

RESEARCH PAPER

Refugees Fleeing the Invasion of Ukraine

How host country integration policies support refugees



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Refugees fleeing the invasion of Ukraine: How host country integration policies support refugees
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At the time of writing this paper, the invasion of Ukraine is ongoing and evolving. Given the changing nature of the events in Ukraine as well as the macroeconomic situation in Europe, the data included in this report may exhibit a “time-lag” in some of the underlying data. However, the paper endeavours, when possible, to provide and analyse the most recent publicly available data.

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Country Codes used in the paper

ALB	Albania	GRC	Greece	MNE	Montenegro
BEL	Belgium	HRV	Croatia	NLD	Netherlands
BGR	Bulgaria	HUN	Hungary	NOR	Norway
BIH	Bosnia and Herzegovina	IRL	Ireland	POL	Poland
CHE	Switzerland	ISL	Iceland	PRT	Portugal
CYP	Cyprus	ITA	Italy	ROU	Romania
CZE	Czech Republic	KSV*	Kosovo	SMR	San Marino
DEU	Germany	LIE	Liechtenstein	SRB	Serbia
DNK	Denmark	LTU	Lithuania	SVK	Slovak Republic
ESP	Spain	LUX	Luxembourg	SVN	Slovenia
EST	Estonia	LVA	Latvia	SWE	Sweden
FIN	Finland	MDA	Moldova (Republic of)	TUR	Türkiye
FRA	France	MKD	North Macedonia		
GEO	Georgia	MLT	Malta		

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Executive Summary

The invasion of Ukraine by Russia has forced more than 4.7 million people to flee to CEB member countries. Europe as a whole has responded to the needs of these people with unparalleled and historic support. As the influx of people is substantially greater than in previous refugee waves in Europe, considerable pressure is being placed on host countries to support the refugees from Ukraine. Against this backdrop, this paper aims to give policymakers, refugee integration practitioners and the general public a brief literature review and data analysis of recent developments in refugee numbers and the challenges and opportunities of supporting refugees. It assesses in which countries refugee numbers are most pronounced and scrutinises the impact this has had on the reception and support capacities of host countries. Improving these support capacities will be critical to help refugees begin rebuilding their lives. To develop a clearer understanding of successful policies and measures, the paper builds on UNHCR and wider refugee support literature to identify the four key areas in which increased refugee support is needed: *access to housing, healthcare, education and labour markets*. In these four areas of focus, the paper offers a review and analysis of the latest data, with information and lessons learned from the policies and measures deployed in the current and the 2015/16 European refugee and migrant crises. This review gives perspectives on how host countries are helping refugees from Ukraine and which additional policies they are considering for future support.

- **Housing is the first immediate and long-term objective for refugees to start rebuilding their lives.** Initially, temporary housing solutions for refugees were provided by national governments, friends and family, and host country citizens. In order to facilitate the successful integration of refugees, governments are adapting and formulating frameworks to provide more sustainable housing solutions. This will help ensure refugees have access to affordable and quality homes that mitigate their exposure to housing-associated challenges such as financial strain and deterioration in health and well-being. Adequate and well-located housing solutions are also essential, as they should allow refugees access to public services and jobs. Yet, this will be a severe challenge, as housing markets are already heavily strained in most host countries, with an inadequate supply of new homes and high prices.
- **Refugees need both general and specialised healthcare, which will increase the demand on host countries' already-stretched systems.** Low vaccination rates, high levels of infectious diseases and war-related injuries among refugees are placing new pressures on host country systems, still strained due to the Covid-19 pandemic. While healthcare systems have worked to respond to some of the concerns (e.g. a vaccination roll-out strategy), other issues, such as a shortage of healthcare workers and mental healthcare professionals, are being addressed to respond to refugees' healthcare needs. European solidarity has helped mobilise collective responses to bolster health systems in countries with the largest inflows. Moreover, countries are exploring new policies and measures to help strengthen health systems – such as incorporating refugees with healthcare professional backgrounds into host country systems.
- **Education is a cornerstone in helping refugees integrate into new host communities and preserve their human capital.** A large proportion of refugees are children, which has meant that education systems are adapting to accommodate them with innovative solutions such as providing classes and educational material in both Ukrainian and the local language. However, given that educational performances are lower in Ukraine than in many host countries, host country education systems are considering how to provide supplementary classes to help refugee students catch up and continue their development.

- **Accessing the labour market is pivotal for refugees to integrate economically into host communities and lay the foundations for rebuilding their lives.** Ensuring refugees can access employment will give them not only a source of income but also a sense of dignity that facilitates broader economic and social cohesion. Refugees from Ukraine are often highly skilled and have also often worked in professions where Europe is currently still facing labour shortages. Countries are working to integrate refugees into labour markets by providing language learning support, streamlined validation of existing credentials, access to vocational and skills training programmes and, for some, entrepreneurship support. These measures will be particularly helpful given that a large share of the refugees are women who were not in the labour market before the war.

As the war continues to unfold and the likelihood of refugees returning remains uncertain, the paper also briefly discusses the challenges that arise from financing and implementing refugee support policies in the short and long term. Funding needs for refugee integration programmes will be considerable and will likely face challenges due to weakening macroeconomic conditions, but successful integration will ensure refugees are net contributors to host countries in the long term. Initial estimates for the cost of supporting refugees ranged from EUR 30 to 43 billion for 2022 alone. However, as the duration of the refugees' stay remains unclear, current indicative costs carry a high degree of uncertainty. The EU and international organisations (IOs) have provided ample budgetary and project support – initially primarily via grants in many cases – through various instruments that have helped host countries with their initial emergency responses. For many countries, sustained financing support – via the EU, IOs, and private financing – is still being mobilised as countries enter the phase of providing integration programmes. Moreover, funding to countries may still be required to maintain emergency capacities as future surges in refugee inflows from Ukraine cannot be entirely discounted. But the economic outlook for most host countries is weakening, and tighter financing environments may create new challenges for governments in providing refugee support.

Introduction

The war in Ukraine has brought a wave of destruction and devastation to its inhabitants and is forcing millions of them to seek refuge and safety in other European countries. This historic exodus of people will create far-reaching economic, societal and policy consequences for Europe in the months and years to come. As the war continues, European states are doing their best to support Ukraine's defence and help those fleeing Ukraine find protection within their borders. After immediate emergency needs have been met, countries are offering refugee support measures to help those who wish to integrate into host countries and to aid those who desire to return home.

The historic inflow of refugees is confronting policymakers and societies on how best to support refugees to empower them to integrate into host communities and to productively re-integrate back home if they decide to return. In order to assess current and possible future refugee policy responses, this paper draws upon the latest literature on integration and support policies in Europe and incorporates a data analysis of refugee numbers and integration challenges. In the context of this current refugee crisis, this paper builds on the UNHCR's integration support dimensions and wider refugee integration literature to identify four key sectors critical to supporting refugees in the short and long term, namely access to housing, healthcare services, education systems and labour markets. The paper analyses the policies, programmes and investments that are key to ensuring that these four focus areas can help refugees become economically and socially integrated into their host communities. At the same time, by preserving and even enhancing their existing skills, competencies, health and well-being, refugee support policies can enable those refugees who so wish to return and re-integrate back home.

Earlier refugee crises in Europe shed insight on how effectively to design and implement integration policies, which can now be applied and built upon to support the current wave of refugees from Ukraine. The literature review and data analysis in this paper in part provide an overview of the past experience European countries acquired during the 2015/16 migrant and refugee crisis. In addition, the paper preliminarily examines the policies being deployed to integrate refugees from Ukraine. Refugee support measures should, when possible, be non-exclusionary to other refugees and, when applicable, maintain a universal design to help all refugees integrate into host communities. However, unlike past refugee waves, refugees from Ukraine have been given unprecedented access to social support via the activation of the European Union's (EU) Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), so not all policies reviewed and recommended can or will be transversal in nature. Nonetheless, well-designed integration policies and their successful implementation will help refugees integrate into the economic and social lives of their new communities, thereby helping to preserve long-term social cohesion. In turn, this will aid in counteracting potential declines in public opinion for the continuing support of refugees.

Deploying successful policies and measures to integrate refugees from Ukraine into host communities will require extraordinary short- and long-term financing support. This paper brings together the latest estimates concerning the total financial cost of supporting refugees. However, these numbers are highly uncertain, as there is little certitude as to how or when the conflict will end and, thus, how long refugees will remain in host countries – surveys indicate that many refugees may remain in host communities for some time. However, as the paper shows, considerable efforts are being made by the European and international communities to finance refugee support measures and thus help with their implementation – which most often takes place at the sub-national level. Support measures for refugees can generate a long-term return when refugees successfully integrate into their host countries and contribute to growth in shared economic and social prosperity.

The paper is organised as follows: (1) an overview of the key figures related to refugee numbers; (2) a data analysis and literature review of past and present sectorial integration policies needed for housing, healthcare, education, and labour markets; (3) the fiscal costs and policy obstacles at the national and sub-national levels of government that are often difficult to overcome to implement integration programmes; and, (4) concluding remarks on the evolution of refugee support policies, and the implementation and funding challenges that are being faced.

Number of refugees fleeing into other European countries

The war in Ukraine has created an unprecedented refugee situation in modern Europe, with the largest movement of refugees since World War II. In early March 2022, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that over 4 million people might flee Ukraine during the military offensive (Siegfried, 2022). However, in reality, after just nine months of fighting, actual numbers surpassed initial estimates. By November 15th, 7,843,714 refugees were estimated to have fled Ukraine since the February 24th invasion (UNHCR, 2022a), of whom 4,740,352 were estimated to have come to CEB member countries.¹ As the situation remains unclear, and with approximately 6.2 million internally displaced persons in Ukraine (IOM, 2022), the number of people fleeing the country may increase further, especially in the current winter months.

Countries near Ukraine are experiencing the greatest influx of refugees, although some have been used as a transit route to move further within the EU. Poland is still hosting the largest number of refugees from Ukraine, roughly 1.5 million as at November 15th, with Germany and the Czech Republic respectively experiencing the second and third highest numbers of incoming refugees among all CEB member countries. Countries with smaller populations, such as Estonia and the Republic of Moldova are receiving a much smaller total number of people, but the figures are high relative to their respective populations. For instance, refugee numbers in Estonia, the Republic of Moldova and Montenegro constitute more than 3.5% of the national population, whereas in Italy and Spain, refugee numbers are greater in absolute terms, but constitute roughly 0.3% of the national population (Figure 1). Thus, with the inflow of refugees from Ukraine, Estonia and the Republic of Moldova have seen a 25,000% increase in refugee inflows relative to their 10-year average refugee inflow. In the broader context, CEB member countries received 1.4 million first-time asylum claims in 2015 (Figure 2), at the peak of the 2015/16 refugee crisis. If current levels of refugees persist, the Ukraine conflict will have created more than three times as many refugees entering CEB member countries than the 2015/16 refugee crisis².

¹ United Kingdom and Austria are not CEB member countries, and if included in the total European figure (minus Russia and Belarus) would add 144,600 and 86,439 additional refugees respectively for a total of 4,971,391.

² While historic asylum applicant numbers are not fully comparable to refugee numbers from Ukraine, they do offer an approximation of historic refugee numbers.

Figure 1 - Refugees from Ukraine in selected host countries

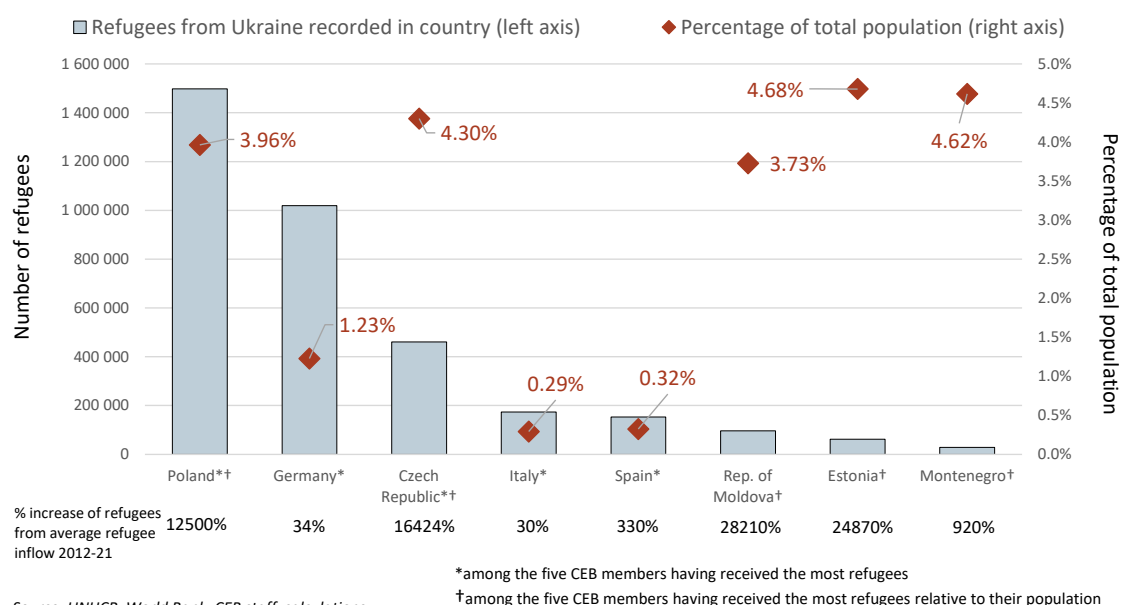
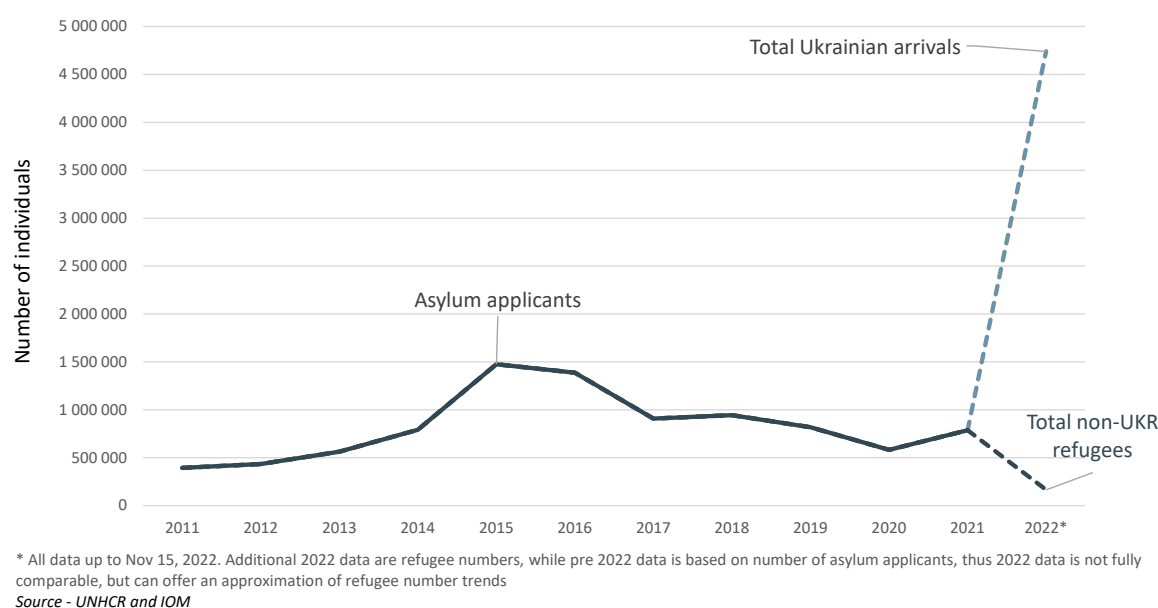


Figure 2 - Refugee numbers in CEB countries (historic data and 2022 estimates)



A large number of refugees may remain in host countries for a prolonged period, adding to the already large Ukrainian diaspora in the EU. Before the invasion, the Ukrainian diaspora was estimated at 1.35 million people, who were mainly migrants motivated by higher wages abroad and the unfavourable economic and geopolitical environment in Ukraine (Dadush & Weil, 2022). By the end of 2020, Ukrainians were the third largest group of non-EU citizens with valid residency permits (Eurostat, 2022). The largest Ukrainian diasporas are in Germany, the Czech Republic, Italy, Poland, and Spain (Katsiaticas & Segeš Frelak, 2022). In the early months of the invasion, the EU expected that half of the refugees fleeing Ukraine would be absorbed by Ukrainian diaspora networks across the EU, while many others would use legal migration channels (Council of the European Union, 2022). By November 15th, approximately 4.5 million people had sought temporary protection in the EU, and the numbers may increase depending on how the invasion of Ukraine evolves. Moreover, even if the

invasion is pushed back, the situation in Ukraine may remain unstable and unsafe for some time. This uncertainty, combined with a more favourable economic and social environment in host countries, may increase the likelihood that many refugees will stay abroad (Dadush & Weil, 2022). The intention of refugees to remain in their host country is also reflected in a survey of their future intentions³ conducted by the UNHCR between mid-May and mid-August 2022. In the survey, 63% of the respondents indicated that they were planning to remain in the host country in the near future, 13% expressed the wish to return to Ukraine, 13% were unsure about their plans, and 11% were planning to move to another host country (UNHCR, 2022b).

Info Box 1 - The use of the term “refugee”

This paper uses the word “refugee” to define those fleeing the current war in Ukraine and seeking safe harbour in host countries. The term refugee in this paper builds on existing conventions that define the term and associated rights, as well as the additional rights the EU is affording people fleeing the war in Ukraine.

As a starting point, the 1951 Refugee Convention defines a refugee as someone “who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion”. According to the Refugee Convention, refugees have certain rights when they arrive in a host country, such as the right to have access to the judicial system or the right to receive the same elementary education as nationals of the host country. However, refugees are not always afforded the same privileges as nationals of the host country; instead, they are afforded the more limited rights granted to foreign nationals.

In response to the war in Ukraine, the EU triggered – for the first time – the European Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) to support people fleeing the invasion. The TPD grants those fleeing the war – which includes both Ukrainian citizens and those people in Ukraine either applying for or already holding refugee status – additional rights to those granted to refugees entering the EU in the past. The TPD also initially granted protection to third-country nationals, who were working or studying in Ukraine, but the TPD will cease to apply to this group in March 2023. The TPD gives beneficiaries the right to wage-earning employment (i.e. the right to work), the right to access education beyond elementary level and the right to access social welfare and medical care. This paper acknowledges that people fleeing the war in Ukraine are afforded more rights in host countries than other third-country nationals seeking refuge in the EU. However, based on existing definitions, those fleeing Ukraine clearly are doing so in line with the definition of what constitutes a “refugee” within the 1951 Refugee Convention.

³ For the survey, 22,507 persons were interviewed in Bulgaria, Hungary, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovak Republic, and 547 persons were interviewed in Belarus. Belarus is not a CEB member country, but those interviewed account for only 2.37% of the total respondents and, thus, have only a limited impact on the survey outcomes.

Key sectors for inclusive refugee integration support

The integration support that refugees need to rebuild their lives requires host countries to implement both immediate and long-term policies. Successful integration support measures for refugees require a careful set of policies, funding solutions, and investment that enable people to access opportunities that will allow them to lead productive, healthy and safe lives. There is no single set of policies that will work for a given country. However, past experience and research have shown that the most successful policies are those that aim to provide refugees with access to housing, health services, education and support for labour market inclusion. While this paper recognises that other integration challenges exist, these four areas give refugees the necessary foundations and capacities to integrate into new societies and become productive members of their host communities (OECD, 2021a). The paper touches upon additional elements within these sectors that are important to refugee support, such as territorial perspectives, the need for the digitalisation of support services, and how to help partially overcome refugee discrimination. Moreover, direct and indirect financial support for refugees can come in the form of financial and social welfare transfers, the direct provision of public resources (e.g. housing) or a mixture of the two (OECD, 2021a).

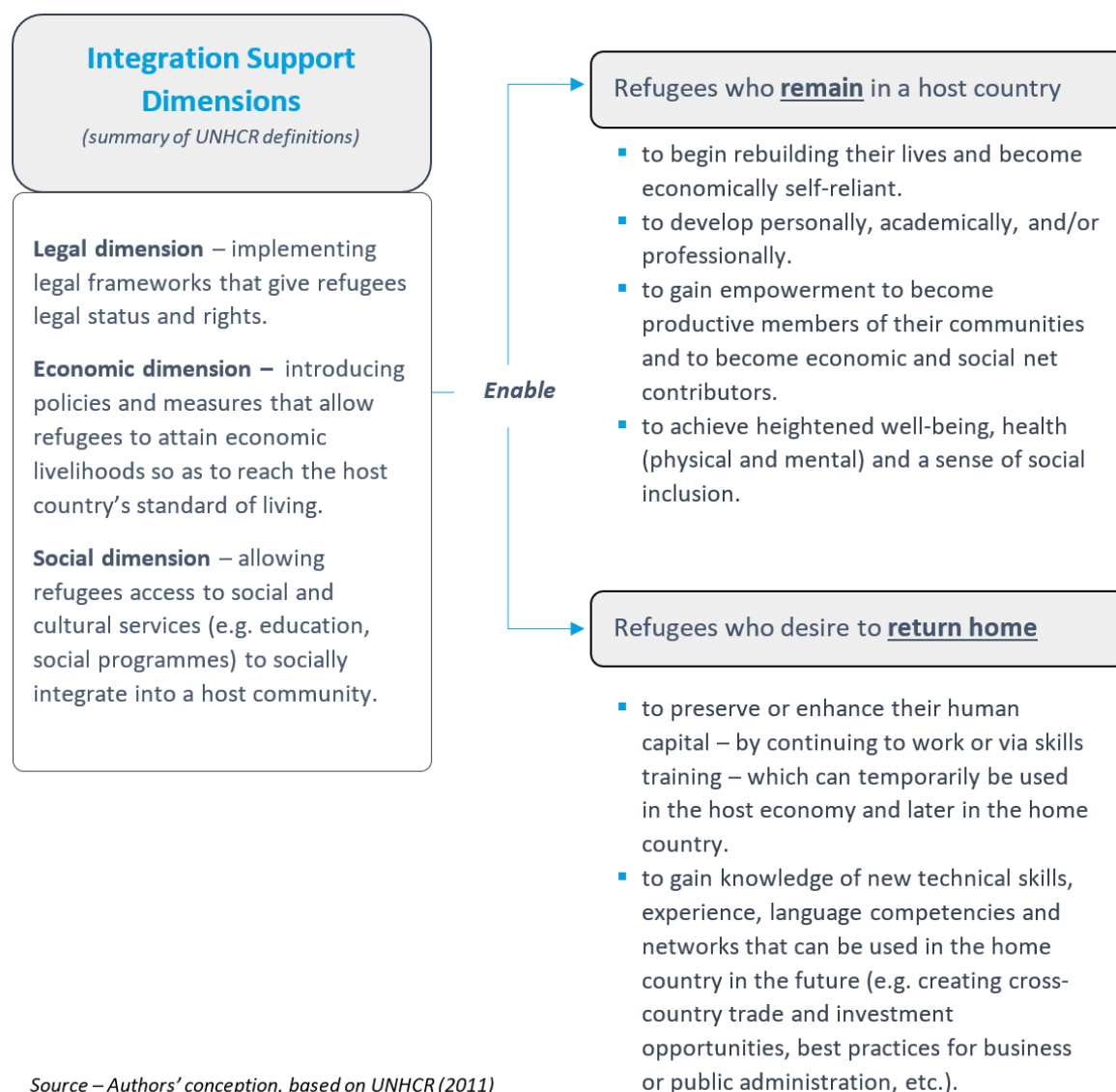
Successful integration requires targeted policies that can help refugees integrate into host countries or give refugees support to re-integrate back into Ukraine, all with the overarching aim of building economic and social cohesion. Notably, integration support policies embody not only measures that need to be rapidly deployed but also those which involve a long-term undertaking – requiring forward-looking policies that may not immediately generate economic benefits. In most cases, refugees and migrants become net economic contributors after several years, which typically outweighs initial costs of investments in social support and integration programmes (Aiyar, et al., 2016; Koczan, Peri, Pinat, & Rozhkov, 2021; OECD, 2021a). As Diagram 1 outlines, integration support dimensions – as defined by the UNHCR – centre on how countries can provide refugees with legal protection, economic opportunities and access to social/cultural services that will allow them to rebuild their lives and contribute to their host communities. Refugee integration support measures also have the added value of helping those refugees who may one day wish to return home to preserve or even upgrade their human capital (physical health, well-being, and skills and competencies). Moreover, this can give them the footing to re-integrate into their home economies/societies, and even establishing new economic and cultural links with former host countries.

Integrating refugees can help both refugees and host communities work together to help address each other's individual challenges. For host countries, the influx of refugees can help partially counteract long-standing concerns of demographic declines, dwindling dependency ratios, and current labour shortages. For refugees, it can allow them to build new lives, access new opportunities, and preserve and upgrade existing skills, or learn new ones, while bringing benefits to their host communities (economically and socially). However, integration support policies should reflect the needs of refugees, which can be different from the needs of those who are considered “economic migrants” (those that choose to move to a new country to improve their economic situation rather than being forced to flee to a new country)⁴. This paper will focus on four key sectors that emerge from policy and research literature, including the UNHCR's integration dimensions, and which are key to successfully supporting refugees, namely access to programmes and policies for **housing, healthcare, education, and labour market integration**. These four areas are cross-cutting in nature,

⁴ The official EC (European Commission) definition of an economic migrant is: A person who leaves their country of origin purely for economic reasons that are not in any way related to the refugee definition, in order to seek material improvements in their livelihood.

and often success in one sector can help generate benefits in another; thus, integration policies should, whenever possible, be holistic in nature.

Diagram 1 - Benefits of integration support

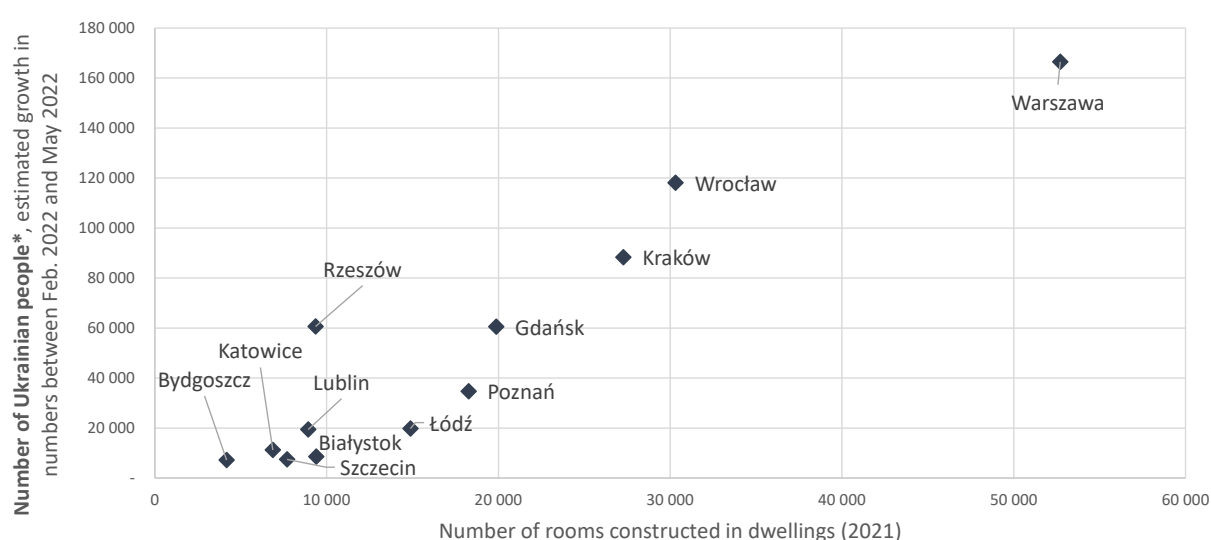


Housing: delivering the basic necessity for refugees to build new lives

Housing is an immediate priority for the millions of refugees in European countries and will be crucial to minimise heightening refugee vulnerabilities. The EU's TPD grants refugees from Ukraine the ability to access housing options within a host country. In response, the EU and its member countries have begun to adapt existing housing policies and create new housing support frameworks to meet the challenge – including reinforcing refugee territorial distribution systems (European Commission, 2022a; Klimešová, Šatava, & Ondruška, 2022; European Commission, 2022b). While many initial refugees found housing via friends or family, subsequent waves had little familial network support or no particular destination in mind (UNHCR, 2022c), and had to rely on the charity of strangers, thereby potentially exposing themselves to additional vulnerability risks.

There is an immediate emergency need to provide basic shelter to refugees, but the relevant policies and means deployed vary between countries. The initial European response to refugee housing needs – for those with limited familial connections – came through the goodwill and solidarity of ordinary citizens, local government actors and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), who worked to find practical solutions (World Habitat, 2022). However, the provision of emergency shelters is complex (OECD, 2022a), and there is considerable variation among European states as to which level of government is responsible for policy design, funding, and final delivery and implementation. In many EU countries, the first response comes in the form of reception centres and temporary accommodation. Many countries have relied heavily on private households (e.g. 80% of refugees in the Czech Republic were in private accommodation (UNHCR, 2022d), repurposed hotels, or financial transfers to refugees to find private housing solutions (OECD, 2022b). However, the cost of living crisis in many European countries – in particular higher energy costs – coupled with the current winter months may make it difficult for some households to afford to host refugees indefinitely. In countries with little experience with emergency refugee support, such as the Czech Republic and Poland, many municipal governments faced the new challenge of how to quickly set up shelter and housing support (Garcia, 2022). Regardless of the solution adopted, countries with large numbers of refugees will require continued mobilisation of financial and grant support for short- and long-term housing needs.

Figure 3 - Refugee populations in Polish cities and historic dwelling room construction numbers



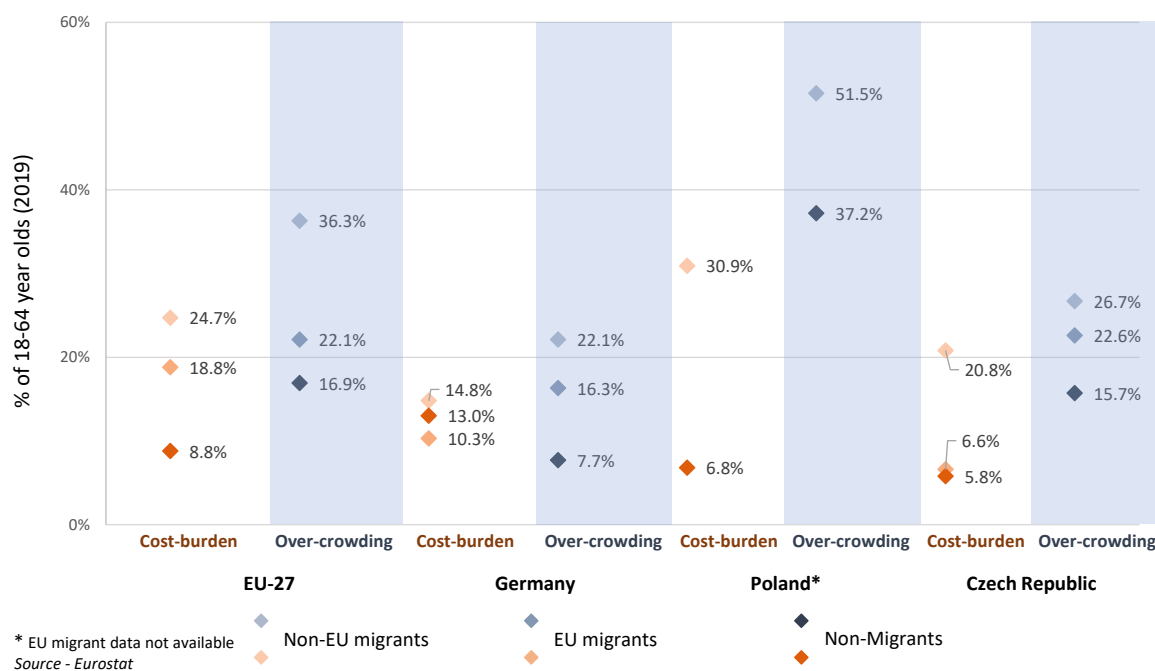
*does not include children due to data availability

Source - CEB Staff Calculations, Statistics Poland, and Union of Polish Metropolises

The high numbers of refugees are placing considerable pressure on Europe's already strained housing markets. Prior to the war in Ukraine, Europe's housing markets were characterised by considerable shortfalls in supply (Housing Europe, 2021), with citizens having difficulty meeting housing-related costs (10% of households spend 40% or more of their income on housing (Van Sparrentak, 2021). The current inflow of refugees is creating an additional and sudden surge in overall demand, which will further aggravate existing supply issues and contribute to high housing prices and rents. Moreover, the current high inflationary environment in Europe is increasing the cost of construction materials, further exacerbating housing supply and affordability. While initial estimates are highly uncertain, in Germany, somewhere between 200,000 and 400,000 new apartments are needed to accommodate the inflow of refugees. In Poland, the figure is closer to 500,000 (Szymanska, 2022). When examining Poland's twelve largest cities (Figure 3), the number of refugees that have arrived from Ukraine often outstrips the historic annual supply of rooms in newly constructed

dwellings⁵; in some Polish cities, the construction rate would need to triple just to meet the needs of the refugees, before even accounting for non-refugee demand. To underscore the challenge in providing new homes, Poland has an estimated shortfall of 2.2 million homes (Barchoń, Ciesielski, & Bobrzyński, 2021), and in 2019 the Polish government’s “Home-Plus” initiative was only able to construct 15% of the planned 100,000 new homes (Pommersbach, 2022).

Figure 4 - Housing cost overburden and overcrowding rates by citizenship status (2019)



Adequate access to quality and affordable housing, which considers territorial dimensions, is critical for the successful social and economic integration of refugees and migrants. Historically, migrants⁶ in EU countries (especially those coming from non-EU states) are much more likely to live in overcrowded homes (36% in 2019 vs 17% for non-migrants), experience housing costs as a severe burden on their incomes (25% in 2019 vs just 9% for non-migrants) – see Figure 4 – and often live in sub-quality homes (25% in 2016, compared to 20% non-migrants) (OECD, 2019). Higher housing-related costs in the current high-inflation environment may place further cost-burden pressures on refugees and migrants – especially for heating during winter. The lack of access to adequate housing partly reflects migrants’ and refugees’ often lower income levels. However, it can just as equally be the result of their lack of knowledge/experience with a new country’s housing market or of discrimination by landlords (OECD, 2019). Moreover, poor housing conditions can exacerbate socio-economic inequalities, such as health status, human capital development and income potential. For instance, some studies have pointed out that overcrowding and poor-quality homes can worsen health conditions – e.g. respiratory diseases – and limit children’s development (UK Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2004; Clair, Reeves, McKee, & Stuckler, 2019). Importantly, the location where refugees are able to find housing can be one of the chief obstacles to finding a job and integrating into the labour market; for example, a housing solution in a rural or remote area may also be where there

⁵ This paper focuses on the number of rooms constructed in dwellings, rather than just on the traditional variable of new dwellings constructed. A dwelling can consist of multiple rooms and can thus feasibly house multiple refugees, which may actually be a necessity given that many refugees are families of mothers and children. However, this assumes a 1:1 ratio of rooms to refugees, which may slightly overestimate demand.

⁶ We use the term migrants here to constitute both refugees and economic migrants as the data does not always differentiate between the two groups.

are fewer available jobs (European Union and United Nations, 2018). To respond to this territorial dimension, some EU countries⁷ have successfully enacted refugee regional dispersal measures to more equally distribute housing demand and costs among regions within a country (OECD, 2022c). Often, such regional refugee dispersal policies are based on specific local criteria such as the availability of housing, existing refugee population numbers and labour market conditions (Arendt, Dustmann, & Ku, 2022).

Policy and investment solutions seek to meet the housing shortfall and ensure they are inclusive.⁸

Presently, several European countries – such as France, Germany, Italy and Belgium are either increasing or strongly advocating to increase budgetary support to meet the need for more affordable permanent housing solutions for refugees from Ukraine (Housing Europe, 2022). In the broader housing policy perspective, such encouraging commitments and initiatives could be carefully designed to ensure new housing meets broader social goals, including the needs of other vulnerable subgroups. A recent United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) study, supported by other research, has pointed to a series of good practices for inclusive and affordable housing for refugees; these include revitalising/renovating unused housing stocks, providing housing solutions in depopulating rural areas,⁹ promoting community interaction measures between refugees and local communities (e.g. community centres), and integrating the latest sustainable and cost-efficient building/architectural practices (UNECE, 2021; Serme-Morin & Coupechoux, 2021). Governments work alongside housing and transportation authorities to provide access to transportation networks to ensure that refugees have the mobility to access not only jobs, but also other public services (child-care, schools, healthcare, etc.). Importantly, temporary housing solutions seek to enact safeguards to protect children, prevent gender-based violence, and meet the needs of the elderly and disabled (UNHCR, 2022e).

Healthcare: providing a foundation for well-being

The Russian invasion has dramatically worsened the physical and mental health of Ukrainians, both for those who have stayed behind and those fleeing the war. Already before the war, Ukrainians were more likely to be exposed to certain health risks than most other Europeans. The number of people in Ukraine with chronic infectious diseases is among the highest in Europe, particularly HIV infections and tuberculosis. Before the war, low life expectancy among Ukrainians was often the result of various non-communicable diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, and mental health conditions (WHO, 2022a). Fleeing the war has further exacerbated the health conditions of many Ukrainians due to the circumstances under which many had to flee, such as cold weather conditions (Katsiaficas & Segeš Frelak, 2022) and limited access to water and sanitation during the transit (WHO, 2022b). Refugees from Ukraine arriving in a host country may have suffered from war-related injuries¹⁰ and may have experienced trauma leading to mental health problems (Health Cluster Ukraine, 2022). The demographic makeup of refugees consists primarily of women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities. These groups are especially exposed to risks of human trafficking and gender-based violence, which can lead to a worsening of their mental health condition and to an increase in sexually transmitted infections (WHO, 2022b).

⁷ Such as Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, and Portugal (as well as non-EU countries, which are CEB Member States, such as Switzerland).

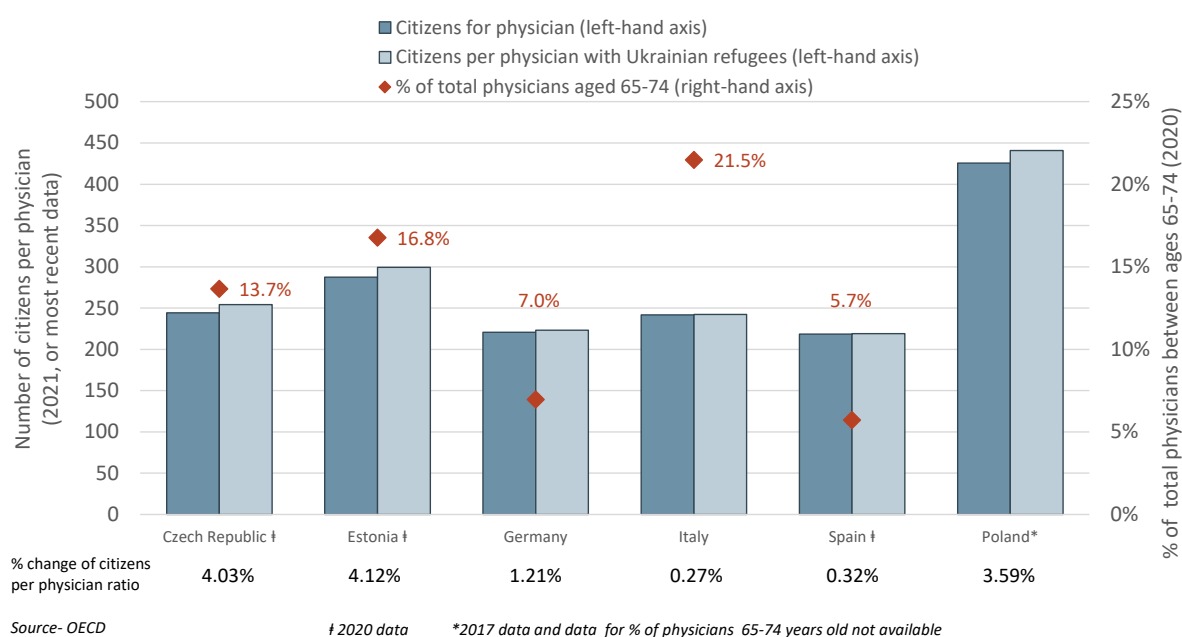
⁸ The policy perspectives discussed here are non-exhaustive.

⁹ Although, as stated above, this should be done in conjunction with labour market needs, to prevent the provision of refugee-based housing in areas with limited employment opportunities.

¹⁰ Refugees with injuries who are able to arrive at the boarder receive emergency care support provided by EU countries (European Commission, 2022e).

The influx of people fleeing the war comes at a time when healthcare systems across Europe are still recovering from the pressures faced during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 crisis has shed light on the various pre-existing vulnerabilities within European healthcare systems and created backlogs in multiple areas, some of which have not yet been resolved. Healthcare systems are encountering supply-side pressures as the number of health workers (already low before the pandemic) remains low in some countries. The shortage of health workers is further challenged by staff exhaustion and burnout due to the pandemic and people leaving their medical jobs (Van Ginneken, et al., 2022), which is now further aggravated by the influx of refugees from Ukraine. For instance, prior to the inflow of refugees, Poland had a ratio of one physician per 426 persons. The ratio has now further decreased to one physician per 441 persons – an increase of 3.6% (Figure 5). the Czech Republic and Estonia saw similar ratio increases, to 4.1% and 4% respectively. In addition, the number of physicians will further decrease in the near future as the percentage of physicians aged 65-74 is relatively high in some countries; in Italy, for instance, it is more than 21%. At the same time, the demand for healthcare services had already been increasing prior to Covid-19 due to an ageing population and an increase in chronic diseases (which now include long-Covid patients) (Van Ginneken, et al., 2022). The people arriving from Ukraine will put further pressure on the demand side, given their more critical health condition due to the consequences of the war and the large proportion of people suffering from chronic diseases and previous infections.

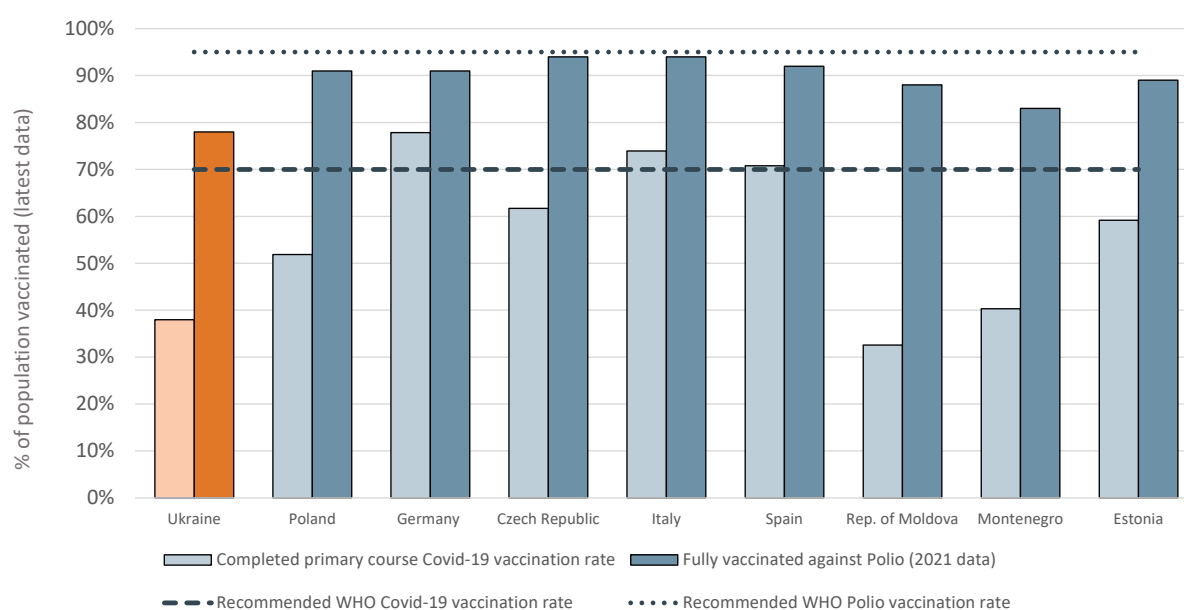
Figure 5 - Physician-to-citizen ratio and percentage of total physicians aged 65-74 (2020, or most recent data)



Given the low vaccination coverage in some host countries and among the people fleeing the war in Ukraine, accelerated vaccination roll-outs are pertinent to prevent disease outbreaks. Ukrainian vaccination rates for infectious diseases, such as polio, measles, and Covid-19, are among the lowest in Europe, mainly due to a high level of vaccination scepticism (Health Cluster Ukraine, 2022). The Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion have further disrupted vaccination programmes (Health Cluster Ukraine, 2022; WHO, 2022c). The low polio vaccination level of only 78% in part contributed to an outbreak in Ukraine, first detected in October 2021, which is still ongoing and is now posing a risk to the populations in host countries (WHO, 2022c). The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that 95% of the population be vaccinated against polio to prevent outbreaks. As a result, the threat of an outbreak due to the large refugee numbers is highest in Estonia, the Republic of

Moldova and Poland, where vaccination rates fall below the WHO recommendation (Figure 6). Concerning Covid-19, the WHO recommends a vaccination rate of at least 70% of the population. However, the rate of fully vaccinated Ukrainians against Covid-19 stood at only 34.4% as of November 2022. The risks of Covid-19 outbreaks are further heightened because some host countries also report relatively low vaccination rates (Figure 6). One immediate focus in host countries has been to provide Ukrainians with vaccines against Covid-19 and other infectious diseases¹¹. However, to prevent disease outbreaks, the immediate and medium-term measures should focus on further strengthening the disease surveillance programmes and the immunisation of both the local population and incoming people from Ukraine (WHO, 2022d). This is challenging as it means host countries having to expand their routine vaccination programmes also to cover people from Ukraine (this includes vaccinating children who have not yet received their immunisation shots), while at the same time continuing with their own Covid-19 vaccination roll-outs (WHO, 2022e).

Figure 6 - Vaccination coverage in Ukraine and selected host countries (most recent data)



Source - World Health Organisation

Note - WHO Covid-19 vaccination differ ECDC figures due to underlying methodological counting differences

Refugees also need access to mental healthcare services to help deal with the potential psychological traumas experienced during the war. However, this new demand for mental healthcare services comes on top of increased demand during and after the pandemic (OECD, 2021b). At the same time, there is still a chronic undersupply of mental healthcare services in many European countries. Moreover, people often face barriers to accessing mental healthcare, such as societal stigma, long-waiting times, and, in some countries, a high financial burden (all having been exacerbated by the pandemic) (Bernardo & Álvarez del Vayo, 2021). Refugees coming into host countries may require mental care, given that some have experienced family separations or witnessed war atrocities (UN, 2020). Yet, refugees face even greater barriers to accessing mental health services than native populations, for instance, language barriers, insufficient training of local staff to work with war refugee traumas or more pronounced financial costs (Katsiaficas & Segeš Frelak, 2022; European Commission, 2020; Kaufman, Bhui, & Katona, 2022). Therefore, to meet the long-term mental healthcare needs of refugees from Ukraine, additional training for local staff is being considered as well as the employment of Ukrainian mental healthcare workers (WHO, 2022f).

¹¹ Additionally, in order to detect the potential spread of infectious diseases, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) continuously monitors the health situation across Europe. The ECDC has also launched a prevention information campaign on the importance of vaccination programmes and the risks of the various infectious diseases

European countries have stepped up their efforts to give Ukrainians access to their already strained healthcare systems. The TPD grants Ukrainians direct access to host-country national healthcare systems (European Commission, 2022c). Additional efforts have been made to ease pressure on health services in countries with large refugee populations. For instance, those EU countries hosting fewer people fleeing the war in Ukraine have allowed for the transfer of patients to their less strained healthcare facilities. This has been most acutely helpful in relieving the pressure on the over-exerted Polish healthcare system (European Commission, 2022d). The EU has set up medical hubs¹² on the border with Ukraine to provide refugees crossing into the bloc with immediate medical treatment (European Commission, 2022e). The possibility of including Ukrainian healthcare workers in the national healthcare systems to help meet the needs of incoming refugees is a central policy consideration (European Commission, 2022c). In Poland, for instance, Ukrainian healthcare workers are already treating refugees from Ukraine. At the same time, they are receiving Polish language classes so they can also treat Polish patients and help relieve the strained Polish healthcare system (WHO, 2022f). Regarding mental health care, the Pan-European Mental Health Coalition, a WHO initiative launched in September 2021 to improve mental health services (WHO, 2022g), held its first meeting in May this year to discuss mental health support for Ukrainians (WHO, 2022h). Overall, the international and European communities have already shown great solidarity with people affected by the war in Ukraine. However, the war is not yet over, and the potential remains for continued refugee inflows and war-wounded patients seeking care and rehabilitation in Europe, as the Ukrainian system may be unable to support them.

Education: ensuring access to equitable learning opportunities

Approximately 40% of the refugees from Ukraine are estimated to be children, who need continued access to education to maintain their academic development (UNHCR, 2022f; UN, 2022). Helping refugee students continue their education in host countries will ensure uninterrupted learning development, ease integration into host communities, and can provide support for those who wish to return and re-enter the Ukrainian education system. However, in the first few months of the conflict, the inflow of new students in the middle of the school year put host countries' educational institutions to the test (Katsiaficas & Segeš Frelak, 2022). Nevertheless, most governments quickly provided immediate support measures to welcome students and teachers from Ukraine into their national education systems (European Commission, EACEA, & Eurydice, 2022). Among the greatest challenges for integrating refugee students into local education systems continues to be the lack of additional school-building capacity, language barriers, information asymmetries about new systems, varying curriculums, and uncertainties about the duration of refugees' stay (European Commission, 2022f; OECD, 2022d). Before the 2022 summer holiday months, many refugee children still had difficulty enrolling in schools (a situation which varied considerably between countries). However, those who did enrol were able to attend local schools and in some cases, follow the Ukrainian curriculum online or in small groups with teachers from Ukraine (European Commission, EACEA, & Eurydice, 2022). Moving towards medium- and long-term integration measures, there is a heightened effort by the European Commission to ensure that every child has a place at a local school and receives face-to-face classes (European Commission, 2022g). This also complies with EU laws which state that children should be enrolled in a host country school within the first three months of arrival¹³ (OECD, 2022d).

The latest OECD PISA study from 2018 shows that Ukrainian students achieve lower test scores in mathematics than students in most host countries. The numbers are similar for their test

¹² In addition to sending medical supplies to Ukraine

¹³ However, given the sudden influx of refugees, parents were given more time to enrol their children.

performances in reading and science. Since the PISA test is geared towards fifteen-year-old students, it will, of course, not be able to precisely reflect the learning outcomes of all the different levels of education. Nonetheless, it should still give an approximation of average student learning outcomes that is comparable between countries. Within the PISA mathematics test, on average Ukrainian students scored 70 points lower than Estonian students, 63 points lower than Polish students and 47 points lower than Germans (Figure 7), with similar results for science and reading performance. For the host countries, this means that additional support might be needed for the students arriving from Ukraine to catch up as best as they can with the performance levels of their host-country peers (see the following paragraph for more details). Furthermore, the 2018 OECD PISA study shows a significant link between immigrant students' reading performance and the language spoken at home (Figure 8). Students who do not speak the language of instruction at home have greater difficulties achieving similar scores in reading test assessments relative to their host-country peers. Consequently, these students might have difficulties following and performing well in most subjects, as solid knowledge of the language of instruction is often required for comprehension (OECD, 2022d). Hence, reducing language barriers is key to successful participation in the host-countries' education systems.

Figure 7 - Mean score in mathematics performance by country, PISA study 2018

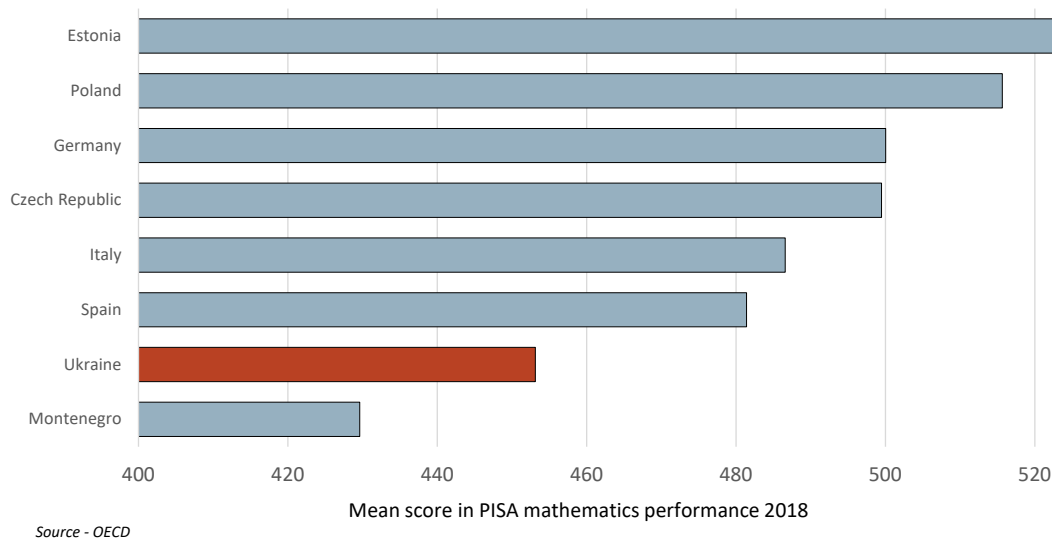
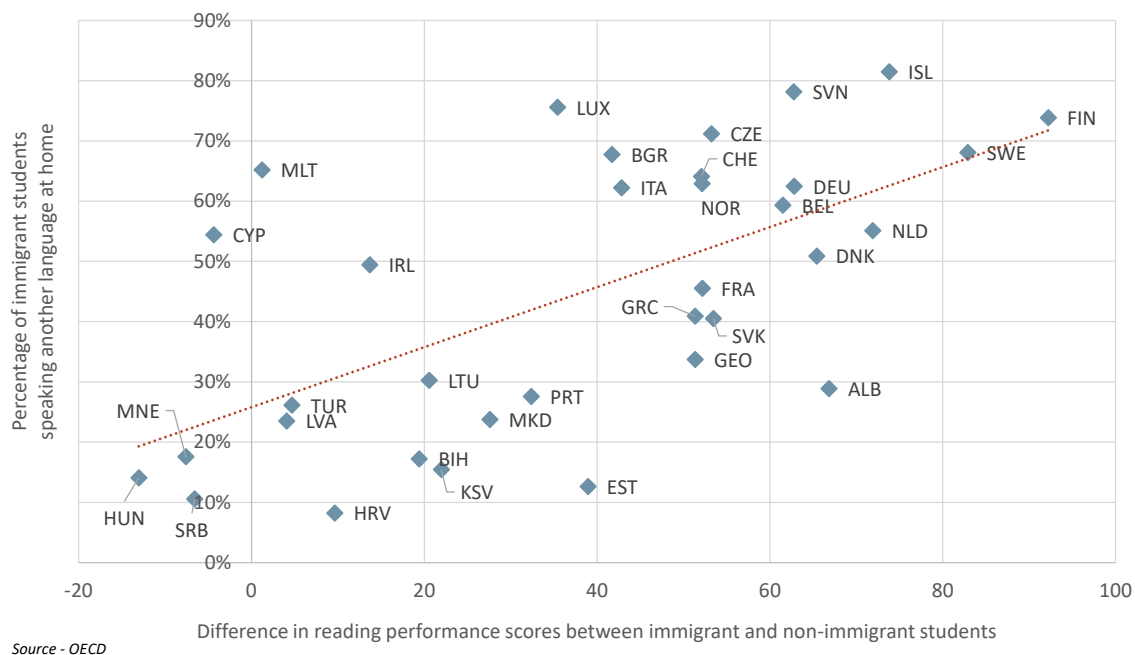


Figure 8 - Difference in reading performance by language spoken at home, PISA study 2018



While support for learning needs is crucial, responding to emotional and social needs is equally important and can also help to improve students' academic performance (OECD, 2022d). In order to provide its Member States with better guidance on holistic student integration, the European Commission published a new plan in June 2022 for the school year 2022/2023 in cooperation with UNHCR, UNICEF and national stakeholders. The document presents a comprehensive approach for the successful medium- and long-term inclusion of refugee students while maintaining their link to Ukraine (European Commission, 2022g). Many countries have already put in place measures to respond to three key aspects for student integration: learning, emotional needs and social needs. For the students' academic development, several countries such as Lithuania, the Slovak republic and Spain have put in place "transition classes" to familiarise them with the local language and education system (UN, 2022). As students have different needs depending on their age and previous education, in some countries, such as Finland and Sweden, personalised education plans have been created to address students' individual requirements (OECD, 2022d). In addition, some host countries such as Estonia, Finland and Poland have also made available educational material on online platforms in Ukrainian alongside the "All-Ukrainian Online Platform" which is run by Ukrainian authorities (School Education Gateway, 2022). Receiving education in Ukrainian and the local language allows the students to integrate into their host country while at the same time developing academically within the Ukrainian curriculum if they decide to return to Ukraine in the future. In countries where "transition classes" are offered, emotional and psychological support is also provided (UNESCO, 2022a). In order to meet the students' social needs, there have been various national, regional and local initiatives. Estonia, for instance, organised summer camps for young Estonians and young Ukrainians to allow them to make new friends and develop their language skills (Cole, 2022). A survey in the Czech Republic has shown that while many Ukrainians have expressed the wish to participate in leisure activities, only a few were doing so (Klimešová, Šatava, & Ondruška, 2022). Hence, the Czech Republic has provided additional funds to expand leisure activities to include children who fled the war in Ukraine (European Commission, 2022h). These are only a few of many initiatives being implemented in host countries to respond to the refugees' medium- and long-term needs, and host countries will likely continue and adapt them throughout the 2022/23 school year to allow children to develop both academically and personally.

Labour markets: integrating the skills of refugees for shared prosperity

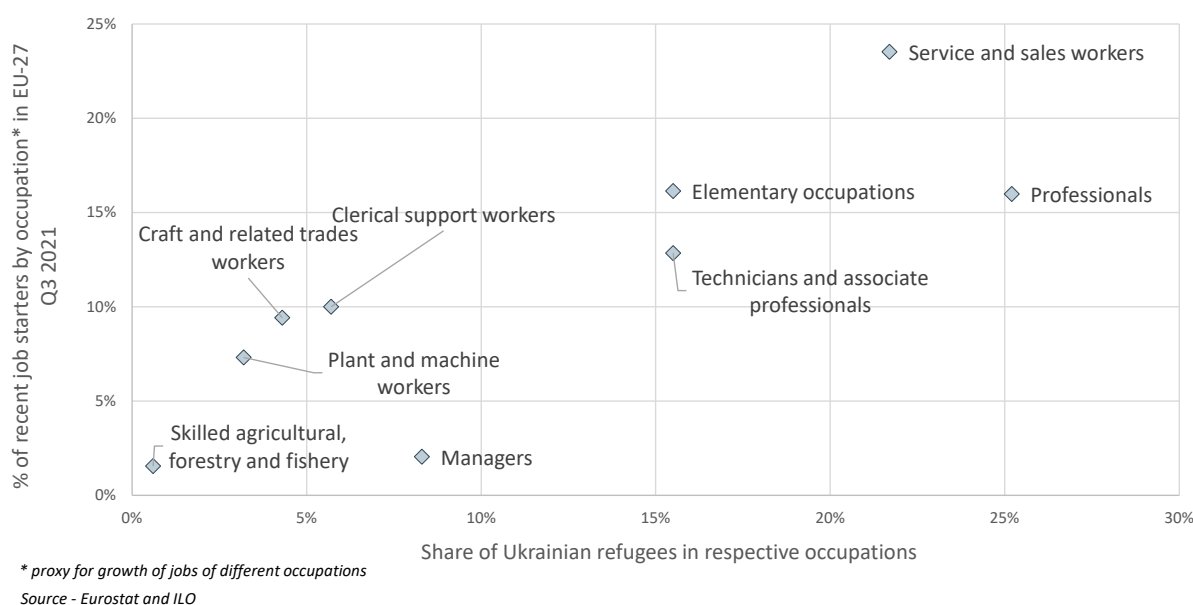
The ability of refugees from Ukraine to find employment will be a critical component of their long-term social integration and ability to start rebuilding their lives. Refugee labour market integration is not just about jobs, but also about giving people ownership of their lives and a sense of dignity that facilitates broader social integration and cohesion (Barrett & Duffy, 2018). Much uncertainty remains as to how many refugees from Ukraine will stay in European countries. However, for those who do remain, there is a need to offer them long-term support programmes to ensure their skills and potential are not wasted and can be fully integrated into a host country's labour market. Unlike the refugees who arrived in Europe during the recent 2015/16 refugee and migrant crisis, adult refugees coming from Ukraine are generally highly educated and predominately female (Ukraine's military conscriptions do not permit military-aged men to leave the country). They also have an immediate labour market advantage due to the EU's enactment of Article 12 of the TPD. Amongst other things, the directive allows refugees¹⁴ to bypass the traditional asylum application process (Fóti & Fromm,

¹⁴ As defined in Info-Box 1 regarding the term refugee and its legal interpretations by the EU; not all people fleeing the conflict will be afforded the right access to labour markets (primarily third-country nationals from "safe" countries who were in Ukraine).

2016) and the resulting limits to labour market access¹⁵. Thus, refugees from Ukraine have the right to find work or to be self-employed in any EU Member State.

Refugees from Ukraine tend to be highly skilled, which aids their job prospects. At the same time, the proportion of refugees who did not participate in the labour market before the war is relatively high. Data from June 2022 estimated 3.6 million refugees were working-age adults (mainly women), with roughly 1.6 million actively working prior to the invasion, while 132 thousand had been unemployed, and 1.9 million were outside the labour force¹⁶. Women make up the most significant portion of the adult refugees outside the labour force, chiefly as a result of their at-home and child-care responsibilities and insufficient labour market/social support for working women in Ukraine (Kupets, 2010; Libanova, Cymbal, Larysa, & Oleg, 2016). Ukrainian refugees have a higher share of qualified workers compared to the refugees during the 2015/16 refugee and migrant crisis. According to International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates, 66.2% of previously employed refugees have advanced education (i.e. tertiary level) (ILO, 2022a), partly due to Ukraine's high gross tertiary enrolment ratio of 83% in 2014¹⁷ (UNESCO, 2022b). The occupations that refugees from Ukraine held were more likely to be highly skilled (49%) or medium-skilled (35.5%), with a low level of low-skilled workers (15.5%) (ILO, 2022a).

Figure 9 - Ukraine refugee occupations and EU new job starters



The influx of higher-skilled refugees can help partially alleviate many European countries' tight labour market conditions in recent years. According to the European Labour Authority, labour shortages in 2021 were seen in various occupations. The most widespread shortages were for general professionals, technical professionals, craft and trade workers, plant and machine operators, and service workers. A high proportion of refugees from Ukraine held jobs in many of these occupations facing labour shortages. Moreover, as shown in Figure 9, Ukrainian refugee occupations correspond

¹⁵ During the 2015/16 refugee and migrant crisis, refugees first had to apply for asylum status within a host country. The asylum applicants were not allowed to access the labour market, or association support measures, until their application was accepted and they were granted asylum protection. According to a Eurofound survey, the asylum application process could take, on average, 6 months or longer in most EU countries.

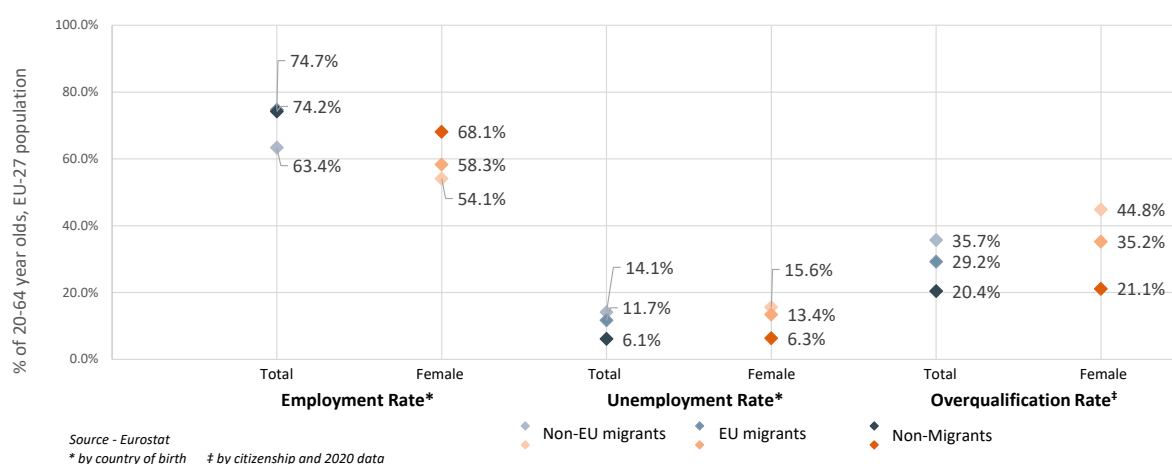
¹⁶ CEB staff calculations, expanding on calculations from the ILO (2022).

¹⁷ Above the EU gross tertiary enrolment ratio of 66% (2014). While more recent tertiary enrolment data for Ukraine is currently unavailable, the 2014 gross ratio for Ukraine was stable after a high growth period starting in the early 2000s; the 2014 ratio remained above the EU's 2020 gross tertiary enrolment ratio of 73%.

precisely to those that saw the highest growth in new jobs in the EU during the third quarter of 2021. However, this lagged data does not necessarily reflect the currently evolving economic situation in many European countries. While there is an expectation that labour markets will remain buoyant in the near term (vacancy rates in third quarter of 2022 remained near historic highs), it should also be anticipated that job growth in some of these sectors may soften.

Historically, however, refugees have often seen worse labour market outcomes than non-migrants, especially women, who make up the bulk of the Ukrainian working-age refugee population. Integrating migrants (including refugees) is by no means straightforward, and even skilled migrants are not guaranteed seamless integration. As shown in Figure 10, migrants in the EU, on average, see higher overqualification rates, lower employment levels, and higher unemployment rates than non-migrants¹⁸. The above indicators are worse for migrant women than for non-migrant women and their fellow migrant men. In the context of women making up the majority of working-age refugees from Ukraine, particular attention is being placed on ensuring that women can effectively integrate into host country labour markets¹⁹. However, initial surveys show that, in the Czech Republic, over half the refugees from Ukraine are employed (75% of them see their work as permanent), but 80% of those employees are in low-skilled occupations that are not taking full advantage of their education and skills (Klimešová, Šatava, & Ondruška, 2022). On the other hand, roughly half of women in Ukraine were outside the labour force before the war (ILO, 2022b), meaning that many may not have the necessary skills or experience to find employment in the short term.

Figure 10 - Labour market outcomes by migrant status in EU-27 (2021 or most recent data)



Previous refugee crises have spurred European states to implement systems for rapid validation of refugees' existing skills and credentials. Prospective employers in host communities may have limited knowledge or familiarity with refugees' home-country qualifications and skills (Hofman, 2022). In turn, this reduces the likelihood that employers will hire refugees. Thus, an important integration policy measure is for countries to establish the ability to assess and validate refugees' existing skills and credentials. At European level, such initiatives are already being implemented via a skill-profiling tool to help organisations validate third-country nationals' diplomas or skills. In April, the EU called for Member States to streamline, fast-track, and, whenever possible, digitise the validation of Ukrainian

¹⁸ However, it should be noted, that some studies have shown that such labour market outcomes tend to improve (and differences between non-migrant and migrant individuals narrow) over time, as migrant/refugee residency within a host country increases (Fasani, Frattini, & Minale, 2022).

¹⁹ At present the right to work in EU labour markets granted under the Temporary Protection Directive may last for up to three years. Initially guaranteed for two years, until March 4th, 2024, with a possible extension until March 4th, 2025, if the war in Ukraine has not yet been resolved.

refugee competencies and credentials (European Commission, 2022i). The Council of Europe set up the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees, giving refugees a standardised document that reports their qualifications, academic disciplines, and job experience (Council of Europe, 2022); such a document is even more helpful when refugees may not have fled with their credentials.

Language and vocational training will be central to ensuring Ukrainians can effectively integrate into the host country's labour market. The first and primary obstacle to refugees' access to labour markets is language limitations, which exacerbate stereotypes and prejudices about refugees' abilities (Sultana, 2022) and thus affect their capacity to access employment opportunities (Konle-Seidl & Bolits, 2016). An OECD study in Germany showed that the challenge most cited by employers in hiring refugees was their inability to speak German (Degler & Liebig, 2017). The second most cited reason was their lack of vocational skills. Vocational education and training (VET) is an effective way to help refugees acquire the work-based experience and skills (or re-skilling) development required by local employers (Jeon, 2019). However, to take full advantage of such courses, they first need language skills – which can be built upon whilst in a VET course. Given the large share of Ukrainian refugees who were not employed before the war, VET could be an effective means to help them transition into work. The EU's TPD has explicitly underscored refugees' rights to "... vocational training access", and many EU Member States have committed themselves to granting VET access to refugees from Ukraine. Nevertheless, how that access will be implemented (UNESCO, 2022a) or resourced is not fully developed in all states, pointing to a persistent and increasing investment need. Work by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) is helping to coordinate VET policy developments for refugees (CEDEFOP, 2022). Ultimately, when refugees have access to language and VET courses, they have been shown to perform better in obtaining jobs and socially integrating into host communities (Dickey, Drinkwater, & Shubin, 2018; Fóti & Fromm, 2016).

Entrepreneurial support programmes help many refugees establish their own businesses and employment opportunities. Based on ILO estimates, nearly 12% of Ukrainian refugees were self-employed before the war, with many still wanting (including new aspiring entrepreneurs among the refugee population) to start a new business (ILO, 2022b). Previous studies have shown that, on average, migrant entrepreneurs in Europe contribute to job creation at the same level as non-migrant entrepreneurs (OECD & European Union, 2019). Thus, entrepreneurial support programmes are offered and have historically been taken up by highly motivated, experienced migrants who typically already have language skills (Impact Hub & The Human Safety Net, 2021). Entrepreneurial support primarily comes in the form of facilitated access to finance (such as loan guarantee programmes or alternative risk-scoring methods), flexible regulatory environments, technical support, and mentoring programmes (Sandilya & Deleva, 2022). Migrant women, who have historically been less likely to be entrepreneurs in the EU (OECD & European Union, 2019) (as is the case for non-migrant women), face additional barriers to starting a business but can be empowered through additional training support, minimised regulatory burdens, and access to child-care support (Sandilya & Deleva, 2022).

Fiscal challenges and opportunities of refugee responses

Integrating refugees effectively into European countries will require extraordinary short- and long-term financing support. All estimates concerning the total financial cost of supporting refugees from Ukraine remain highly uncertain, as there is limited visibility on how or when the conflict will end and if and in what numbers people will be able to return. In the meantime, it will be necessary to have some approximation of how much funding for refugee support European countries will need to provide. UNHCR estimated that it would require EUR 2.25 billion in grant funds for immediate emergency support measures (such as shelter, food security and medical attention) between March and August 2022 (UNHCR, 2022g). A number of countries, such as the Republic of Moldova, Poland and Romania, continue to face funding gaps for needed emergency support (UNHCR, 2022h; World Food Programme, 2022; UNICEF, 2022). Long-term integration funding estimates are larger and more imprecise. For instance, during the opening months of the conflict, the EU projected that refugee support programmes (for an initial 4 million people) would cost Member States EUR 30 billion in 2022 (Lee, Aboneaaj, & Landers, 2022). However, based on a series of scenarios and assumptions, later estimates made by the think tank Bruegel placed the figure closer to EUR 43 billion (Darvas, 2022) if refugee numbers increase to 5.7 million. Regardless of the estimates, the costs of supporting refugees from Ukraine are expected to surpass the EU member countries' total estimated spending on refugees (EUR 27.3 billion) during the two-year migrant crisis in 2015/2016 (Hargrave, Foresti, Massa, Dempster, & Rea, 2016). However, due to the evolving economic outlook and tightening financing conditions in many host countries, fiscal space may narrow, creating new challenges for funding refugee integration measures. Finally, in the current high inflationary environment, the refugee funding support committed to so far will devalue in real terms.

The funding of refugee emergency support and long-term integration programmes is implemented at different levels of government, potentially requiring coordination among authorities of resource allocation (OECD, 2017). Historically, central governments typically absorb the costs associated with immediate refugee support measures (such as registration, medical and shelter needs, etc.). However, the cost and implementation of long-term integration projects often fall under the responsibility of sub-national authorities (OECD, 2017). Depending on the level of decentralisation in a country, sub-national authorities may have limited revenue-raising powers. They may thus have to rely on intergovernmental transfers, potentially creating funding challenges when having to deal with evolving refugee situations. For instance, central government grants may only cover schooling costs based on the initial number of registered students in an academic calendar year, without taking into consideration any potential growth in refugee students throughout the year (OECD, 2017). A 2021 joint OECD-European Committee of the Regions survey of sub-national governments funding issues during the Covid-19 crisis sheds some light on the financing policy direction and challenges that sub-national authorities continue to face during the refugee crisis. The survey found that approximately 66% of European sub-national authorities surveyed (73 in total) wanted more decentralisation of tasks in the healthcare sector and in primary/secondary education (OECD, 2022a) to deal with local needs more effectively. Additionally, some sub-national governments also rely on non-governmental organisations to provide support for certain sectors (OECD, 2022a), which may require additional funding support.

Info Box 2 - The support for refugees in host countries provided by the European and international communities

The war in Ukraine spurred immediate action at EU level in mobilising new funding instruments and adapting existing ones to help member states fund their refugee support initiatives. Member States have access to a series of EU funding instruments contributing to migration-oriented projects (e.g. AMIF/home affairs funds, ERDF, ESF, REACT-EU, or FEAD). In March 2022, the EU adopted the Cohesion's Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE and subsequently CARE-plus), which adapted existing migrant-oriented funding instruments and cohesion funds and allowed more flexibility for the Member States' response to refugee needs. Through the mobilisation and reallocation of EU funds under CARE, EU Member States have access to approximately EUR 17 billion (Dadush & Weil, 2022).

Alongside other global and European actors, the CEB acted rapidly to support people fleeing the war in Ukraine and their host countries. The CEB has so far provided emergency support grants worth over EUR 6.4 million and approved EUR 1.3 billion in loans to meet refugees' support needs. Moreover, the CEB has raised funds in international markets via its social inclusion bonds (SIB) to help meet those funding needs; SIB issuances were made in April (worth EUR 1 billion) and June (worth USD 1 billion) to partially or fully help with the funding of refugee support projects in CEB Member States. Other European multilateral development banks, such as the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, are also contributing to the financing of refugee support measures. Organisations such as UNHCR and the IOM mainly provide support in the form of shelter, material, and medical and administrative support. Currently, the CEB is collaborating closely with the IOM to respond swiftly to the crisis by channelling MRF grant funds to those fleeing the war in Ukraine.

The investments towards integrating migrants - including refugees - will have long-term positive fiscal impacts on countries. Past research has shown that when migrants are able successfully to integrate within a host country, they will, in the long run, contribute to its economic and fiscal position. Redistribution of fiscal policies in favour of migrants was estimated to have cost European states approximately 1.35% of GDP during the 2015 inflow of migrants and refugees (Ruist, 2016). While data analysis has indicated that integration policies for the 2015/16 migrant and refugee crisis may have higher fiscal costs than economic benefits for up to the first nine years, the long-term benefits of a stronger workforce can "generate significantly larger GDP expansionary effects", equal to the "full integration" scenario in which annual GDP growth would be 1.31% higher until 2040 (European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Lecca, & Kanacs, 2018). Moreover, a considerable quantity of research and evidence has shown that the longer migrants stay within a country, the higher their net fiscal contribution becomes (Hennessey & Hagen-Zanker, 2020); an OECD analysis has shown that, once integrated, immigrants contribute more in tax revenues than they take out for social protection, health, and education (OECD, 2021a). However, the net fiscal impact of refugees tends to be higher when they are younger, as opposed to older refugees who will have less time to participate economically in the host country (Dadush & Weil, 2022). Additionally, there is limited evidence that migrants become heavily reliant on benefits within a host country; research has shown that migrants and non-migrant individuals have the same propensity to access government benefit programmes (Conte & Mazza, 2019).

Conclusion

Europe's refugee support policies have been put to the test by the extraordinarily large number of people fleeing the invasion of Ukraine. The response in Europe has been unequivocal, unified, and robust. The EU has granted refugees fleeing the war unprecedented legal support via activation of its Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), emergency funds have been rapidly mobilised through various EU instruments, and the Union's members have shown unique solidarity to share burdens where possible (especially within the health sector). The TPD has allowed refugees to "skip" the asylum application process and has given them direct access to the social support systems that will aid them in starting to rebuild their lives in host communities.

The sudden influx of refugees at both country and local levels has created considerable challenges in providing support. Not all countries are equally impacted by the number of people crossing and settling within their borders. Additionally, various economic and policy environments, institutional foundations and historical experience with refugees have determined countries' abilities to respond to the current wave. In the initial weeks of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the absolute number of refugees fleeing to border countries exceeded their capacity to provide adequate social support. Many countries relied on the goodwill of volunteers, quick adaptation of existing budgets, and reliance on grant funding to meet the immediate challenges of providing housing and medical care. This refugee crisis and those in recent years have given European states considerable experience as to what future emergency support policies, systems and funding tools will be needed. Even as the initial months have come to pass, a number of long-term issues can be foreseen that will continue to challenge the support and integration of refugees.

Due to the protracted nature of the conflict, the refugee support measures are now transitioning to a new phase, from emergency assistance to medium- and long-term support, which will require forward-looking policies and funding measures. While the ultimate hope is that Europe can start helping Ukraine rebuild its country and providing a place for refugees to return to and reunite with their families, in the meantime, host countries will need continued funding to ensure their ability to provide refugee integration measures. And, as refugees find stability and security, integration programmes will address their longer-term needs, such as access to a permanent housing, physical and mental healthcare, language and skills training, and the ability to integrate into education and the labour markets. Already governments have begun shifting to provide such long-term support, as evidenced by the Council of Europe Development Bank providing loans totalling EUR 1.3 billion in several countries most affected by the inflow of refugees. This, in part, signals a shifting of government priorities to find durable funding solutions to help finance, at least partially, long-term programmes to assist refugees. Local and sub-national authorities will benefit from increased and continuous financing support, since they are responsible for implementing the major part of the support measures. Moreover, the funding and implementation of refugee support policies could be designed in such a way as to ensure that they are long-lasting and resilient in order to adequately respond to future refugee shocks.

The shift to funding and implementing long-term refugee integration faces considerable uncertainties due to the evolution of the war and host countries' economic prospects. As the risk of an enduring war heightens, so does the likelihood that refugee numbers may grow again; as a result, host countries cannot entirely discount a scenario in which they will need to return to providing emergency support measures. In many host countries, the uncertainty of the refugee situation also places further pressure on already strained social systems (education and health) and on the housing markets characterised by limited supply and high prices. Moreover, the macroeconomic environment and outlook continue to weaken in many European countries. This may create two challenges for the

solidarity and support for refugee integration; (1) the labour market may deteriorate, among other economic factors, and contribute to competition for jobs between refugees and non-refugees as economic vulnerabilities potentially grow; (2) governments will face deteriorating fiscal positions caused by increasing borrowing costs – especially in the light of the announcements of continued rate hikes by central banks and the European Central Bank – and the need to provide broader counter-cyclical and social support programmes. To help minimise these risks, the EU is already adapting its funding assistance to countries for refugee support – particularly those countries that depend heavily on grants. Moreover, international financial institutions and private lenders are working with host countries to further increase their coordination efforts and ensure favourable financing conditions.

Successful refugee integration programmes will help generate long-term economic and social returns in host countries. The refugee support measures outlined in this brief paper can help serve as a guide on how to, first and foremost, give refugees the security and assistance they will need to begin the gradual process of rebuilding their lives. Such support can help them to gain the necessary skills and competencies to contribute to the economic prosperity and social cohesion of their new communities. At the same time, all of these support measures provide those refugees who ultimately wish to return home to Ukraine with the opportunity to gain new experience, skills, and networks which they can take back with them. Regardless of the refugees' future intentions, integration support will ensure they become valued members of their host communities and help safeguard social cohesion. Moreover, Europe can draw on the positive outcomes and solidarity experienced during this crisis to continue to add to already inclusive policies for the benefit of future refugees.

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