with higher education among Ukrainians of working age by age group, 2020 (women in Ukraine, %) [16]

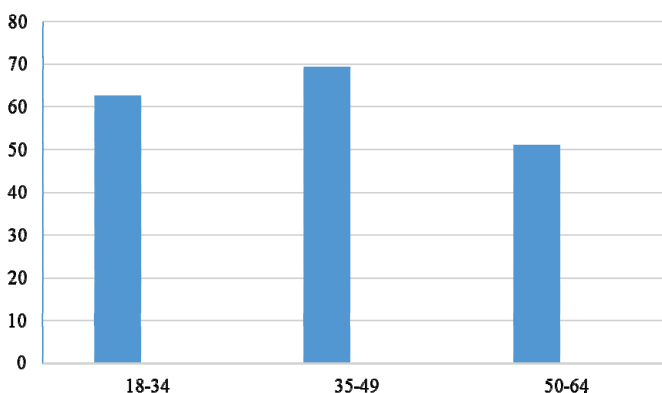


Fig. 2. Percentage of people with higher education among Ukrainians of working age by age group (Ukrainian refugees in Spain, April 2022, %) [16]

The results of the analysis of the socio-economic characteristics of Ukrainian war refugees show that they are dominated by people with higher education, with a prevailing share of white-collar workers, candidates and doctors of science, young people and the economically active population. The level of education of Ukrainian war refugees is significantly higher than that of refugees from other countries, in addition, they are more highly educated than the population of Ukraine as a whole.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the employment rate of Ukrainian war refugees

is lower than that of their compatriots of the same age who arrived in the EU countries earlier as labor migrants. This can be explained by a number of reasons (Fig. 3).

From the employers' point of view, hiring refugees can be risky, as they may face difficulties in assessing the skills they possess, in terms of formal qualifications, previous professional experience and, in general, in understanding their abilities and motivation.

Examining the demographic situation, it should be noted that the level of unemployment before the war in the host countries of Europe was low (Fig. 4).

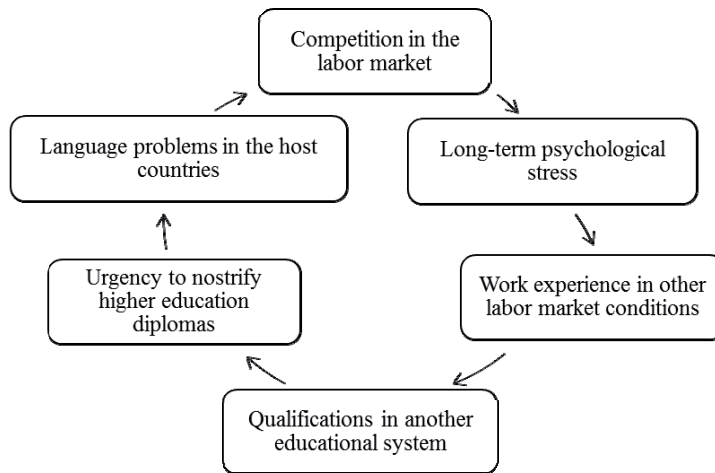


Fig. 3. Problems of refugees in the labor market of host countries [the authors' development]

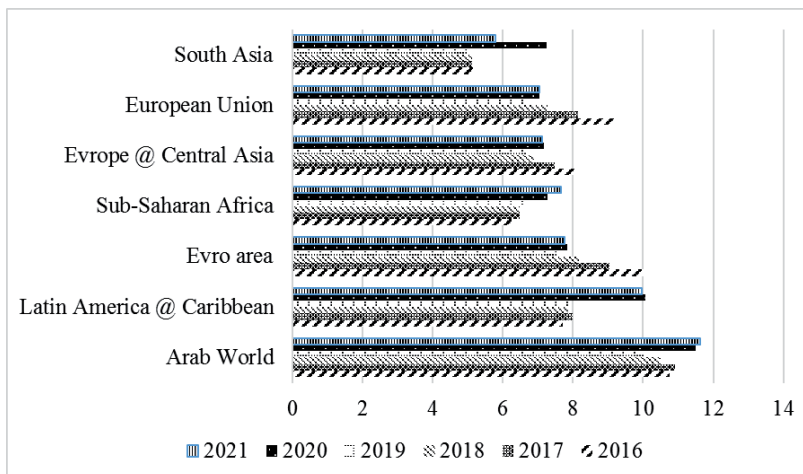


Fig. 4. The level of unemployment in certain regions of the world in the period from 2016 to 2021 [15]



Statistical observations results show the level of unemployment in some regions of the world from 2016 to 2021 with the highest unemployment rate in the Arab world of 11.63%.

It should be mentioned, that the unemployment rate improved after the 2008 crisis in most countries. The same trend is observed with regard to unemployment among young people aged 15 to 24 all over the world. However, a lot of young people have faced layoffs since 2008, mainly because they are interchangeable and easily replaceable. Therefore, youth unemployment has increased, despite little improvement.

Within 2012-2013, the unemployment rate in some regions of the world remained relatively unchanged, but is expected to improve in the long term according to current employment trends. The economic situation in the world is improving mainly due to the growth of the gross domestic product, which is positive in most countries, except for the European zone.

The increase in gross domestic product indicates economic growth, as well as improved productivity in a country. On the other hand, other indicators of economic health, such as inflation, point to further economic shocks, since inflation is expected to rise globally, particularly in underdeveloped countries.

Knowing the language of the host country and using previously acquired qualifications are crucial for employment in the labor market of any EU country. Such social component is a necessary condition for participation in the life of society as a whole. Social contacts with native speakers will increase the probability of obtaining higher education and moving within the country.

The main obstacle to the employment of Ukrainian war refugees is that many refugees are mothers with children. This seriously complicates their entry into the labor market. Among them there are working-age women accompanied by elderly relatives. This category of Ukrainian refugees do not have time to professionally learn the language of the host country, as they, first of all, solve housing problems and try to find a job without

knowing the language of the host country. It should be noted that foreign applicants must develop and improve their skills and, above all, learn the national language in order to avoid employment in low-income and low-paid positions, such as cleaners, dishwashers, etc.

For example, the largest shortage of personnel in the Czech Republic is observed among medical workers. The average age of medical workers in this country is 52, which means that when doctors retire due to age and length of service, there is simply no one to replace them.

This is due to the fact that young doctors move to other countries of the European Union – they choose Germany and Switzerland for work, less often – Ireland and Great Britain, where the payment level is higher. So young refugees have to get a higher education in a European country to fill positions that are in short supply.

It should be determined that the migrants' salaries are significantly lower than those of citizens of the countries in which they live. There is also unequal payment for women and men, with the same type of work and its performance. Gender inequality is observed in the EU countries.

Table 2 presents Eurostat data on average hourly wages, hours paid per month and employment rates for men and women, and the resulting gender gaps. In 2018, women in the EU were paid on average 12% fewer hours per month than men.

There is an obvious gap between the number of hours paid to men and the number of hours paid to women in different EU member states. At one end of the scale, women in the Netherlands were paid 27% fewer hours per month than men. At the other end of the scale, the difference was only 1% in Bulgaria and Romania and 2% in Croatia.

In 2018, at the EU level, the employment rate for men was 15 % higher than that of women. In different Member States, the difference between the employment rate for men and women varied from 2 % in Lithuania to 30 % in Greece.

There is a decrease in unemployment rate in 2022 in countries such as Poland,

Table 2

## Gender differences in hourly wages, paid hours and employment rates, 2018 [6]

	Average hourly payment (EUR)		Uncorrected gender pay gap, %	Average number of paid hours per month		Gender gap by hours, %	Employment rate within the age group of 15-64 years (%)		Gender employment gap, %
	men	women		men	women		men	women	
EU	16,6	14,1	15	162	142	12	73,1	62,3	15
Belgium	20,8	19,6	6	163	143	12	68,2	60,7	11
Bulgaria	3,6	3,1	14	179	177	1	71,5	63,9	11
Czech Republic	7,8	6,3	20	171	165	4	81,8	67,6	17
Germany	21,7	17,3	20	153	123	20	79,7	72,1	10
Estonia	8,5	6,6	22	177	167	6	78,1	71,4	9
Ireland	24,3	21,6	11	158	134	15	74,1	63,3	15
Greece	9,2	8,2	10	159	151	5	64,7	45,3	30
Spain	12,9	11,4	12	161	146	9	67,9	56,9	16
France	19,7	16,4	17	154	142	8	68,9	61,9	10
Croatia	6,7	6,0	11	184	181	2	65,4	55,9	15
Italy	15,9	15,1	5	175	144	18	67,6	49,5	27
Cyprus	11,9	10,6	10	174	166	5	73,3	64,2	12
Latvia	7,0	5,6	20	164	159	3	73,6	70,1	5
Lithuania	5,7	4,9	14	174	165	5	73,3	71,6	2
Luxembourg	25,3	24,9	1	182	158	13	70,6	63,4	10
Hungary	5,9	5,0	14	179	172	4	76,3	62,3	18
Malta	12,6	11,0	13	169	156	8	81,5	61,5	25
Netherlands	19,8	16,9	15	146	107	27	81,6	72,8	11
Austria	19,0	15,2	20	167	132	21	77,4	68,6	11
Poland	6,5	6,0	9	180	166	8	74,0	60,8	18
Portugal	8,1	7,4	9	169	160	5	72,7	66,9	8
Romania	5,2	5,1	2	184	183	1	73,2	56,2	23
Slovenia	10,0	9,1	9	181	174	4	74,5	67,5	9
Slovak Republic	7,4	6,0	20	171	166	3	73,5	61,2	17
Finland	22,0	18,3	17	162	153	6	73,5	70,6	4
Sweden	52,5	18,9	12	165	149	10	78,8	75,9	4
Iceland	28,1	24,1	14	162	137	15	87,5	82,5	6
Norway	31,9	27,7	13	151	131	13	76,9	72,6	6
Switzerland	38,9	31,8	18	167	130	22	84,5	75,7	10

Germany and the Czech Republic. This indicator became significantly lower than the average indicator for European countries (Fig. 5).

While analyzing this data we should bear in mind that by the end of 2022, a significant number of Ukrainian war refugees will become the labor force of European countries, and the same number will be employed. Figure 5 shows the labor force or employment results in host countries.

As for the labor force, according to experts, all European countries will see an increase of about 0.5%, or more than

1.2 million people. As for individual countries, the largest increase in the labor force can be observed in three countries: the Czech Republic (2.2%), Poland (2.1%), Estonia (1.9%). For other countries, the impact is estimated to be between 1% and 1.5% (Hungary, Latvia, Slovak Republic, Lithuania, Romania).

For all other countries, the relative change is expected to be much lower, no more than 0.5%, and even less for most large European countries (Figure 6).

The analysis does not take into account additional refugee arrivals that occurred



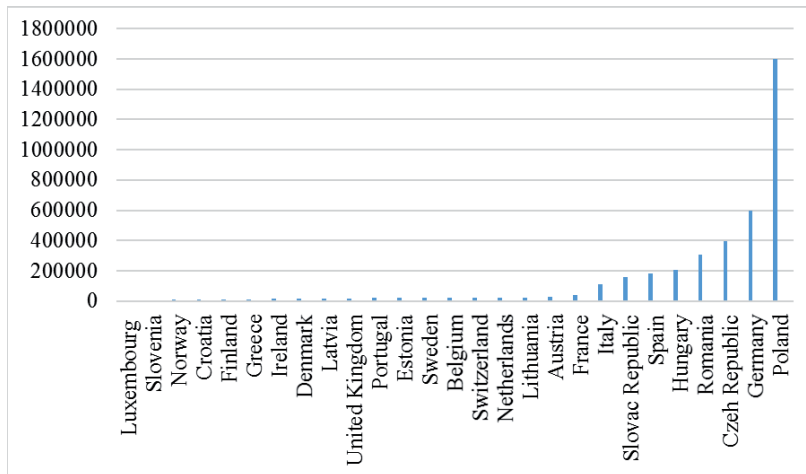


Fig. 5. Number of Ukrainian war refugees in EU countries, the end of April, 2022 [15]

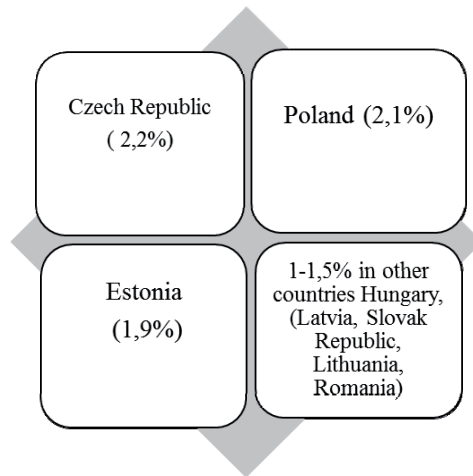


Fig. 6. Countries with the largest labor force growth in 2022 [the authors' development]

between September and October and that may occur later in 2022.

Based on the research results, the influence of the migration movement of Ukrainian population during military operations in Ukraine on the labor potential of the European Union countries has been determined. It has been established that a significant number of Ukrainian war refugees has been part of the labor potential of a number of European countries since spring of 2022. The largest increase in the labor force is observed in three countries: the Czech Republic, Poland, and Estonia.

**Conclusion.** The paper has given an overview of the socio-economic structure

of the labor potential of Ukrainian war refugees, which consists of an economically active part of the population, highly educated people, scientists, young people with higher education, among whom women with children predominate. The significant intellectual component of the labor potential of Ukrainian war refugees is accelerating the EU's transition to a green and digital economy, which requires the acquisition of certain skills and the restructuring of the economy and labor markets. The transition to a climate-neutral economy will significantly influence sectors such as construction, energy, manufacturing and transport, which will also require additional labor force with new skills.

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## THE IMPACT OF THE LABOR POTENTIAL OF THE UKRAINIAN WAR REFUGEES ON THE ECONOMY OF THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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The influence of the migration of the Ukraine's population to the countries of the European Union on their labor potential during the Russian Federation's military aggression against Ukraine has been studied. It has been established that since the beginning of spring 2022, Ukrainian war refugees represent a highly educated workforce for a number of European countries. The paper has assessed the labor potential of Ukrainian war refugees, which consists mainly of the economically active population, highly educated people, scientists, employees, young people with higher education, with prevailing share of women with children. Currently, the EU countries consider the prospect of a transition to a climate-neutral economy, which will influence such sectors as construction, energy, manufacturing and transport that, in turn, will require additional labor force with new skills. It is the significant intellectual component of the labor potential of Ukrainian war refugees that contributes to the rapid transition of the EU countries to a green and digital economy, which requires economic restructuring and transformation of labor markets. It has been proven that the massive migration flow of Ukrainian war refugees to the EU countries during the war will have a positive effect on the labor potential and economic development. This is indicated by factors such as unemployment decrease and per capita GDP growth in the EU countries. It has been proved that there is a need for labor in the host countries. The study of political issues will enable migrants to live profitably in areas with a large number of representatives of the same ethnic group. The positive influence of the labor potential of the migration movement of the Ukraine's population on the labor market of European countries has been proved. This will result in the improvement of the economy and increase in the relatively high employment rates among the mono-ethnic population. Therefore, it is important to monitor the situation closely to avoid any potential problems at the local labor level or in specific occupations.

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