



IOM  
UN MIGRATION



YEARS

# 2021

## MIGRATION IN UKRAINE

### FACTS AND FIGURES

## FOREWORD

Dear Readers,

IOM, the UN Migration Agency, Mission in Ukraine is pleased to present you the fifth edition of “Migration in Ukraine: Facts and Figures”, the publication that was first launched in 2011.

While this overview can only serve as an introduction to the complex topic of migration in Ukraine, we have tried to the extent possible to put the facts and figures in context and to highlight the evolving and emerging trends to inform the public about the dynamics and the impact of migration in Ukraine. This analysis is incredibly important given the often-limited information available.

In 2021, IOM observes two jubilees — the 25th anniversary of the opening of its Mission in Ukraine, which coincides with the 70th anniversary of the IOM establishment in 1951. In view of the organization’s specific mandate and expertise, we have always placed a strong focus on evidence-based policymaking. IOM Ukraine’s Strategic Approach for 2020–2024 prioritizes supporting national and local level efforts to collect, analyze and utilize disaggregated migration data while upholding the right to privacy and data protection.

Globally, addressing the paucity of data on migration has been recognized for many years as an issue requiring immediate and collective action. As highlighted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

Development, the collection and analysis of data on the costs and effects of migration, as well as data disaggregated by migratory status, is required to ensure that nobody is left behind.

The first intergovernmentally negotiated agreement, the Global Compact for Migration (GCM), provides an opportunity for the international community to agree on a set of priorities to improve data on international migration in the coming years, building on commitments made elsewhere, such as in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. The Declaration calls upon States to ensure that migration data are “disaggregated by sex and age and include information on regular and irregular flows, the economic impacts of migration and refugee movements, human trafficking, the needs of refugees, migrants and host communities and other issues.”

This publication provides an analytical assessment of the drivers, positive and negative impacts of migration, as well as of the needs and vulnerabilities of migrants. It also accentuates the significance of contributions made by Ukrainian migrants into the country’s economy and development, highlighting the IOM underpinning principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society.

This overview is a dynamic document, updated on a regular basis, and thus, we welcome any comments, advice and new data, which you might have and that may help improve migration data overview in the future.

Anh NGUYEN,  
IOM Ukraine Chief of Mission

# CONTENT

<b>Introduction</b> .....	4
<b>I. Key statistics on Ukraine</b>	
1.1. Economy and welfare .....	4
1.2. Demographics .....	7
<b>II. Internal migration</b>	
2.1. Characteristics of internal migration .....	8
2.2. Internally displaced persons .....	9
<b>III. Migration from Ukraine</b>	
3.1. International mobility during the pandemic .....	11
3.2. Labour migration .....	12
3.3. Migration for educational purposes .....	14
3.4. Asylum seekers .....	15
3.5. Ukrainian diaspora .....	15
<b>IV. Migration and development</b>	
4.1. Migration impact on Ukraine .....	16
4.2. Migrant remittances to Ukraine .....	17
<b>V. Migration to Ukraine</b> .....	18
<b>VI. Irregular migration</b> .....	19
<b>VII. Human trafficking</b> .....	21
<b>VIII. Recent initiatives in migration policy</b> .....	22

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## INTRODUCTION

In 2021, Ukraine celebrates the thirtieth anniversary of independence. Drastic changes in the life of Ukrainians associated with this historical event are also reflected in the area of migration. Democratization of public life, respect for human rights, focus on integration into the European Union, including a visa-free regime with the EU, have opened up opportunities for citizens to freely move, travel abroad for employment, study, tourism, and leisure.

Migration is an important source of revenue, knowledge, and experience for the country. At the same time, it poses new risks, primarily those associated with movement of the large numbers of Ukrainians to work abroad, loss of part of the nation's labour and intellectual potential.

The COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions on cross-border mobility have exacerbated these risks. Temporary labour migration has been evolving into permanent migration, emigration sentiments of Ukrainians have increased, while Ukraine's attractiveness for immigrants has remained low.

If the European economy recovers faster than the Ukrainian economy, migration of Ukrainian citizens may increase. In addition to socioeconomic circumstances, a threat of escalation of hostilities in the east of the country remains an important push factor. In this regard, the Government has intensified efforts to protect the rights of citizens abroad and create conditions for the reintegration of returnees.

## I. KEY STATISTICS ON UKRAINE



**603.5** sq. km  
the area



**41.4** million the population  
(present) as of 1 May 2021<sup>1</sup>

**53.65%** women **46.35%** men



**69.4%** urban population **30.6%** rural population



**72.01** years life expectancy  
at birth (2019)

**76.98** years **66.92** years



**11.4** years average  
study duration



**0.779** the Human Development Index  
(with a rank of 74th among 189 countries of the world based on the 2019 data)



**0.728** the Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index (with a rank of 45th among 154 countries assessed)

1 Excluding the annexed territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol) in line with UN General Assembly Resolution 73/263.

### Economy and welfare

For the fourth time since gaining independence, Ukraine's economy has entered a period of economic difficulties<sup>2</sup>. In 2020, economic recovery after the 2014–2015 crisis, caused by the conflict in the east of the country, was hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic and quarantine restrictions. A drop in industrial production exceeded 6 per cent, while freight turnover declined by 15 per cent, and the agricultural sector by over 12 per cent<sup>3</sup>.

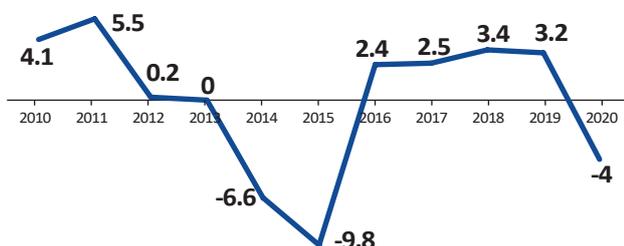
In the second quarter of 2020, with the introduction of strict quarantine, Ukraine's GDP fell by 11.2 per cent compared to the same period of the previous year. The replacement of a full-scale lockdown with an adaptive model in June 2020 made

2 The crisis of transition period lasted from 1991 to 1999, the global financial and economic crisis of 2009 adversely affected the economy, and the third crisis of 2014–2015, triggered by Crimea's annexation and the conflict in the east of Ukraine, resulted in a loss of 20 per cent of economic potential and 10 per cent of territories.

3 Україна-2020: завищені сподівання, неочікувані виклики, інерційний рух. С. 49 [Ukraine 2020: inflated expectations, unexpected challenges, inertial motion, p. 49] URL: razumkov.org.ua/uploads/other/2021-PIDSUMKI-PROGNOZI-UKR-ENG.pdf

it possible to restore the full functioning of many businesses, and the situation improved at year-end. A GDP contraction in the fourth quarter was 0.5 per cent year-on-year. At the end of the year, GDP decreased by 4 per cent against the projected 6 per cent (fig. 1).

**Fig. 1. Ukraine's real GDP in 2010–2020, year-on-year percentage change**



Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine  
<http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/express/expr2021/03/31.pdf>

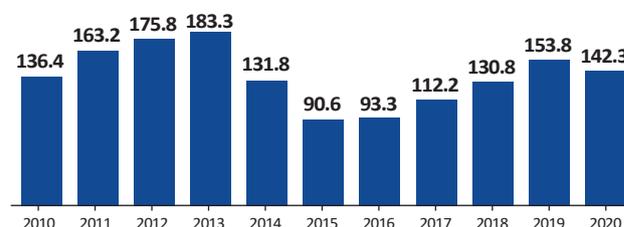
The recovery of economic activity was primarily due to the growing domestic demand, increased wages and social budget expenditures, public consumption aimed at developing infrastructure and the health sector, and was also related to the favourable situation in Ukraine's key export markets.

The country's GDP is still lower than in 2013 both in terms of volume (fig. 2) and per capita (USD 3,424.8 in 2020 against USD 4,030.3 in 2013).

The country's economy remains focused mainly on low-tech and raw material production. Its development is constrained by excessive dependence on exports, a high share of imports in domestic consumption, lack of investment, and low labour productivity. Although Ukraine ranked 145th in the World Bank's Doing Business report ten years ago and 64th in 2020, barriers to entrepreneurship are still in place.

According to the World Bank's projections, only a partial recovery of 3.8 per cent of Ukraine's GDP is expected in 2021 due to the slow deployment of vaccination and a slowdown of structural reforms<sup>4</sup>.

**Fig. 2. Ukraine's GDP, USD billion**



Source: Ministry of Finance of Ukraine  
<https://index.minfin.com.ua/economy/gdp/>

Tensions in the labour market have risen as a result of the economic recession. In 2020, the unemployment rate increased, and, according to a labour force survey, amounted to 1.8 million people at the end of the year, or 10.1 per cent of the population aged 15–70, being the highest level since 2014 (fig. 3). The annual figure was 9.5 per cent in 2020 against 8.2 per cent in 2019. Youth unemployment among those aged 15–24 was almost twice as high as Ukraine's general population (18.5% in 2020 against 15.4% in 2019.)

**Fig. 3. Unemployment rate of the population aged 15–70 in % to labour force of respective age in 2019 and 2020**



Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine  
<http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/express/expr2021/03/33.pdf>

From 12 March to 20 August 2020, during the strictest quarantine restrictions, employment services granted the status of unemployed to 431,800 people, 67 per cent up from the same period of 2019. The ratio of unemployed per one vacancy has been 11 as of 1 January 2021 against 6 as of 1 January 2020.

A dramatic increase was reported in hidden unemployment. At the quarantine's peak, 17 per cent of the labour force was on unpaid leave

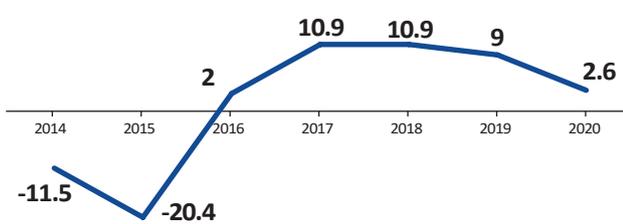
<sup>4</sup> Global economic prospects. World Bank Group. June 2021. URL: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/35647/9781464816659.pdf>

or worked part-time.<sup>5</sup> In March, only seven per cent of respondents reported working part-time, while in April this number increased to 20 per cent.

The situation in the labour market was complicated by unevenness and rapid changes in priorities. As a result of switching to distant working, demand for specialists in the IT, logistics, and transportation sectors rocketed, along with a sharp reduction of staff in services, hotel, and catering industries.

The economic situation affected the population's welfare level. According to household surveys, real wages in the second quarter of 2020 plummeted. Despite a resumed growth in the second half-year, facilitated by the indexation of pensions, increase in the minimum wage and related payments, government programmes to support pensioners and entrepreneurs, real wage growth in 2020 essentially slowed compared to the previous year (fig. 4).

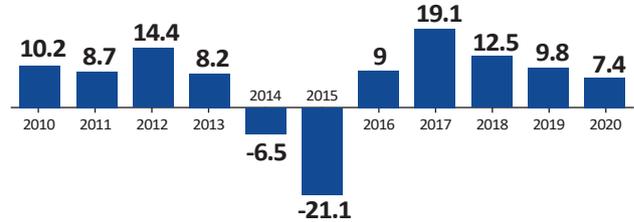
**Fig. 4. Average monthly real wage, year-on-year percentage change**



Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/express/expr2021/03/37.pdf>

Notwithstanding an increase in wages in national currency<sup>6</sup> (fig. 5), they decreased in U.S. dollar (USD) terms as a result of the hryvnia's devaluation; the average wage in Ukraine in January–November 2020 dropped by approximately 7 per cent. Wage arrears grew by nearly 50 per cent. The average wage in Ukraine remains one of the lowest in Europe.

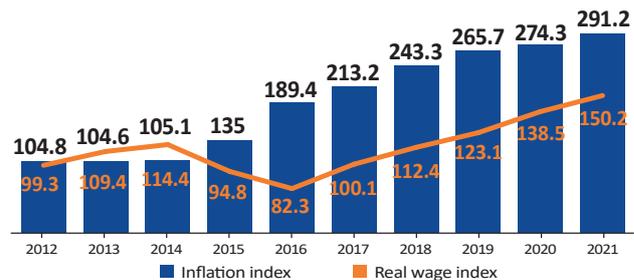
**Fig. 5. Average monthly real wage in 2010–2020, year-on-year percentage change**



Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine [http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2005/gdn/tznr/tznr\\_u/tznr\\_u\\_bez.htm](http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2005/gdn/tznr/tznr_u/tznr_u_bez.htm)

Remuneration still deeply varies by economic activity and region. In 2020 the highest wages were reported in air transportation, where the average salary was 2.4 times higher than in the health-care sector and 2.6 times higher than in cultural institutions<sup>7</sup>. The average wage in the capital was 1.5 times higher than in Ukraine as a whole and almost twice as high as in Chernihiv, Kirovohrad, and Volyn oblasts. It should also be noted that the wage increase was largely offset by a rise in prices (fig. 6).

**Fig. 6. Dynamics of changes in inflation and real wage indexes, 01.2011=100%**



Source: Ministry of Finance of Ukraine <https://index.minfin.com.ua/economy/gdp/>

For several years before the pandemic, there was a tendency towards curbing poverty. While the income of more than half of Ukrainians was below an actual subsistence rate in 2015–2016, this figure was 23.1 per cent in 2019. However,

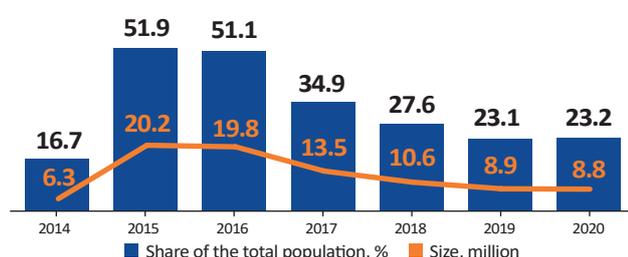
5 Україна-2020: завищені сподівання, неочікувані виклики, інерційний рух. С.77 [Ukraine 2020: inflated expectations, unexpected challenges, inertial motion, p. 77] URL: [razumkov.org.ua/uploads/other/2021-PIDSUMKI-PROGNOZI-UKR-ENG.pdf](http://razumkov.org.ua/uploads/other/2021-PIDSUMKI-PROGNOZI-UKR-ENG.pdf)

6 The average wage was UAH 10,727 in January 2020, UAH 11,579 in June, and UAH 14,179 in December. In Q1 2021, the average wage has dropped and amounted to UAH 13,612 in March.

7 State Statistical Service of Ukraine. Average monthly wage of full-time workers by the type of economic activity URL: [http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2021/gdn/szpsph/arh\\_szp\\_ed\\_u.html](http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2021/gdn/szpsph/arh_szp_ed_u.html)

almost 9 million people live below the poverty line. Adverse effects of the COVID-19 crisis affected the poverty growth: absolute poverty (less than USD 5.5 per day) increased from 2.1 per cent in 2019 to 2.3 per cent in 2020<sup>8</sup>; the poverty rate based on the actual minimum subsistence rate increased in 2020 by 0.1 percentage points (fig. 7).

**Fig. 7. Population with a monthly per capita income lower than an actual minimum subsistence rate**



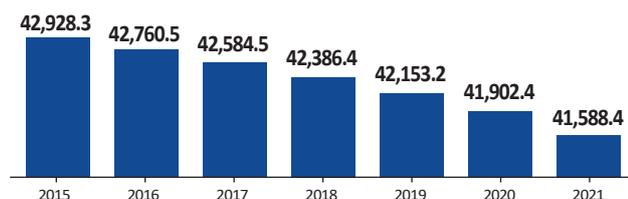
Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine  
[https://ukrstat.org/uk/operativ/operativ2020/gdvdg/duf/arh\\_duf\\_u.htm](https://ukrstat.org/uk/operativ/operativ2020/gdvdg/duf/arh_duf_u.htm)

## Demographics

Almost 2.5 million people remained in the non-government controlled areas as a result of the annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the conflict in the east of Ukraine. Ukraine's present population continued to decline, amounting to 41.6 million people (fig. 8) as of 1 January 2021, mainly due to a low birth rate. The total fertility rate is 1.2 per woman.

**Fig. 8. Ukraine's population in 2015–2021 as of the 1st of January of the relevant year, thousand persons**

(excluding the annexed territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol in line with the UN General Assembly Resolution 73/263)

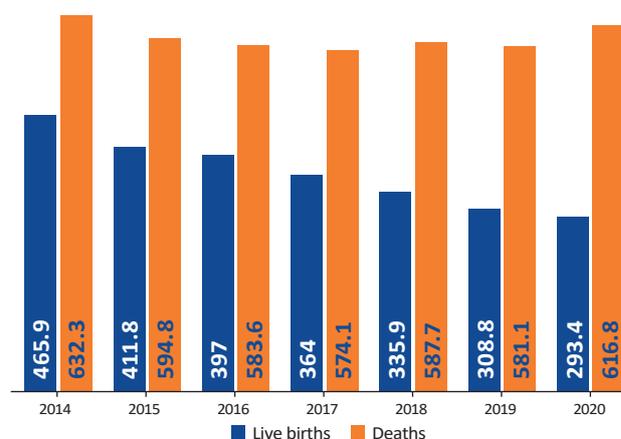


Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine  
[http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/menu/menu\\_u/ds.htm](http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/menu/menu_u/ds.htm)

The number of deaths considerably prevailed over the number of live births (fig. 9). The natural decrease in the population was increasing, having reached 323,400 in 2020 (166,800 in 2014, 183,000 in 2015, 186,600 in 2016, 210,100 in 2017, 251,800 in 2018, 272,300 in 2019). The number of deaths grew in 2020 and was 6 per cent higher than in 2019. The figures were particularly disappointing in the second half of 2020, as the number of deaths was 42.9 per cent higher in December compared to December 2019, 35 per cent in November, 17.5 per cent in October, 15.4 per cent in September.

**Fig. 9. Number of live births and deaths in 2014–2020, thousand persons**

(excluding the annexed territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol) in line with the UN General Assembly Resolution 73/263, and non-government controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts)



Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine  
[http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/menu/menu\\_u/ds.htm](http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/menu/menu_u/ds.htm)

In addition to the decrease in the population, its ageing is an important demographic trend. The average age of the population, which was 39.3 years in 2010, reached 41.4 years, as of 1 January 2020. The old-age dependency ratio (population aged 65+ years) reached 17.1 per cent, and the child (under 14 years old) dependency ratio was 15.3 per cent. The share of children in the demographic burden structure has been decreasing, whereas that of old-age dependent persons has been increasing (fig. 10).

<sup>8</sup> Україна-2020: завищені сподівання, неочікувані виклики, інерційний рух. С.77 [Ukraine 2020: inflated expectations, unexpected challenges, inertial motion, p. 77] URL: [razumkov.org.ua/uploads/other/2021-PIDSUMKI-PROGNOZI-UKR-ENG.pdf](http://razumkov.org.ua/uploads/other/2021-PIDSUMKI-PROGNOZI-UKR-ENG.pdf)

**Fig. 10. Demographic burden per 1,000 persons (permanent population aged 15 to 64)**



Source: "Population Ukraine, 2019" Demographic Yearbook [http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat\\_u/2020/zb/10/zb\\_nas\\_2019.pdf](http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_u/2020/zb/10/zb_nas_2019.pdf)

According to projections, the population of Ukraine will have decreased to 35.2 million by 2050, persons aged over 65 will have accounted for 24.7 per cent or 1.8 times more than children under 14 by 2050 (fig. 11).

## II. INTERNAL MIGRATION

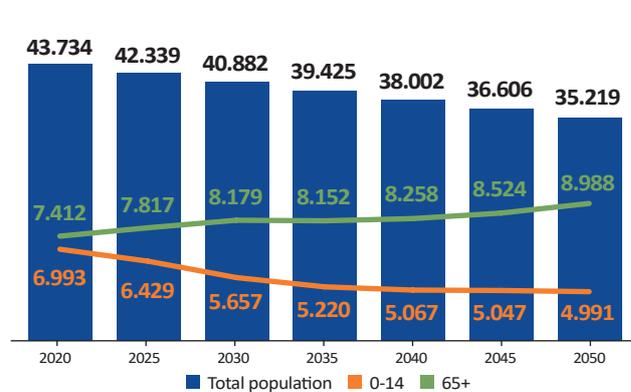
### 2.1. Characteristics of internal migration

According to the data on registration/deregistration at the place of residence, more than a half million people annually move from one settlement of Ukraine to another.

Internal migration is primarily rural-to-urban. It is an important factor in the decrease in the rural population (the rural population decreased by 11.6% in 2010–2020, while the urban population increased by 7.6%). In 2019 alone, the urban population increased by around 20,000 people due to internal migration, whereas the rural population accordingly decreased. After 2018, six villages have officially disappeared from the map. Up to 5,000 sparsely populated villages with less than 50 inhabitants remain on the verge of extinction<sup>9</sup>.

In 2020, due to the quarantine, the outflow of rural population to cities slowed down, the balance of internal migration for rural areas remained negative but was almost twice lower than the previous year (11,000). Rural areas are losing their population primarily due to youth migration. In 2019, the age

**Fig. 11. Ukraine's population forecast based on the 2019 data, million persons (whole territory)**



Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Population Division. World Population Prospects <https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Probabilistic/Population/>

group of 15–19 years accounted for 43 per cent of the rural population's negative migration surplus.

Kyiv, the capital, and oblasts with the largest cities in Ukraine — Dnipro, Kharkiv, Odesa, and Lviv — traditionally have a migration surplus. In all other oblasts of the country, the internal migration surplus remained negative.

Migration for educational purposes is a significant element of internal migration. According to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MES), in the 2019/2020 academic year, about 50 per cent out of 1.27 million students applied for places in dormitories, i.e. they came to study from other settlements<sup>10</sup>. The majority of migrant students go to the capital, and the four other largest cities, where almost half of Ukrainian higher education institutions are located and around 60 per cent of all students study.

Better employment opportunities and higher wages offered by large cities are also important pull factors of migration. In 2020, the average wage in Kyiv was 1.5 times higher than in the rest of Ukraine, and the unemployment rate was almost one and a half times lower.

<sup>9</sup> Українське село: вимирання чи еволюція [Ukrainian village: extinction or evolution?] URL: <https://tyzhden.ua/Society/219622>

<sup>10</sup> МОН готує Концепцію державної програми відновлення та розбудови мережі гуртожитків для студентів закладів вищої освіти в Україні [MES is preparing the Concept of the state programme for the restoration and development of a network of dormitories for students of higher education institutions in Ukraine] <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/mon-gotuye-konceptiyu-derzhavnoyi-programi-vidnovlennya-ta-rozbudovi-merezhi-gurtozhitkiv-dlya-studentiv-zakladiv-vishchoyi-osviti-v-ukrayini>

Conversely, the growth of large cities is slowed by high housing and consumer prices. Satellite towns have been rapidly growing over recent years due to mass residential construction and housing prices, which are 15–20 per cent lower than in agglomerations around big cities. In 2019, the migration surplus in Kyiv amounted to 17,200 people and was 27,300 in Kyiv oblast, i.e. one and a half times higher.

However, numerous rural populations commute to work in other big cities. Analysis of “big data” from cellular operators made it possible to estimate that each day around half a million employees commute to work in Kyiv and Kyiv oblast<sup>11</sup>. As shuttled migrants in the capital may be employed from nearby oblasts, in particular Zhytomyr and Chernihiv, some researchers estimate daily shuttle migration in Kyiv at 700,000 people. Such shuttle migration can be also observed in agglomerations around other big cities. For example, 180,000 residents of the oblast come on weekdays to Lviv<sup>12</sup>, and 134,000 to Kharkiv<sup>13</sup>. According to a survey on the economic activity of households, 16.3 per cent of the employed working-age population, or more than 2 million, had a job in another settlement of the country<sup>14</sup>.

Experts forecast a weakening of internal migration under the influences of an active policy of local development and decentralization of governance<sup>15</sup>. On the other hand, the educational reform, aimed at the creation of hub schools and accompanied by downsizing in personnel of understaffed rural schools, will stimulate migration of households with children and young people due to educational needs. The elimination of the procedure for exercising social rights at the place of registration, in particular, the right to apply to a health-care facility regardless of

the place of registration, will also contribute to the intensification of migration.

## 2.2. Internally displaced persons (IDPs)

The annexation of Crimea and the conflict in eastern Ukraine led to numerous induced displacements. According to the Ministry of Social Policy that registers internally displaced persons to provide them with financial assistance for covering living expenses, the number of migrants from the non-government controlled areas reached about 1.5 million persons. Their number has stabilized since 2017. However, in 2020, there was a certain increase in the number of IDPs. 1.43 million IDPs were registered in December 2019, 1.46 million in December 2020, and 1.47 million in July 2021, or 40,000 more than in 2019. However, this was not due to new displacements, but to the fact that as a result of the COVID-19 crisis and rising unemployment, persons who had not previously applied for assistance were registered as IDPs to receive government benefits\*.

Most IDPs are located in Donetsk Oblast (over half a million) and Luhansk Oblast (up to 300,000), as well as in Kyiv and Kyiv Oblast (234,000 cumulatively) (fig. 12). The share of IDPs living in the capital region has been gradually growing: 16 per cent in July 2021, 15.4 per cent in 2020, 14.9 per cent in 2019 and 13 per cent in 2016. The capital attracts IDPs and other internal migrants with better employment conditions and higher wages.

According to the National Monitoring System Report on the Situation of IDPs<sup>16</sup>, the average per capita income of IDP households (UAH 3,651 per person as of March 2021) is one third lower than the average

11 Ukrainian and international experts discussed the prospects of forming Kyiv agglomeration.  
URL: <http://koda.gov.ua/news/ukrainski-ta-mizhnarodni-eksperti-ob/>

12 Great Lviv and not only: how many people come to Lviv each day? URL: [Dashboard.city-adm.lviv.ua/velyky-lviv-i-navit-shche-bilshe](http://Dashboard.city-adm.lviv.ua/velyky-lviv-i-navit-shche-bilshe)

13 Серіда К., Костриков С. Просторовий економетричний аналіз маятникової трудової міграції на регіональному рівні [Sehida K., Kostrikov S., Spatial econometric analysis of shuttle labour migration at the regional level].  
URL: [visnyk-geo.knu.ua/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/09-64.pdf](http://visnyk-geo.knu.ua/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/09-64.pdf)

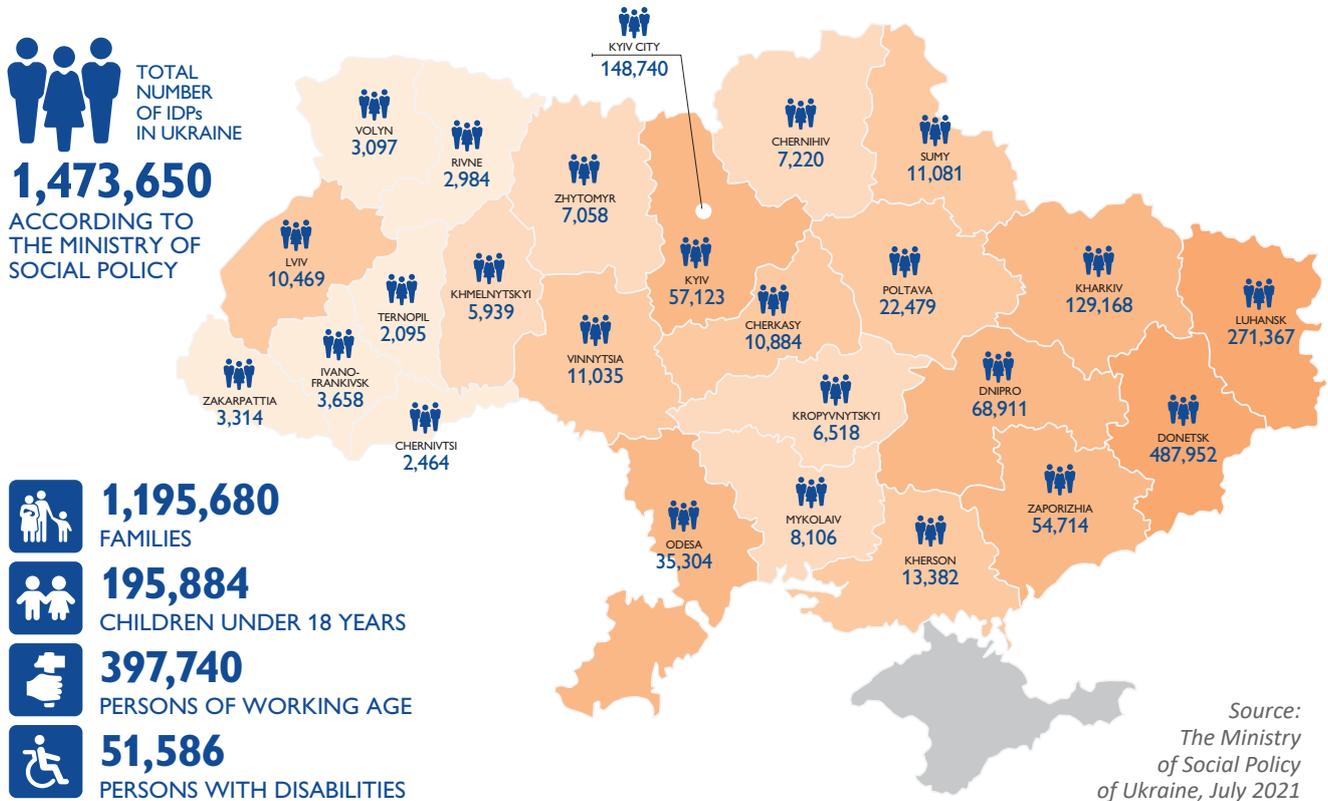
14 Робоча сила України 2019: Стат. збірник. – К., Держстат, 2020 [Labor force of Ukraine 2019: Statistical Yearbook, State Statistics Service, 2020]. URL: [ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat\\_u/2020/zb/07/zb\\_r\\_s\\_2019.pdf](http://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_u/2020/zb/07/zb_r_s_2019.pdf)

15 Українське суспільство: міграційний вимір. Національна доповідь. – К., Національна академія наук України, 2018. – С.183 [Ukrainian society: Migration aspect, National report, Kyiv, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2018, p. 183]  
URL: [https://www.idss.org.ua/arhiv/Ukraine\\_migration.pdf](https://www.idss.org.ua/arhiv/Ukraine_migration.pdf)

16 Since March 2016, IOM conducts a quarterly survey that covers over 15,000 IDPs affected by the armed conflict in all Ukrainian oblasts, as well as returnees to the non-government controlled areas by personal interviews, telephone interviews and focus groups

\* Analysis by Olena Malynovska

Fig. 12. Distribution of IDPs in the territory of Ukraine



value in Ukraine, and it is also lower than the actual subsistence level (UAH 4,224 in March 2021). In addition, in 2020, amid the quarantine restrictions, the income of IDP households was lower than in 2019. A lot of IDPs have to rely on state support, which represents their second-largest source of income (after wages).

A lack of own housing remains the most pressing problem of IDPs. Only 12 per cent have their own housing. More than 60 per cent rent it. Rental payments significantly worsen the financial situation of households. About 15 per cent of IDPs live with relatives or friends.

Employment of IDPs is slowly growing, however, according to the IOM monitoring data from March 2021, it was 49 per cent<sup>17</sup> against 56 per cent of Ukraine’s general population aged 15 to 70. Moreover, 24 per cent of those surveyed reported that they had to

go on paid or partly paid leave during the quarantine. Seventeen per cent (17%) of Ukraine’s general employed population was sent on unpaid leave<sup>18</sup>.

Notwithstanding the difficulties, 55 per cent of surveyed IDPs considered themselves integrated into the local community, and 34 per cent partly integrated. The March 2019 survey showed that 39 per cent of IDPs do not intend to go back to their former homes in the non-government controlled areas even after the end of the conflict. There was 34 per cent who answered similarly in June 2019<sup>19</sup>.

The vulnerability of IDPs has increased amid the pandemic. This is mainly due to the sociodemographic characteristics of this population group. According to the monitoring data, almost one third of IDP households with children are led by women, 14 per cent have members with disabilities, and 22 per cent consist only of persons aged above 60.

17 National Monitoring System Report on the Situation of IDPs, Round 19. March 2021

18 National Monitoring System Report on the Situation of Internally Displaced Persons. Round 17. June 2020  
URL: [http://ukraine.iom.int/sites/default/files/nms\\_round\\_17\\_ukr\\_web.pdf](http://ukraine.iom.int/sites/default/files/nms_round_17_ukr_web.pdf)

19 National Monitoring System Report on the situation of Internally Displaced Persons. Round 19. March 2021

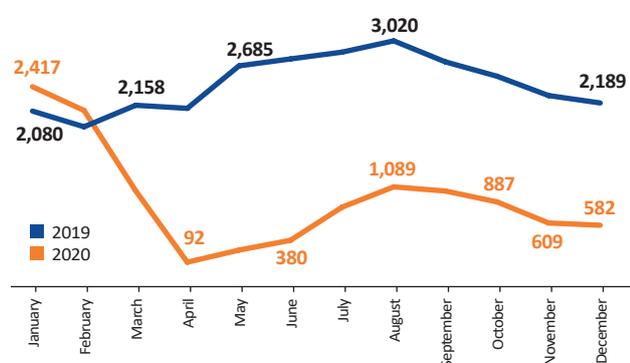
## III. MIGRATION FROM UKRAINE

### 3.1. International mobility during the pandemic

Prior to the outbreak of the pandemic in 2019, Ukrainians crossed the state border almost 30 million times while exiting the country. Granting a visa-free regime with the EU to Ukraine in 2017 contributed to the intensification of cross-border mobility of the population. According to the results of the annual sociological monitoring, conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences, 7.6 per cent of the population used the opportunity of a visa-free regime in 2018 and 14.4 per cent in 2019. Most of them travelled (14.4%), visited relatives and friends (9.5%), and searched for a job (8.2%)<sup>20</sup>.

The right of citizens to travel abroad was not restricted during the quarantine. However, the cessation of passenger traffic and entry restrictions imposed by foreign countries, as well as fears of the adverse effects on health, have led to a significant reduction in cross-border mobility of Ukrainians. In 2020, the number of border crossings by Ukrainian nationals exiting Ukraine was 11.2 million, or almost three times less than in the previous year (fig. 13). The most pronounced decrease, 5.5 times less, was reported in the number of Ukrainians travelling to the Russian Federation.

**Fig. 13. Number of state border crossings by Ukrainian citizens exiting Ukraine in 2019–2020, thousand**



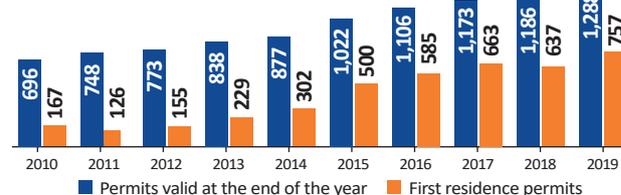
Source: State Border Guard Service of Ukraine

The lowest number of border crossings was recorded during the spring lockdown. Many foreigners left the country, and Ukrainians actively returned to their homeland, whereas the number of Ukrainian migrants significantly decreased. The number of Ukrainian nationals entering the country exceeded the number of those exiting by 300,800 in March 2020, 100,000 in April, and 53,000 in May. Yet in June–July, the number of Ukrainians exiting the country was 156,000 higher than the number of nationals entering Ukraine. In 2020, a minor positive balance between Ukrainian nationals entering and exiting the country (+80,000) was reported, whereas, in 2019, this balance was negative and amounted to -200,000.

The EU is the main destination for transborder mobility of Ukrainians. The number of Ukrainians who have residence permits in the EU countries is steadily growing (fig. 14). By the end of 2020, 1.3 million Ukrainians lived in the EU, including in Poland (499,500), Italy (223,000), the Czech Republic (165,600), and Spain (94,000).

The number of EU first residence permits issued to Ukrainians was the highest, compared to the citizens of other countries. The number decreased slightly in 2020, but remained significant (601,000 in 2020, 757,000 in 2019). Most of the new permits in 2020 were issued by Poland (almost 500,000). Mostly these are short-term permits valid for 3–11 months (88%), issued in connection with paid employment (93% of permits issued for up to 11 months).

**Fig. 14. Number of the EU first residence permits and valid residence permits at the end of the year for Ukrainians, thousand**



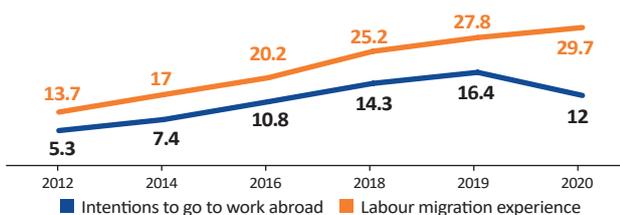
Source: Eurostat: Asylum and Managed Migration <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/asylum-and-managed-migration/data/database>

20 Українське суспільство: моніторинг соціальних змін. Випуск 6 (20) / Головні редактори д.екоп.н. В.М.Ворона, д.соціол.н. М.О.Шульга. – Київ: Інститут соціології НАН України, 2019. – 517 с. [Ukrainian society: Monitoring of social changes, Issue 6 (20) / Editors-in-Chief: Vorona, V. M., Doctor of Economics, Shulha, M. O., Doctor of Sociology, Kyiv, Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2019 p. 517] URL: <https://i-soc.com.ua/ua/edition/ukrainske-suspilstvo/issues/>

### 3.2. Labour migration

The most probable estimate is that up to 3 million Ukrainian nationals work abroad<sup>21</sup>. As highlighted by the annual sociological monitoring, conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences (2020), 29.7 per cent of Ukrainians or their family members have an experience of temporary working abroad. In 2019, 16.4 per cent reported that they intended to go soon to work abroad, compared to 5.3 per cent in 2012. However in 2020, due to COVID-19 related movement restrictions, this share dropped down to 12 per cent (fig. 15)<sup>22</sup>.

**Fig. 15. Response to the question in regard to intentions to go to work abroad and labour migration experience, both personal experience and that of family members, %**



Source: Українське суспільство: моніторинг соціальних змін. Вип.7 (21): К.. 2020. - с. 524. [Ukrainian society: Monitoring of social changes, issue 7 (21), Kyiv, 2020, p.524] <https://i-soc.com.ua/assets/files/monitoring/mon2020.pdf>

The main reason for labour migration is the intention to meet families' financial needs. The average wage in Ukraine remains one of the lowest in Europe (fig. 16): it is ten times lower, compared to Germany, 5.5 times lower than in Italy and Spain, 3–3.5 times lower than in Portugal, Czech Republic, and Poland<sup>23</sup>. At the same time, one fourth of those who think about emigration associate it with better opportunities for self-realization. Seventeen per cent (17%) of Ukrainians in 2019 and 25 per cent in 2020 intended to emigrate due to a lack of opportunities in Ukraine.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the associated restrictions on cross-border mobility have not stopped labour

migration but made it more difficult. The number of exits has not reduced but was rather postponed. According to experts, about 10 per cent of labour migrants (300,000–400,000) who returned home in the spring of 2020 faced serious difficulties in finding a job and, for the most part, returned to countries of employment at the first opportunity. According to a survey of Ukrainians who worked in Poland prior to the quarantine, a third of them could not find a job at home since July 2020, 70 per cent reported that they intended to go soon to work abroad<sup>24</sup>.

According to the online platform for employment abroad, JOOBLE, demand for Ukrainian labour migrants abroad has slumped since the onset of the lockdown, but increased by 40 per cent in the second half-year of 2020. As before, the main destination countries for labour migrants from Ukraine are Poland (packers, handymen, tailors, drivers, builders), Germany (caretakers, tilers, plumbers, electricians), the Czech Republic (industrial workers, maids, welders, electricians).

Labour migration to the Russian Federation, which used to be massive enough, has been steadily declining since 2014, and the pandemic has only exacerbated this trend (fig. 16).

**Fig. 16. Number of Ukrainian citizens with employment permits or patents to work in the Russian Federation and the share of Ukrainians among foreign labour migrants, thousand persons**



Source: Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation <https://rosstat.gov.ru/folder/210/document/12993>

21 Лібанова Е.М. Зовнішні трудові міграції українців: масштаби, причини, наслідки // Демографія та соціальна економіка. – 2018. - № 2(33) [Libanova, E. M. External labour migration of Ukrainians: scope, causes, consequences // Demography and Social Economy, 2018, No. 2(33)]

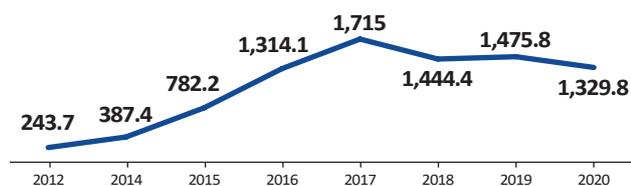
22 Українське суспільство: моніторинг соціальних змін. Вип.7 (21): К.. 2020. - с. 524. [Ukrainian society: Monitoring of social changes, issue 7 (21), Kyiv, 2020, p. 505] <https://i-soc.com.ua/assets/files/monitoring/mon2020.pdf>

23 [wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_European\\_countries\\_by\\_average\\_wage](https://wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_European_countries_by_average_wage); Мінфін. Середня заробітна плата в Україні в Євро, URL: [index.minfin.com.ua/ua/labour/salary/average/eur/](https://index.minfin.com.ua/ua/labour/salary/average/eur/)

24 Чи потрібні у Польщі українські робочі руки? [Does Poland need Ukrainian labour?] URL: <https://ampua.org/novyny/chi-potribni-u-polshhi-ukrainski-roboch/>

Poland has become the main destination country for labour migrants from Ukraine. The decisive argument in favour of working in this country (except for territorial, linguistic and cultural proximity) is the opportunity of regular temporary employment without an employment permit pursuant to an employer's declaration of intention. Even amid the pandemic, the number of such declarations exceeded 1.3 million in 2020 (fig. 17). The number of Ukrainians employed in the Polish economy at a certain moment is estimated at around one million persons. According to the estimates of Polish economists, Ukrainian labour migrants have contributed to 13 per cent of the country's GDP growth in recent years<sup>25</sup>.

**Fig. 17. Number of registered Polish employers' declarations of intention to employ a citizen of Ukraine in 2012–2020, thousand**



Source: Ministry of Economic Development, Labour and Technology of the Republic of Poland; Former Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Poland  
<https://archiwum.mpips.gov.pl/analizy-i-raporty/cudzoziemcy-pracujacy-w-polsce-statystyki/>

As Poland will need additional labour resources to develop its economy after the negative effects of the pandemic, the Government has taken actions to keep migrants, providing them with certain social guarantees, and creating conditions for a further influx of foreign labour migrants. For example, Ukrainians who enter Poland for work or study can get free COVID-19 vaccinations right at the border, where round-the-clock vaccination points are deployed. According to Poland's post-COVID recovery

programme, it is planned to simplify the employment procedure for foreigners, in particular, to digitize the procedure for obtaining employment permits, and extend them for a longer period (up to three years).

The quarantine restrictions did not stop labour migration but led to some changes in its characteristics. Firstly, the tendency to expand the geography of travelling abroad for work has slowed down, as travelling to neighbouring countries is both easier and safer during the pandemic. According to surveys, prior to the pandemic, 31 per cent of labour migrants in Poland reported their intention to work in Germany. This number decreased to 19 per cent<sup>26</sup> in 2020.

Secondly, since both a biometric passport and confirmed purpose of travel are needed for entering another country, migration is becoming more organized and orderly, and irregular migration abroad is declining. This is evidenced, for example, by the fact that the number of Ukrainian nationals registered with the Polish Social Insurance Agency (ZUS) has increased. At the end of 2020, 532,000 Ukrainians paid insurance contributions, i.e. worked under employment contracts, 11 per cent down from 479,000 in the previous year<sup>27</sup>.

Thirdly, because of the difficulties of cross-border migration, the tendency of transforming temporary labour migration into permanent emigration has intensified. The number of migrants who intend to apply or have applied for long-term or permanent residence permits in the host country has grown. The number of Ukrainians who had valid residence permits in Poland, as of April 2021 reached 261,000. This is five times higher compared to 2015<sup>28</sup>. The number of Ukrainians with residence permits in the neighbouring country has been growing every year. Yet due to the COVID-19 crisis of 2020, fewer residence permits were issued than in the previous year. In the first quarter of 2021, the dynamics of registration of residence permits in Poland for Ukrainians resumed (table 1).

25 Strzelecki P., Growiec J., Wyszynski R. The contribution of immigration from Ukraine to economic growth in Poland. NBP Working Paper No. 322. URL: [https://www.nbp.pl/publikacje/materialy\\_i\\_studia/322\\_en.pdf](https://www.nbp.pl/publikacje/materialy_i_studia/322_en.pdf)

26 Через коронавірус мігранти в Польщі все менше думають про заробітки в Німеччині: дослідження [Fewer Polish labour migrants think of earning money in Germany due to the COVID-19 pandemic, study]. URL: <https://naszwybir.pl/doslidzhennya-chez-koronavirus-migranty-v-polshhi-vse-menshe-dumayut-pro-zarobitky-v-nimechchyni/>

27 Cudzoziemcy w polskim systemie ubezpieczen społecznych. URL: <https://www.zus.pl/documents/10182/2322024/Cudzoziemcy+w+polskim+systemie+ubezpiecze%C5%84+spo%C5%82ecznych+2020.pdf/8a693717-9b66-3e70-737b-28fe827ea41e>

28 Zezwolenia na pobyt po I kwartale 2021 r. URL: <https://udsc.gov.pl/zezwolenia-na-pobyt-po-i-kwartale-2021-r/>

**Table 1. Number of Ukrainians with permanent (5–10 years) and temporary (up to 3 years) residence permits in Poland**

	2005	2010	2015	2018	2019	2020	Q1 2021
Permanent residence permits	1,518	1,553	6,729	7,712	7,167	29,400	16,800
Temporary residence permits	8,304	8,427	37,833	80,231	99,936		

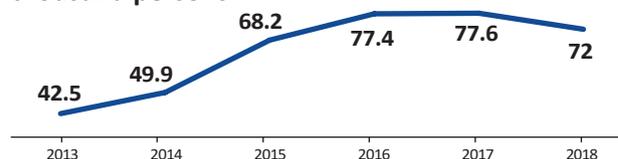
Source: Rocznik Demograficzny. 2020. <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/roczniki-statystyczne/roczniki-statystyczne/rocznik-demograficzny-2020>; Zezwolenia na pobyt po I kwartale 2021 r. <https://udsc.gov.pl/zezwolenia-na-pobyt-po-i-kwartale-2021-r/>

A survey of Ukrainian labour migrants in Poland has shown an increase in their intention to get permanent residence permits in the host country (66.5% in 2021 against 60% in 2020), buy real estate here (55.5% against 34%), set up a business (39.8% against 25%), reunite with their families (51.7% in 2021 and 41% in 2020)<sup>29</sup>.

### 3.3. Migration for educational purposes

The number of Ukrainian students of higher education institutions of other countries grew especially rapidly after the annexation of Crimea and the start of the armed conflict in the east of the country (fig. 18). Due to the stabilization of the situation in the country, this process has slowed down. According to UNESCO, in 2018, 72,000 Ukrainians (the latest available data) studied abroad. The outflow rate, i.e. the percentage of mobile students in the total number of students, was 4.46, which roughly corresponds to its value in the neighbouring countries of Central Europe (Romania — 6.97, Hungary — 4.54, the Czech Republic — 3.75, Poland — 1.77).

**Fig. 18. Number of Ukrainian students abroad, thousand persons**



Source: UNESCO. Education: Inbound internationally mobile students by country of origin <http://data.uis.unesco.org/index.aspx?queryid=3806>

In 2018, the largest number of Ukrainian students studied in Poland (26,900), followed by Germany (6,500), and the Czech Republic (3,200). Italy ranked fourth in terms of the number of Ukrainian students (3,000). The directions of migration for educational purposes, in general, coincide with the geography of labour migration due to established migration networks.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hampered migration for educational purposes and cross-border mobility of the population. The number of Ukrainian students abroad may also decrease because of the insufficient financial capacity of households as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Studying abroad is often seen by Ukrainian young people as a step towards employment in more prosperous and safer countries; therefore, their reasons for leaving Ukraine are significant, whereas implications for the country's development are mainly negative. According to various surveys, only 10–20 per cent of Ukrainian students abroad intend to go back to Ukraine<sup>30</sup>.

### 3.4. Asylum seekers

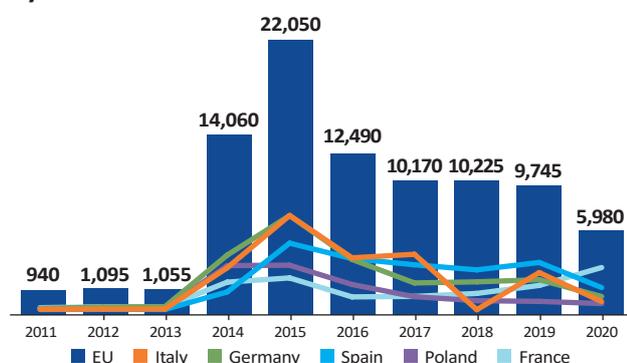
Prior to the annexation of Crimea and the armed conflict in the Donbas, the number of asylum applications submitted by citizens of Ukraine in the EU countries was about one thousand per annum. Following the conflict in the east, it jumped to more

29 Пульс трудової міграції. Інтеграційні наміри українських трудових мігрантів у Польщі Аналітичний рапорт за підсумками опитування громадян України, які працюють у Польщі, 2021 [The pulse of labor migration. Integration intentions of Ukrainian labour migrants in Poland, analytical report based on the results of a survey of Ukrainians working in Poland, 2021]. URL: <https://gremi-personal.com.ua/ua/puls-trudovoi-migracii-integracijni-namiri-ukrainskih-trudovih-migrantiv-u-polshhi-2/>

30 Другов О. До проблеми освітньої еміграції українців [Druhov, O. About the problem of emigration of Ukrainians for education] URL: <https://osvita.ua/vnz/75342/>; Міграційні настрої студентів в умовах візової лібералізації [Migration sentiments of students in the context of visa-free travels] URL: <http://miok.lviv.ua/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ-МІГРАЦІЙНИХ-НАСТРОЇВ.pdf>

than 22,000 in 2015. Most asylum applications were filed in the EU countries with a large number of Ukrainian labour migrants, in particular in Italy, Spain, Germany, and Poland. In the following years, the number of applications submitted gradually declined, which can be attributed to the stabilization of the situation in the country. Due to the restrictions on cross-border mobility in 2020, it dropped by a third against 2019 (fig. 19). France was the only EU country where a significant surge in asylum applications by Ukrainians was reported (2,200 in 2020 against 1,300 thousand in 2019). However, it was linked not to humanitarian issues, but to a criminal scheme revealed by Ukrainian and French law enforcement officers. The authors of this scheme organized free, or even with a minor fee for the participants, trips to France where the so-called tourists had to apply for refugee status and gave the organizers their bank cards, to which the amount of asylum benefit would have been remitted<sup>31</sup>.

**Fig. 19. Number of asylum applications submitted by Ukrainian citizens in the EU countries**



Source: Eurostat: Asylum and first-time asylum applications by citizenship, age and sex [http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr\\_asydcfsta&lang=en](http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_asydcfsta&lang=en)

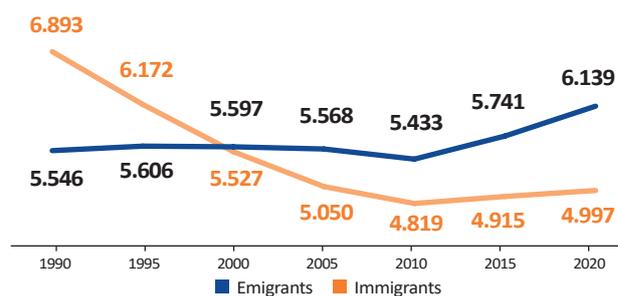
### 3.5. Ukrainian diaspora

As a result of several waves of economic and political emigration, as well as repressive displacements, numerous Ukrainian diaspora settled in different countries of the world.

The largest Ukrainian diaspora lives in the Russian Federation (1.9 million persons who claimed that they were Ukrainians according to the 2010 census), Canada (around 1.4 million according to the 2016 data), the USA (1 million persons of Ukrainian descent according to the 2015 data). Large groups of Ukrainians live in Kazakhstan (257,000 according to the estimates as of 1 January 2019), Moldova (181,000 according to the 2014 census, excluding Transnistria), Belarus (160,000 according to the 2019 census).

The number of emigrants, i.e. people who were born in Ukraine, but live in other countries of the world, was almost 6 million persons in 2019, while the number of immigrants, i.e. people living in Ukraine, who were born abroad, was around 5 million (fig. 20).

**Fig. 20. Number of emigrants from Ukraine and immigrants living in its territory, million persons**



Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Population Division. International Migrant Stock. <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates19.asp>

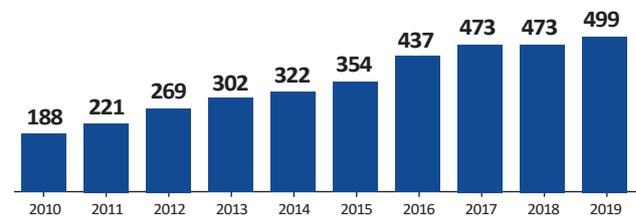
Most migrants live in the territory of post-Soviet countries and had moved before the USSR collapsed. However, the number of Ukrainian migrants is gradually decreasing, whereas the number of those who emigrated to other countries is increasing. While there were 8,000 migrants from Ukraine in the Czech Republic in 1990, there were 131,300 of them in 2019, i.e. 16 times more. The respective figures were 403 persons and 106,400 for Spain, i.e. 264 times more, 206 persons and 248,500 for Italy, i.e. 1,200 times more<sup>32</sup>.

31 Статус «біженців» у Франції. На Одещині викрили міжнародний канал торгівлі людьми – ДПСУ [The "refugee" status in France. An international human trafficking channel exposed in Odesa oblast, SBGS]. URL: <https://news.khmelnitskiy.ua/post1058225>

32 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Population Division. International Migrant Stock 2020 (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2019).

However, the number of Ukrainian migrants is increasing in the main destination countries for labour migrants as a part of temporary labour migration evolves into permanent migration. According to the Eurostat, the number of Ukrainian citizens with a long-term migrant status in the EU increased 2.5 times over the past decade (fig. 21). More and more Ukrainians become citizens of their countries of stay. In 2019 alone, 4,800 were naturalized in Germany, 3,500 in Poland, 2,400 in Italy, by 1,600 in Portugal and Spain, around 1,000 in the Czech Republic<sup>33</sup>.

**Fig. 21. Number of Ukrainian citizens with a long-term migrant status in the EU countries, thousand persons**



Source: Eurostat: Long-term residents by citizenship on the 31st of December of each year  
appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr-reslong&lang=en

## IV. MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

### 4.1. Migration impact on Ukraine

Migration impact is primarily felt at the household level. According to the results of the nationwide monitoring, annually conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences, one third of Ukrainians said that the income from employment abroad makes up 20 to 50 per cent of the income of migrants' households, and 39 per cent said that it exceeds 50 per cent<sup>34</sup>.

Household surveys, regularly carried out by the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, show that the cash income and cash expenditure in the western oblasts of the country, where the share of labour migrants is the largest, is higher than Ukraine's average, primarily for clothing and shoes, household items, household appliances, and housekeeping<sup>35</sup>.

The population's welfare is growing not only because of the income from employment abroad but also due to the fact that mass labour migration prompts

employers to raise wages in an attempt to retain employees. Analysis of macroeconomic indicators and labour market indicators gave researchers reasons to conclude that following 2015, amid a certain economic growth and demand for labour, labour migration abroad contributed to higher wages in Ukraine, which is most noticeable in the oblasts with the highest migration ratio<sup>36</sup>. In other words, migration prompted an increase in the income of not only migration stakeholders but also the population, which did not earn money abroad.

Migration has a minor impact on production investment. According to the 2020 survey of labour migrants from the Carpathian region, only 4 per cent of them invest in business development in Ukraine. Thirty six per cent (36%) said they did not have enough money to invest, and one in four claimed they did not want to use their earnings in this way<sup>37</sup>.

33 Eurostat - Data Explorer. URL: <https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

34 Українське суспільство: моніторинг соціальних змін. Вип.6 (20).: К.. 2019. - С. 505. [Ukrainian society: Monitoring of social changes, issue 6 (20), Kyiv, 2019, p. 505] URL: <https://i-soc.com.ua/assets/files/monitoring/mon2019.pdf>

35 Саріогло В. Зовнішня трудова міграція в Україні: мотиви, масштаби, наслідки [Sariohlo, V., External labour migration in Ukraine: motives, scales, implications] URL: [http://www.irbis-nbu.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis\\_nbu/cgiirbis\\_64.exe?I21DBN=LINK&P21DBN=UJRN&Z21ID=&S21REF=10&S21CNR=20&S21STN=1&S21FMT=ASP\\_meta&C21COM=S&2\\_S21P03=FILE=&2\\_S21STR=ecan\\_2019\\_29%281%29\\_\\_7](http://www.irbis-nbu.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis_nbu/cgiirbis_64.exe?I21DBN=LINK&P21DBN=UJRN&Z21ID=&S21REF=10&S21CNR=20&S21STN=1&S21FMT=ASP_meta&C21COM=S&2_S21P03=FILE=&2_S21STR=ecan_2019_29%281%29__7)

36 Lücke M., Saha D. Labour migration from Ukraine: Changing destinations, growing macroeconomic impact. URL: [https://www.german-economic-team.com/ukraine/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/GET\\_UKR\\_PS\\_02\\_2019\\_en.pdf](https://www.german-economic-team.com/ukraine/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/GET_UKR_PS_02_2019_en.pdf)

37 Василюк Т., Риндзак О., Бачинська М. Проблеми життя та праці зовнішніх мігрантів з Карпатського регіону України: результати пілотного опитування та пріоритети регіональної міграційної політики. Науково-аналітична записка, 2021. [Vasylyuk T., Ryndzak O., Bachynska M., Problems of life and work of external migrants from Ukraine's Carpathian region: the results of a pilot survey and priorities of regional migration policy, scientific and analytical note, 2021]

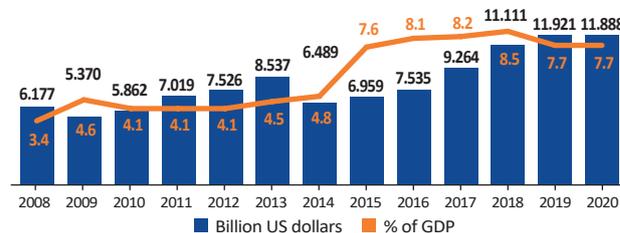
The restrictions on cross-border movement in 2020 have shown serious risks of labour migration. The return of labour migrants to their homeland, as well as the non-departure of those who planned to go for seasonal work, have escalated tensions in the labour market. A third of returnees surveyed in the summer of 2020 could not find work in their homeland<sup>38</sup>. The lack of earnings abroad has hit the income of many families hard.

The quarantine has revealed the negative implications of migration for meeting Ukraine's demand for specialists, especially in such an important area as health care. According to the Ministry of Health, more than 30,000 doctors have quit in Ukraine in 2020, while 4,200 Ukrainians worked in Poland's health-care system<sup>39</sup>. The accessibility of jobs for Ukrainian doctors in Poland has significantly increased due to the adopted procedure, according to which they can work without an employment permit and the simplified procedure for recognition of diplomas<sup>40</sup>.

## 4.2. Migrant remittances to Ukraine

Following a slight decline caused by the conflict eruption in 2014, the amount of migrant remittances to Ukraine has been steadily growing. Though the COVID-19 crisis and migration restrictions have slowed this growth, they have not led to a significant drop in remittances. In 2020, according to the National Bank of Ukraine, the amount of remittances was approximately USD 12 billion, being down just by 0.3 per cent, compared to 2019, (fig. 21). The average value of one transfer increased from USD 364 to USD 390<sup>41</sup>. The positive dynamics of private remittances in the first quarter of 2021 give grounds to expect their growth by the end of the year by 8 per cent to 13 billion.

Fig. 22. Private remittances to Ukraine in 2008–2020



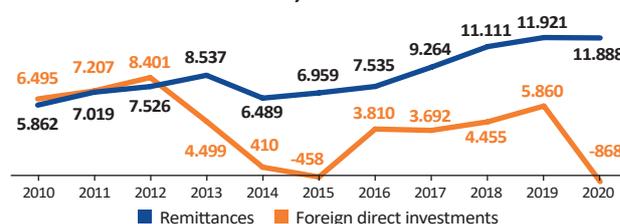
Source: National Bank of Ukraine  
<https://bank.gov.ua/doccatalog/document?id=19208355>

One fourth of private remittances came from Poland, the main destination country for labour migrants, 10.3 per cent from the United States, and 8.5 per cent from the United Kingdom. The share of remittances originating from the Russian Federation continued to decline (26.4% in 2015, 10.6% in 2019, 8.5% in 2020).

In 2020, the amount of remittances to the country through informal channels, i.e. transfers of cash and values from one household to another, drastically fell and accounted for 49.3 per cent of total remittances in 2019, 37.6 per cent in 2020<sup>42</sup>.

Private remittances are an important source of Ukraine's currency earnings. They are equivalent to 7.7 per cent of the country's GDP and by far exceed the Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) amount that not only decreased during the crises, but also fell into negative values (fig. 22).

Fig. 23. Private remittances and foreign direct investments to Ukraine, USD billion



Source: NBU, Ministry of Finance of Ukraine  
<https://index.minfin.com.ua/ua/economy/fdi/>

38 Does Poland need Ukrainian labour force? URL: <https://ampua.org/novyny/chi-potribni-u-polshhi-ukrainski-roboch/>

39 Польща очікує напливу лікарів і медсестер з України [Poland expects an influx of doctors and nurses from Ukraine]. URL: <https://zn.ua/ukr/WORLD/polshcha-ochikuje-napliv-likariv-i-medsester-z-ukrajini.html>

40 <https://censor.net/ua/n3254293>

41 В Україну за 9 місяців надійшло приватних переказів на \$8,5 мільярдів – НБУ [NBU says Ukraine received private remittances worth \$8.5 billion in 9 months] URL: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-economy/3133648-v-ukrainu-za-9-misaciv-nadijslo-privatnih-perekaziv-na-85-mlrd-nbu.html>

42 НБУ. Статистика зовнішнього сектору України. [NBU. The statistics of Ukraine's external sector] URL: <https://bank.gov.ua/ua/statistic/sector-external/data-sector-external>

At the same time, according to the World Bank, private remittances to Ukraine in 2020 amounted to USD 13.7 billion, which is 13.2% less than in 2019. The difference in the data of the two institutions

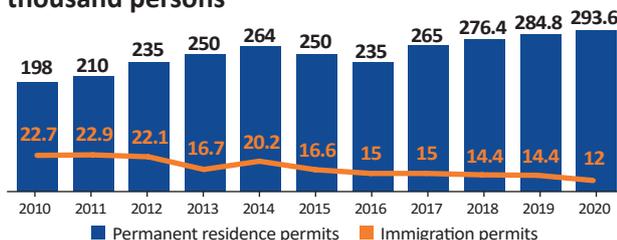
can be explained by the fact that the National Bank of Ukraine compiles data based on net transfers, i.e. excluding costs and taxes in the host country, while the World Bank includes taxes for transfers.

## V. MIGRATION TO UKRAINE

293,600 foreigners, or less than 0.7 per cent of the population, reside permanently in Ukraine (fig. 23). Around 25,000 permanent residence permits were issued on an annual basis in the 2000s, but since 2014 their number has reduced. Its further decrease was due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Just 12,000 immigration permits were issued in 2020.

The majority of immigrants (83% in 2020) are family members of Ukrainian citizens, as well as people of Ukrainian origin and their descendants who are eligible for Ukrainian citizenship and receive immigration permits out of the immigration quota annually set by the Government. These are mostly nationals of the Russian Federation (more than a half) and other post-Soviet countries. Quota immigrants are mostly family members of foreigners who permanently reside in Ukraine. Although the Government is increasing the immigration quota (3,800 in 2019, 8,500 in 2020, almost 10,000 in 2021), it usually remains unfilled.

**Fig. 24. Number of foreigners who permanently reside in Ukraine and immigration permits issued, thousand persons**



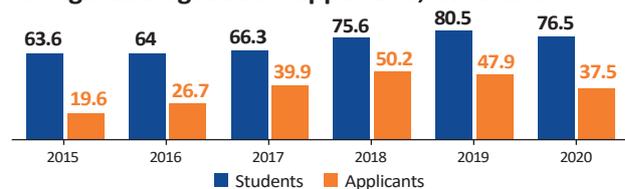
Source: State Migration Service of Ukraine

Some foreigners temporarily stay in Ukraine; there were 151,300 of them as of 31 December 2020. These are mostly students of Ukrainian universities and temporary workers.

After a decline, which can be attributed to the armed conflict, the number of foreign students in the country's universities started growing again. In 2019, the number of foreign students in Ukraine was record high and exceeded 80,000. In 2020, as a result

of the pandemic, their number dropped to 76,500, or by 5 per cent. The number of invitations for foreign undergraduate applicants fell by 22 per cent (fig. 24), which will lead to a reduction in the number of foreign students in the nearest term.

**Fig. 25. Foreign students in Ukrainian universities and the number of registered invitations for foreign undergraduate applicants, thousand**

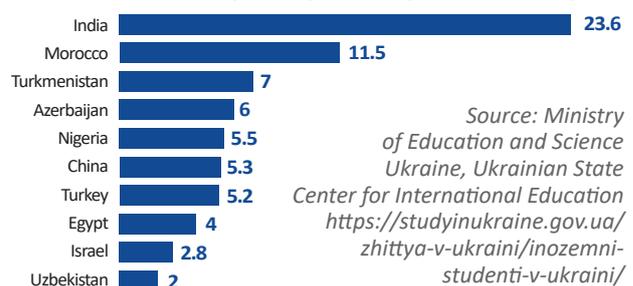


Source: Ministry of Education and Science Ukraine, Ukrainian State Center for International Education <https://studyinukraine.gov.ua/zhittya-v-ukraini/inozemni-studenti-v-ukraini/>

Ninety per cent (90%) of foreign students pursue general university curriculum, 6.5 per cent — language training, the rest — postgraduate education. Thirty seven per cent (37%) of them study medicine, in particular about 7 per cent — dentistry. Three hundred ninety four education institutions provide educational services to foreigners.

Foreign students of Ukrainian higher education institutions come from 155 countries, they are mainly citizens of India (23.6%), Morocco (11.5%), Turkmenistan (7%) (fig. 25).

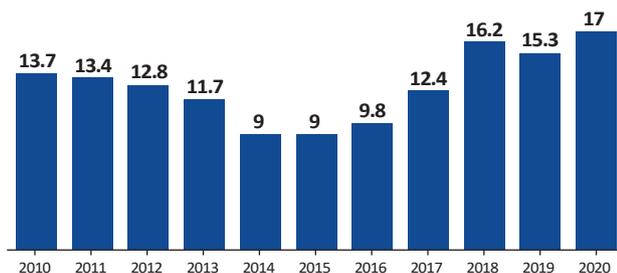
**Fig. 26. Largest groups of foreign students in the 2020/21 academic year by country of citizenship, %**



Source: Ministry of Education and Science Ukraine, Ukrainian State Center for International Education <https://studyinukraine.gov.ua/zhittya-v-ukraini/inozemni-studenti-v-ukraini/>

According to the State Employment Service, which issues employment permits to foreigners, although the number of migrant workers from other countries is growing, it remains minor (fig. 26). In 2020, the largest number of employment permits was issued to citizens of Turkey (4,600), India (1,900), the Russian Federation (1,700), Belarus (1,300) and China (1,200). By professional groups, labour migrants are mostly executives and managers (60%), employed in trade and repair services, information and telecommunication sector, construction and industry.

**Fig. 27. Number of foreigners temporarily employed in Ukraine under employment permits as of the end of the year, thousand persons**



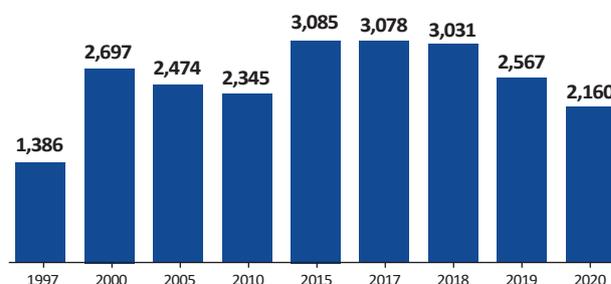
Source: State Employment Service

Another group of foreigners in Ukraine includes refugees and persons who were granted complementary protection. Amid the quarantine restrictions on cross-border mobility, the number of applications for complementary protection in Ukraine fell to 529 applications in 2020 against 1,443 in 2019. Conversely, the number of positive decisions increased.

123 persons were granted refugee or complementary protection statuses in 2020 against 93 in 2019.

The number of refugees living in Ukraine remains insignificant (1,273 with the refugee status and 887 with the status of complementary protection) and is gradually decreasing (fig. 27) as some of them naturalize. In 2018, Ukrainian citizenship was granted to 40 refugees in compliance with the Decree of the President of Ukraine, 28 – in 2019, 17 – in 2020.

**Fig. 28. Number of recognized refugees in Ukraine (in 2015–2020, cumulatively refugee complementary protection status), persons**



Source: State Migration Service of Ukraine

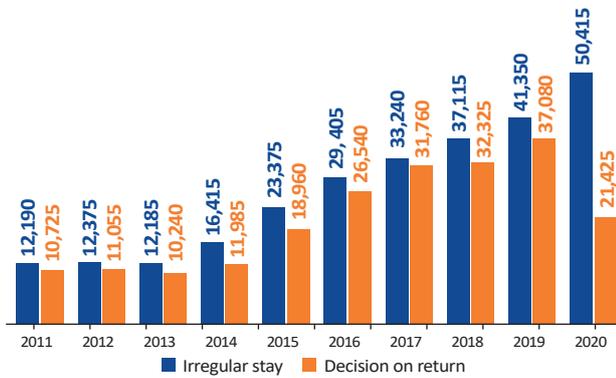
Most persons who were granted complementary protection are from Afghanistan (647 refugee status and 162 complementary protection status) and Syria (32 and 437 respectively), as well as from some of the CIS countries, namely from the Russian Federation (82 and 60 respectively). These are mainly people of working age, 60 per cent of whom are men. Almost 9 per cent of children under 14 and less than one per cent of people aged 65+ were granted complementary protection status.

## VI. IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Ukraine is simultaneously the country of origin, destination, and transit for migrants with irregular legal status. Some Ukrainian citizens stay or engage in paid activities abroad in violation of the legislation of the country of stay. Moreover, a certain number of foreigners who have either entered the country irregularly or lost legal grounds for staying in the country, stay in Ukraine. Many of them see

Ukraine as a territory of transit on their way to the EU. According to Eurostat, in 2020, the number of Ukrainians violating the rules of stay on the EU territory grew by 20 per cent, compared to the previous year, which indicates the escalation of the problem of Ukrainian citizens' irregular migration abroad in the context of economic deprivations aggravated by the consequences of the pandemic (fig. 28).

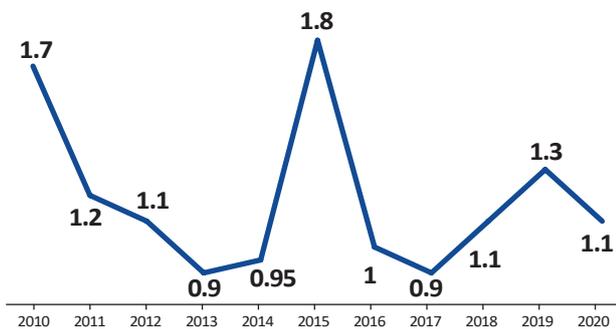
**Fig. 29. Number of Ukrainian citizens with irregular status, who were detected in the EU, subject to decisions on return, persons**



Source: Eurostat: Enforcement of migration legislation [ec.europa.eu/Eurostat/web/asylum-and-managed-migration/data/database](http://ec.europa.eu/Eurostat/web/asylum-and-managed-migration/data/database)

The issue of irregular migration of foreigners to and via Ukraine remains relevant. Persons who attempt to irregularly cross the state border are detained both while entering and exiting Ukraine (fig. 29), but the number of those attempting to irregularly exit the country is almost twice as high as those attempting to enter it.

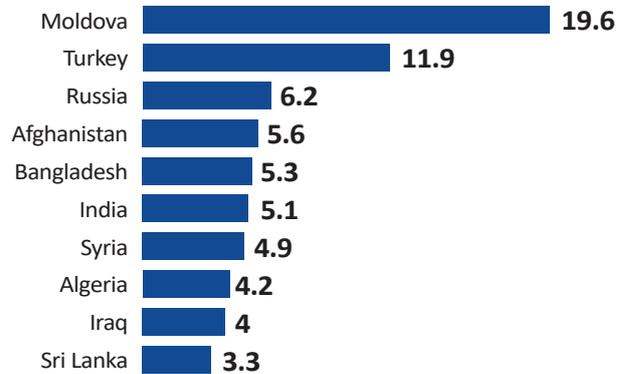
**Fig. 30. Number of migrants detained for irregular state border crossing or attempting to irregularly cross the state border of Ukraine, thousand persons**



Source: State Border Guard Service of Ukraine

In 2020, the most numerous groups among the persons detained at the border were citizens of Moldova (both entering and exiting), Turkey, the Russian Federation, Afghanistan and Bangladesh (fig. 30).

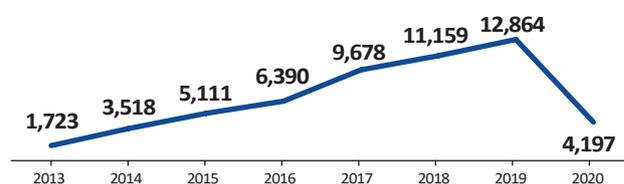
**Fig. 31. Distribution of migrants detained for irregular state border crossing or attempting to irregularly cross the state border of Ukraine, by country of citizenship, %**



Source: State Border Guard Service of Ukraine

While the number of attempts to irregularly cross the border documented by the State Border Guard Service, in general, remained stable, the number of irregular migrants detected by the State Migration Service inside the country has increased. However, in 2020, this indicator was three times lower than in the previous year (4,200 compared to 12,900), since it was impossible to carry out some activities by law enforcement agencies due to the quarantine restrictions (fig. 31). This indirectly indicates that the statistical findings reflect the level of activities of migration and other agencies rather than the dynamics of irregular migration in Ukraine.

**Fig. 32. Number of irregular migrants detected by the State Migration Service in Ukraine, persons**



Source: State Migration Service

In order to assess the real number of irregular migrants at the request of the State Migration Service, IOM, with funding from the European Union, has conducted a study allowing to claim that the number of irregular migrants in Ukraine may be from 37,700 to 60,900 persons<sup>43</sup>.

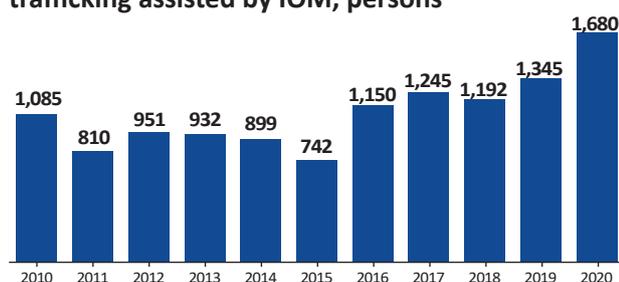
43 Irregular migrants in Ukraine. Analytical Summary URL: [http://ukraine.iom.int/sites/default/files/irregular\\_migrants\\_in\\_ukraine\\_eng.pdf](http://ukraine.iom.int/sites/default/files/irregular_migrants_in_ukraine_eng.pdf)

## VII. HUMAN TRAFFICKING

According to IOM estimates, over 260,000 Ukrainians could have suffered from human trafficking since 1991. Every eighth Ukrainian is ready to accept at least one risky job offer abroad that could lead to human trafficking or exploitation<sup>44</sup>.

From 2000 until 2020, the IOM Mission in Ukraine assisted 18,287 victims of human trafficking, most notably, to over 3,000 in 2019–2020 (fig. 32). In 2020, a 25 per cent increase in the number of VoTs was observed compared to the previous year (1,345 VoTs in 2019), marking the highest number of VoTs ever assisted by IOM Ukraine since the start of its Counter-Trafficking Programme in 1998.

**Fig. 33. Number of victims of human trafficking assisted by IOM, persons**



Source: IOM Ukraine

Based on the Law of Ukraine “On Countering Human Trafficking”, from 2019 until 2021, the status of a human trafficking victim was officially granted to 353 persons (table 2).

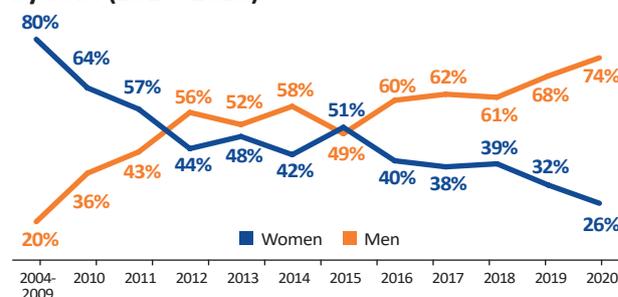
**Table 2: Official status of a human trafficking victim (September 2012–June 2021)**

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	January–June 2021
Number of statuses	13	41	27	83	110	198	221	185	136	32

Source: Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, National Social Service of Ukraine

Both the IOM data and official data indicate an increase in the share of men among the victims, as well as in the share of labour exploitation victims and persons who were exploited inside Ukraine. In 2020, men accounted for 74 per cent of the beneficiaries of IOM assistance (compared to 68% in 2019) (fig. 33), and 73.5 per cent of those, officially granted the status of a human trafficking victim. The victims of labour exploitation accounted for 97 per cent of the IOM VoT caseload in 2020 (compared to 93% in 2019) and 40 per cent of those officially granted the status of a human trafficking victim. Along with that, 48 per cent of the persons who were officially granted the status of a human trafficking victim by the relevant state authorities were exploited in armed conflict. According to IOM, the key country of destination for the victims of human trafficking was the Russian Federation (52% of IOM’s beneficiaries in 2020), followed by Poland, Germany, the Czech Republic, and others.

**Fig. 34. The proportion of men and women among the human trafficking victims assisted by IOM (2010–2020)**



Source: IOM Ukraine

The COVID-19 pandemic aggravated the situation of human trafficking survivors. According to IOM estimates as of summer 2020, the financial situation worsened for 84 per cent of surveyed VoTs, and over 50 per cent of them lost their jobs.

It should also be noted that the complications for international travelling increased the risks for Ukrainian migrants to accept risky proposals related to employment abroad that might lead to falling prey to traffickers.

44 Survey on migration and human trafficking in Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and Georgia, 2019. URL: [http://ukraine.iom.int/sites/default/files/iom\\_regional\\_ct\\_survey\\_2019\\_eng\\_print.pdf](http://ukraine.iom.int/sites/default/files/iom_regional_ct_survey_2019_eng_print.pdf)

**Table 3. Number of crimes registered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) of Ukraine and number of criminal cases with verdicts delivered by Ukrainian courts under Art. 149**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021, H1
Number of registered crimes	257	197	162	130	109	111	115	346	291	306	212	130
Number of court verdicts (Art. 149)	85	106	96	64	29	23	28	23	29	36	26	22

Source: MIA of Ukraine, State Judicial Administration of Ukraine

## VIII. RECENT INITIATIVES IN MIGRATION POLICY

In his electoral programme, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky, elected in 2019, promised to create conditions for Ukrainian emigrants to return home.

In December 2019, the Government announced the launch of the “Affordable Loans 5-7-9%” programme for small and medium-sized businesses aimed at, among other things, creating the necessary conditions for Ukrainian migrant workers’ return to Ukraine.

The Great Construction National Programme, which is one of the key initiatives of the President of Ukraine, provided for the creation of 500,000 new jobs that were planned to satisfy the employment needs of the migrants coming back to Ukraine.

In the context of the spread of the pandemic in spring 2020, the Government took substantial efforts to return from abroad the citizens who were willing to do so. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs developed information platforms and provided practical assistance to organize the citizens’ return.

In order to create and retain jobs, particularly for labour migrants, a mechanism was introduced for the provision of partial unemployment benefits during the quarantine period; the procedure for unemployment registration was also simplified.

In spring 2020, amid the high demand for seasonal agricultural workers in a number of foreign countries,

the Government took efforts to ensure organized and safe labour migration and requested from foreign employers to provide Ukrainian workers with official employment contracts, medical insurances, and guarantees of housing and transportation to the place of work and back to Ukraine.

At the same time, the Parliament adopted legislation under which the foreigners who could not exit Ukraine or contact relevant authorities concerning the extension of their stay or the exchange of expired documents could not be held liable for violating migration rules if the violation took place during the quarantine or was caused by it.

In January 2021, Cabinet of Ministers submitted draft law No. 4669 “On Amending Certain Laws of Ukraine as regards Assistance to Labour Migrants with a View to Their Economic Reintegration”<sup>45</sup> to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine for review. The draft law provides for non-repayable grants or interest-free loans for beginner entrepreneurs from among migrants returning to Ukraine in the amount equivalent to their own investments (but no more than UAH 150,000). In September 2021, the Verkhovna Rada returned the draft law to the Cabinet of Ministers for revision.

A group of Members of Parliament registered a draft law aimed at regulating the issue of dual citizenship<sup>46</sup>, suggesting to abolish the current procedure for the loss of Ukrainian citizenship due to voluntary acquisition of

45 Draft Law of Ukraine “On Amending Certain Laws of Ukraine as regards Assistance to Labour Migrants with a View to Their Economic Reintegration”.  
URL: [http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4\\_1?pf3511=70943](http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=70943)

46 Draft Law of Ukraine “On Amending Certain Laws of Ukraine as regards the Legal Groundwork Regulating Foreign Citizenship (Allegiance) of Ukrainian Citizens”  
URL: [http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4\\_1?pf3511=70895](http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=70895)

citizenship of a foreign state, which meets the needs of Ukrainians abroad; at the same time, the draft law provides for some limitations for the persons with dual citizenship to hold certain positions in public authorities, law enforcement authorities, etc.

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine is currently reviewing draft law № 3387 “On Granting Protection to Foreigners and Stateless Persons”<sup>47</sup>, aimed at improving the procedures for granting the status of a refugee, complementary and temporary protection, as well as asylum in Ukraine, and their better alignment with the legislation of the European Union. The draft law provides for important guarantees for protection-seekers and recipients, as well as mechanisms for their implementation. Specific legal provisions are aimed at ensuring the integration of protection recipients into Ukrainian society.

In June 2021, the draft law “On Protection of Migrant Workers and Combatting Fraud in Employment Abroad”<sup>48</sup> was adopted by the Parliament in the first reading. If adopted in full, this legislation would forbid businesses that provide services for mediation in employment abroad to receive fees, commissions, and

other rewards from labour migrants. It also envisages administrative liability for violation of such norms. Furthermore, the draft law suggests deregulating mediation services for employment abroad by cancelling the requirement for its licensing.

Migration data and evidence is crucial for all policy planning and development. In October 2021, Ukraine has completed the Migration Governance Indicators Follow-up Assessment; the latter represents a Government-led process carried out with the support of IOM, aimed at tracking and reporting progress of Ukraine on priorities related to migration governance, since the first assessment that was undertaken in 2018. The findings of the report will be used to further advance migration governance policy in Ukraine, including for mainstreaming migration governance in the next programme of cooperation between UN and Government of Ukraine (UNPF). Furthermore, this year is also very important one in terms of advancement of migration agenda in the country. The Government of Ukraine with support from IOM and other UN agencies is working to finalize the draft Action Plan of the Migration Strategy for the period 2022–2025.

47 Draft Law “On Granting Protection to Foreigners and Stateless Persons”.  
URL: [https://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4\\_1?pf3511=68661](https://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=68661)

48 Draft Law “On Protection of Migrant Workers and Combatting Fraud in Employment Abroad”.  
URL: [http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4\\_1?pf3511=67255](http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=67255)



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