



THE FATE OF YOUNG UKRAINIANS
ON THE LABOR MARKET
IN CENTRAL EUROPE



REPORT FROM INDIVIDUAL IN-DEPTH
INTERVIEWS CARRIED OUT AS PART OF THE
PROJECT:
“THE FATE OF YOUNG UKRAINIANS ON THE
LABOR MARKET IN CENTRAL EUROPE”

*Report from the research module carried out in
Poland*

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Abstract:

This report presents the results of qualitative research conducted among war refugees as part of the project "THE FATE OF YOUNG UKRAINIANS ON THE LABOR MARKET IN CENTRAL EUROPE" (financed by the National Agency for Academic Exchange: NAWA). The study was conducted in the form of interviews using the Individual In-depth Interview (IDI) method. IDI consists of a casual conversation with the respondent conducted by a qualified researcher based on a previously prepared interview scenario. The sample was selected according to a "random-route" scheme. The research was conducted for knowledge enrichment, to better understand the main problems that refugees face in their host countries, and to allow for a better interpretation of the results obtained in the quantitative survey. The interviews were carried out in June-July 2023 among 6 people aged 18-34 who crossed the Polish-Ukrainian border after Russia's invasion of Ukraine (after the date: February 24, 2022).

This report refers to the results of the qualitative study and aims to present the opinions of respondents who were in the "NEET" (not in employment, education or training) status for at least 3 months in Poland, as well as in Ukraine before crossing the European Union border, regarding their living, housing, material, and family situation as well as work patterns, attitudes toward education, lifestyle and future plans.

Keywords: war refugee, migrations, labor market, NEET, youth, education and training.

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1. Introduction

The presented document was developed as part of the project: "THE FATE OF YOUNG UKRAINIANS ON THE LABOR MARKET IN CENTRAL EUROPE" (financed by the National Agency for Academic Exchange: NAWA).

The aim of the project was to try to answer the question about the fate of Ukrainians who reached Central Europe after the day of the Russian Federation's attack on Ukraine in 2022.

The armed conflict caused the migration of Ukrainians, e.g. to Central Europe (by May 2022, Poland, where over 3.6 million citizens of Ukraine arrived, and Hungary, with over 671,000, are among the top three European Union countries that have welcomed Ukrainians). The project was interdisciplinary and aimed at examining the mental condition of young Ukrainians who live in Central Europe, their plans for further migration or return to their homeland, and the degree of the risk of social exclusion.

Particular attention was paid to the study of the fate of young immigrants in the host countries. The issues of activation in the labor market or education, taking into account, among others, variables such as the education and the social status of respondents were investigated.

The project was carried out by a transnational and interdisciplinary Research Team composed of:

In Poland (University of the National Education Commission, Krakow):

- Dr. Paweł Walawender, Head of the Research Team
- Dr. Damian Liszka, Deputy Head of the Research Team
- Dr. Aldona Guzik, author of the desk research report
- Dr. Mateusz Szast, author of the desk research report

In Hungary (University of Debrecen, Debrecen):

- Prof. Molnárné Kovács Judit, Head of the Hungarian Team, Contractor Researcher
- Dr. Csukonyi Csilla, Contractor Researcher
- Dr. Karolina Eszter Kovács, Contractor Researcher
- BA Szandra Roman, 12 IDIs' interviewer

The presented document is one of many that have been created, as part of the project, so far. In addition to this report, partial and comparative reports on quantitative research were prepared on refugees arriving in Poland and Hungary together with two desk research reports, one per each country¹.

This report refers to the results of the qualitative study and aims to present opinions of respondents in the "NEET" (not in employment, education or training) status residing in Poland regarding their living, material, and family situation as well as work patterns, attitudes toward education, lifestyle and future plans.

The report has the following structure. The first chapter is a short introduction to the project, the research goals and the methodology and characteristics of the interviewed sample.

¹ All the project products are available at the project's web-site: <https://fate.uken.krakow.pl/to-download/>

The second chapter presents the motives for choosing the host country and the housing situations of the respondents living in Poland.

Chapter three refers to the material and housing situations of the interviewees.

Chapter four presents the family situations of the respondents, and the particular needs of support in the context of their situations.

The next chapter focuses on the professional mobility of the refugees.

Chapter six deals with the refugees' expectations, perceptions, and needs associated with their work-related situations.

The seventh chapter focuses on the expectations, perceptions, and needs associated with the refugees' education-related situations.

The eight chapter presents the lifestyles and future plans of the respondents.

The research report ends with a summary and conclusions from the research.

1.1 Purpose of the research

The research was conducted for knowledge enrichment and to understand the main problems that refugees aged 18-34 in the so called "NEET" status face in the host countries. Another goal of the research was to allow for a better interpretation of the results obtained in the quantitative survey which was carried out as part of the project in November-December 2022. The research focused on a number of specific issues in order to provide answers to the following questions:

- What oblast had the respondents lived in Ukraine before first crossing the Polish border and what region do they live in Poland? What was the size of the settlement in Ukraine and what is it in Poland?
- Why have the respondents decided to stay in Poland? Why did they choose this country and not any other?
- What are their housing situations? Where do they currently live?
- What are the respondents' marital statuses?
- Do they live with any dependents in Poland? If yes, what type of dependents? Do the dependents require constant assistance that can be provided by external persons or institutions?
- Is taking care of dependents and housework discouraging respondents from taking part in a professional activities?
- Do the respondents live with any family members, relatives, or friends?
- What is the respondents' main source of income while staying in Poland?
- Have the respondents been looking for jobs while staying in Poland? If yes, where, how, and how often? If no, why not and what are the main obstacles?
- Are there any incentives a potential Polish employer can offer to encourage the respondents to work?
- What is the respondents' opinion on working informally, without an employment or work contract, health insurance, and social benefits?
- Are the respondents satisfied with their level of education in the context of staying in Poland, and what are the reasons behind being satisfied or dissatisfied?

- What are the respondents' Polish language skills? Do they plan to improve their language skills while staying in Poland?
- What are the reasons for not participating in any educational activities?
- Are there any incentives to encourage the respondents to participate in educational activities?
- How are the lifestyles of the respondents during their stay in Poland? How do they spend an average day? Do they spend time with their friends and if so, are they Poles or Ukrainians?
- Are the respondents going to stay in Poland after the war is over?

1.2 Methodology

The research was carried out using the Individual In-depth Interview (IDI) technique. An IDI is one of the most common qualitative techniques. It involves a conversation between two persons that is conducted on the basis of a specially constructed script which indicates the most important topics to be discussed during the conversation. The script and instructions for the interviewer were prepared and presented at the Krakow seminar, as part of the project, by Dr. Liszka in February 2023. The script consisted of the following main parts: Information about the project and inclusion criteria, body parts (Part 1. Living and material situation, Part 2. Family situation, Part 3. Work Patterns, Part 4. Attitudes toward Education, Part 5. Lifestyle and plans), ending.

This type of interview allows to expand the knowledge in a given area. Obligatory parts of the interview were (chronological order): 1) Information about the project; 2) Inclusion criteria verification; 3) Gaining consents from the respondent; 4) Interview based on the body part of the interview script.

During the interviews, a Ukrainian interviewer selected the respondents in accordance with the sample instructions and then asked questions from the constructed script. The respondent was supposed to provide honest, short, but possibly exhaustive answers. All the answers were confidential and no personal data was collected, except for the first name, gender, and the city of stay of the respondent in Poland. Nobody except the project team had access to personal data.

The sample was selected according to a scheme known as "random-route" in accordance with the principles of the sampling adopted in the qualitative research methodology.

1.3 Characteristics of the sample

The main inclusion criteria for the interviewees were:

- Being a refugee of the 2022 Ukrainian war – the respondent must have a Ukrainian citizenship and must have entered Poland for the first time not earlier than on February 24, 2022

- Having a “NEET” status in Poland – the respondent must reside in Poland, and had not worked nor participated in an educational or training activity in Poland for at least 3 full calendar months, and does not intend to do so in the nearest future
- Having a “NEET” status in Ukraine – the respondent must have not worked, nor participated in an educational or training activity in Ukraine before first crossing the border of Poland
- Being a “Young” person – the respondent must have been in the age range of 18-34 at the time of the interview

The interviews were carried out in June-July 2023 among 6 Ukrainian citizens (5 women and one man) aged 18-34. It should be noted that at the time of our study the data on the refugee population in Poland were incomplete. We were obliged to rely on statistics of some main research centers. Our research focused on adult refugees and excluded minors. The share of women in the refugee population differed substantially between European countries. The share of women among adult refugees was 70% on average at the beginning of 2023. The share was even higher in some countries like Poland where it was estimated to be 84% (OECD Data 2023). In the 18-34 age group, the share of women was not known in the first half of 2023. Although we used purposive sampling, we asked our interviewer to obtain a sample representative of the population distribution. As such, the sample population distribution is in line with the above provided data. Although “martial law” was in effect in Ukraine at the time of the study, there were many exceptions under which adult men could leave Ukraine (please see: VisitUkraine.today 2022). Moreover, in Poland alone, it is estimated that at least 80.000 adult men entered the country despite being under the “marital law” (see, for example, this press article: Kacprzak and Szoszyn 2023). Therefore, we ensured the inclusion of at least one man in the sample. In mid-2022, 69% of all Ukrainians residing in Poland lived in 12 metropolitan areas of Poland based on the latest available report of the Union of Polish Metropolies (UMP) about Ukrainians refugees in Poland (UMP 2022). Due to this, we focused on respondents residing in central cities in the metropolitan areas. The respondents were living in the following Polish cities: Warsaw (3 respondents), Kraków (2 respondents), and Łódź (1 respondent). Before the migration, the respondents lived in the following cities in Ukraine: Tetiiv (small town², Kyiv Odblast), Irpin (medium size city³, Kyiv Odblast), Kyiv (Kyiv Odblast) – 2 respondents, Zhytomyr (large city⁴, Zhytomyr Odblast), Khust (medium size city², Zakarpattia Oblast).

² up to 20,000 inhabitants

³ 20,000 to 99,000 inhabitants

⁴ 100,000 to 500,000 inhabitants

2. Motives for choosing the destination country

MOD: What were the main reasons for the decision to stay in Poland? Why did you choose this particular country and not some other?⁵

There are large differences in the population structure of the refugees arriving in Western countries in 2015–2016 compared to the refugees arriving from Ukraine after the 24th of February, 2022. Kosyakova and Kogan (2022) asked an open empirical question as to whether the integration patterns of refugees arriving in 2015–2016 will be comparable to the patterns of Ukrainian refugees in 2022. Even within the post-2022 Ukrainian refugee population, it should be noted that those who crossed the border immediately after the 24th of February, 2022 may differ from those who migrated at some later time. The latter could have some more time to prepare for the migration and could be closer in behavior to economic migrants. Similarly, for the Ukrainians from West Ukraine—the region that was much less affected by the war than East Ukraine.

The main reason given by our respondents for choosing Poland as the host country was that it is Ukraine's closest neighbor (5 out of 6 respondents). The location of Poland was perceived as beneficial by interviewees, since it may help the refugee to quickly provide a safe bastion for their children (1 respondent) and allow them to come back quickly to Ukraine after the war is over (1 respondent). All the observations presented can be confirmed by the following statements of our respondents:

R02PL: Because it is geographically close to Ukraine, and we stayed because of the safety of the children.

R03PL: Because it's not far to go home from here, so that was one of the main reasons, the belief at the beginning was that the war wouldn't last long and that it would end quickly and you could go back quickly, was the first reason.

R04PL: Because it is close to the border of Ukraine and there is an opportunity to sometimes come home and see relatives and my husband.

R05PL: Because it was the closest to the border...

R06PL: Because it was not far from my house, where I lived.

The other reason indicated by 2 of our respondents were social networks (friends, colleagues) in the Poland that could help arrange a place to stay for the refugee and help after the migration. We should emphasize that Poland has been one of the favorite destinations of Ukrainian economic immigrants well before the war started. The

⁵ The report contains the actual wording of the script questions

contemporary migrations from Ukraine to Poland started in the 1990s. Soon, Ukrainians become the largest migrant group in Poland (Brunarska et al. 2016) and Poland was the main European Union country which Ukrainians choose for work (Jaroszewicz 2018). Consequently, war-refugees could find substantial social support in Poland from others from the Ukrainian culture. The following statements of our respondents indicate this:

R01PL: I came to Poland because I have a friend who lives here, and she helped me with emigration, found me an apartment, helped me with documents, told me about everything in the city, that's why I came here.

R05PL: ...and it so happened that I already had acquaintances here who lived here even before the war, and there was someone to come to at first and turn to. That was the main reason.

Positive attitudes toward Poles and perceived similarity of Poles' and Ukrainians' mentality was indicated as the main reason of choosing Poland by two of our respondents. Here are excerpts from their statements:

R01PL: And then I liked this city, I liked the people here, and I decided to stay here with my child.

R03PL: And the third is that it seems to me that of all the European countries, the mentality of the Polish people is similar to the Ukrainian, allowing for easy adaptation in the country.

Regarding similarities, one of our respondents indicated the main reason for her choice was the similarity of the languages. We should emphasize the similarity of the Polish and Ukrainian spoken languages (Corbett and Comrie 1993). Such similarity would allow refugees to more readily express their need for social support in various networks, help them in finding a suitable job, negotiate the employment terms, or understand the supervisors' comments. Below is the respondent's statement:

R03PL: And the second reason is the language, because Polish is similar to Ukrainian.

3. Housing and material situation

3.1 Housing situation (type of accommodation, roommates)

MOD: What is your current housing situation? Where do you live now?

Finding suitable housing is perceived as one of the major problems faced by refugees (Jolly et al. 2016). All of our respondents indicated that they rent apartments in the cities of Poland that they live in, as the following statements indicate:

R01PL: We rent a room with a child.

R02PL: We rent an apartment.

R03PL: I rent an apartment.

R04PL: In the city of Warsaw, in an [rented] apartment.

R05PL: I rent housing.

R06PL: I rent the apartment in which I live.

MOD: Apart from family members or dependents, do other people live with you in Poland, such as friends or colleagues?

Since all of our respondents rented apartments, we were curious whether they live by themselves / with their families, or also with other people. Only one of the respondents rented an apartment with roommates:

R01PL: Yes, we rent an apartment with neighbors (...). Yes, friends live with us.

All other respondents rented the place only for themselves. Here are their responses:

R02PL: Nope.

R03PL: No, I live alone.

R04PL: No, no one lives there.

R05PL: No one is with me in the apartment.

R06PL: No, I live alone.

3.2 Material situation in the host country (main source of income)

MOD: First, please tell me what is your main source of income during your stay in Poland?

Per the inclusion criteria, all of our respondents indicated being in the “NEET” status in Poland – the respondent must have lived in Poland and not worked nor participated in any education or training in Poland for at least 3 full calendar months. We asked the interviewees what was their main source of income during their stay in Poland since all of them rented apartments in large Polish cities: Warsaw (3 respondents), Kraków (2 respondents), and Łódź (1 respondent), where the rental prices are high.

Three of our respondents indicated their savings as the main source of income. Here are their sample statements:

R03PL: I live from savings.

R05PL: Most of it is my savings, although I have already worked here for some time. I am currently looking for a job.

R06PL: I live off my savings that I brought with me to Poland...

One of the respondents indicated that besides relying on savings he also used a financial benefit provided by a government entity supporting refugees:

R06PL: ...I have some help from the Polish government in the refugee program.

Among the others, two persons indicated earnings from activities performed remotely for an entity in Ukraine, as outlined in the following statements:

R02PL: ... remotely for (...) in Ukraine.

R04PL: I am engaged in a freelance project, in principle, it is such a very old project from Ukraine, it is an online store, which I am currently simply supporting for on a remote basis.

4. Family situation, needs related to the family situation

4.1 Marital status

MOD: Tell me, please, what is your marital status?

Our first question concerning the family situation of the respondents was about the marital status. The group consisted of one single man, two single women, one divorced woman, and two married women.

4.2 Family status (dependents, number of dependents, children's age)

MOD: At the moment, do you live in Poland with a person or people as dependents whom you take care of? Dependents can be children, the elderly, people with disabilities or the chronically ill. Are there people you provide care for?

MOD: If yes, please answer, are there dependents children, the elderly, the disabled, or the chronically ill? If so, how many are there?

The single man and one of the single women lived in Poland without any dependents:

R03PL: No, I live alone.

R06PL: No, I live alone.

The other respondents indicated that they live with dependents. All of them indicated a child or children, and none of them lived with the elderly, the disabled, or the chronically ill. As research results indicate, having family responsibilities may affect the integration of refugee women, it may lead to a worsening position in the European labor market and it may lead to inequalities which may intensify over time (Cheung and Phillimore 2017; Salikutluk and Menke 2021).

The other interviewed single woman indicated she lived with one child:

R01PL: This is my child, she is 7 years old.

The divorced woman respondent also stated that she lived with one child:

R05PL: Yes, I live with my four-year-old son. That is, I am with a child.

Among the married women respondents we interviewed, one lived with one child, and the other with two.

4.3 Needs for medical, physiotherapeutic and psychological assistance for the dependents

MOD: If you have dependents, does the person or people need ongoing care that can be provided by outside persons or institutions (e.g. doctor, nurse, rehabilitator, psychologist, etc.)? Have you sought help from external persons or institutions in Poland?

The four respondents living with dependents were asked whether they required constant help that could be provided by external people or institutions (e.g. medical care, nurses, rehabilitators, psychologists, others).

The answers varied. One of the married women living with two children indicated that they don't need any external support. Below is her reply:

R02PL: No, it is not needed.

The single mother with one child answered that she needed help from a nanny she paid for with her own resources, but she didn't apply for any governmental or NGO support:

R01PL: No, we didn't apply, we don't need to, but we have a nanny for whom we pay.

The female respondent living with one child indicated that her dependent needed constant medical and psychological support. Below is her statement:

R04PL: Yes, this child needs the support of a psychologist and a neurocorrectologist, and yes, we asked for help here locally in Warsaw.

The divorced woman living with her son replied that although no specialists' help was needed, her child went to a private kindergarten:

R05PL: Yes and no. I don't know how to answer here correctly, well, he goes to kindergarten here. Most of all, yes, I use it, it's just that the kindergarten is private. But here in Poland he also went to a communal, state kindergarten.

5. Professional mobility

5.1 Readiness to take actions aimed at obtaining employment (active search for a job)

MOD: Tell me, please, did you look for a job while in Poland?

Brell et al. (2020) provided an overview of the integration of refugees into the labor markets in a number of high-income countries, including European countries (Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom). They found that the employment rates of refugees are below 20 percent in the first two years after the migration (except for the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada). The employment rates of refugees are below those of other migrants, especially in the first years of stay in the host country (Dustmann et al. 2017), and increase in the subsequent years (Brell et al. 2020). These findings are in line with the results of other studies. Fasani et al. (2022) analyzed the labor market performance over time of refugees and other types of migrants across 20 European countries. They found that refugees are 11.6% less likely to have a job and 22% more likely to be unemployed than other migrants, and also have a lower income, occupational quality, and labor market participation.

The survey data indicated that refugees declared a relatively high interest in being active on the labor market when taking into account the fact that our respondents largely took care of dependents. All of our respondents have looked for a job since first arriving in Poland:

R01PL: Yes, I was looking.

R02PL: Yes.

R03PL: Yes.

R04PL: Yes.

R05PL: Yes, and I am doing it now.

R06PL: Yes, I searched.

5.2 Job search channels

MOD: If yes, tell me more: - Where and how? [Instructions for MOD – ask if the respondent looked for work in traditional media such as television, radio or newspapers, or the Internet, or asked about job offers from family or friends, or used professional organizations that help refugees find work in Poland]

Our respondents tried to find a job through many ways. All of them used the Internet (including specialized websites, such as: LinkedIn, social media - like Facebook, chats), as indicated in the below responses:

R01PL: I was only looking for information on Facebook...

R02PL: I searched in the traditional way on specialized sites...

R03PL: No, I did not use such organizations, I looked for work on my own, through the Internet, there is such a site and it is already a mobile application, it is called LinkedIn.

R04PL: I did not use the services of specialized organizations, I tried to search on my own, on the Internet, because in general I have a profession and education related to IT technologies, namely the selection of IT personnel, and therefore I searched specifically on local sites, as well as Ukrainian ones that offer remote work in Poland.

R05PL: In various ways, ...websites, the Internet, social networks, chats. That is, in all possible and impossible ways.

R06PL: I've searched through social media...

Despite using resources and services on the Internet, most of the respondents also searched through other channels. Social networks play a very important role in various areas of refugees' lives (Simich et al. 2005) and when seeking employment. Possessing particular social networks (for example, contacts with ethnic (Lamba 2003) or religious and co-national groups) helps with housing and access to work (Cheung and Phillimore 2014), especially if the networks are mobilized for the job search (Gërxfhani and Kosyakova 2020). Three of our respondents tried to find a job through social networks (friends, acquaintances):

R01PL: ...and through friends, I found a job in a restaurant.

R05PL: In various ways, I applied through acquaintances...

R06PL: I've searched through friends, and I'm still searching.

One respondent tried to find a job through support organizations for refugees. Refugee support offered by the authorities or organizations focuses mainly on offering various professional and employment services. There may be a mismatch between the perceptions and expectations of the services by providers and the refugees (Torezani et al. 2008). Below is the answer provided by our respondent who tried to find a job through a specialized institution:

R02PL: I searched in the traditional way on specialized sites, and also turned to organizations that help with employment of Ukrainians in Poland.

5.3 Readiness to make “sacrifices” to find a job

Based on the literature and existing research results, it was assumed that the professional and educational mobility of refugees can be understood as the ability to adapt to the requirements of the labor market through the readiness to make specific "sacrifices". In the interviews, respondents were asked what inconveniences they were willing to accept and to what extent. The first question was about the average number of days a week they looked for a job.

MOD: On average, how many days a week did you look for work?

Four of the respondents indicated that they searched for a job every day of the week. Their statements are below:

R01PL: I searched every day.

R04PL: It's a difficult question, it seems to me that for two or three months every day I monitored the vacancies that were available.

R05PL: I'm doing it now, since I quit my previous job, I'm doing it every day now.

R06PL: I'm always looking.

Among the other responses, one respondent indicated searching 2-3 days a week, and one 3-4 days a week.

Next, we asked if the respondents tried to find a job that matched their skills and if not, why? If yes, we were curious if they found such job in Poland.

MOD: Are you looking for jobs that match your skills? If yes, did you find such a job? If not, why?

Previous studies showed that refugees often face: a loss in the occupational status compared to the situation before the migration (Chiswick et al. 2005; Tsolak and Bürmann 2023); occupy jobs with a significantly lower level of wages (Brell et al. 2020); and undertake part-time or temporary jobs (Bakker et al. 2017; Jackson and Bauder 2014) requiring low skills (Kanas and Steinmetz 2021) for which they are overqualified (Akresh 2006; Lamba 2003).

Two of our respondents tried to only find a job that matched their skills. None of the respondents found such job in Poland:

R02PL: Unfortunately, no, I did not find it in Poland.

R04PL: No, unfortunately not yet.

Two other respondents tried to find a job matching their skills, but were also open to different opportunities, as indicated in the below responses:

R01PL: Yes, but not only, I was looking for a different job that fits my schedule.

R05PL: I at least try to search, and consider other suggestions.

Only one of the respondents who was open to find other jobs was successful:

R05PL: There are situations when I find one, and I fit, and it happens when it fits me, but I don't fit. There are different situations.

Another respondent who decided to change her profession was also able to find a job in Poland. Her statement is below:

R03PL: I was changing my profession, so I was looking for new competencies. I was looking for a new specialty. / MOD: If so, did you find it?/ R03PL:Yes.

All of the above responses are from women. The sole man in our sample tried to find any job with a salary sufficiently high to allow him to cover his expenses in Poland. He did not specify his financial expectations. Nonetheless, he has not found a job in Poland:

R06PL: I am looking for a salary that is normal so that I can live normally in Poland. / MOD: Did you find it?/ R06PL:Not yet, I'm looking.

6. Expectations, perception, and needs associated with the one's own work-related situation

6.1 Acceptance of working illegally

MOD: How do you feel about informal work ("in the gray zone"), that is, work without an employment contract, without health insurance and social benefits?"

The particular situation, and the obstacles, that the refugees face makes them vulnerable to a more disadvantaged situation than economic migrants in European countries (Brücker 2022; Bevelander et al. 2019; Fasani et al. 2022). This may lead to lower future job expectations (Akkaymak 2017). One of the submissive behaviors on the labor market is working without an employment contract, without health insurance and social benefits. In Poland, we call such employment as being in "in the grey zone". All 6 respondents presented negative attitudes toward such a form of employment. Four of them were firmly against it, while two were rather negative. Below are their responses:

R01PL: Negative...

R03PL: Negatively.

R04PL: Negatively.

R06PL: I have a negative attitude towards this.

R05PL: In general, it is negative, but, unfortunately, if you need money, then you have to partially agree to such work as well.

R02PL: Rather negative.

Two of the respondents that explained their negative attitudes toward working „in the grey zone” emphasized the illegal character of such practices:

R02PL: Because it is a violation of the law and any violation of the law is not very good.

R06PL: I have a negative attitude towards this, I want it to be all legal.

The other two respondents explained that such a form of employment may lead to different forms of exploitation of the disadvantaged refugee by the employer (such as: lowering the payments or not paying for the job done, expecting to work over hours). Refugees may face a biased perception from potential employers who may view them as candidates suitable only for low-skilled jobs (Boerchi 2023; Coates and Carr 2005). Such a form of employment also disallows the worker to have written documents that may be

helpful to them, for example at banks, in obtaining a legal status in Poland and it is disadvantageous in terms of earning possible social security benefits. Below are some sample statements highlighting this issue:

R01PL: Negative, because it allows the employer to pay less for you, or not to pay you at all, to use your labor beyond the norm, also you cannot legally have documents to help you, you cannot issue documents, so you do not have an employment contract.

R05PL: In general, it is negative, but, unfortunately, if you need money, then you have to partially agree to such work as well. But this medal has two sides, it is negative in terms of paying taxes, and all kinds of benefits, seniority, payments. But the negative thing is that you can be deceived, and you can be cheated, but sometimes you have to agree to this when you really need money.

6.2 Impact of having dependents on the professional career

MOD: If you have dependents, do you find that taking care of them and doing housework hampers your professional activities?

In a study among a nationally representative sample of 2958 U.S. wage and salaried workers, Galinsky et al. (1996) concluded that parent and non-parent employees, although quite similar in many respects, differed in values they placed on benefits and policies, the sacrifices made in their personal lives for their jobs, and in the time available for completing household and childcare responsibilities. Job demands also foster work-family conflict between the working parents (Bakker et al. 2008). The ability to manage work and family roles is affected negatively by heavy job demands, low wages, and extended parental or family responsibilities (Annor 2013). The findings of other studies (Chapple 2001; Preston et al. 1993) confirmed that women with children are likely to seek a workplace close to home and reduce commuting times. The last question we asked our four respondents living with dependents concerned their opinion on whether or not taking care of the dependent persons and doing housework affects their professional activities.

All of the respondents indicated such relationship. Below are the sample replies:

R01PL: Yes.

R02PL: Yes of course.

R04PL: Yes.

The divorced woman indicated that, in her opinion, it is not just in the case of living in Poland, as taking care of small child affects the professional activities of the respondent in Ukraine, as well as any other country:

R05PL: It imposes certain restrictions, but these restrictions were also in Ukraine, because the issue here is that living with a small child, taking care of a child of this age, imposes restrictions in terms of a career in any country. At least in my opinion.

6.3 Employer incentives that can help respondents find employment in the host country

MOD: Are there any incentives that a potential Polish employer can offer to encourage you to work?

The respondents were asked to indicate what incentives from employers could help them to find employment in Poland. The responses differed, indicating that employers may provide many possible incentives. Two of the respondents (a single man without dependents and the single woman with one 7-year old child) indicated financial incentives:

R01PL: Decent pay.

R06PL: It all depends on financial earnings, what money he offers for my work.

Half of the respondents (all being mothers with a child or children) indicated that flexible working hours that fit their family responsibilities are the most desired incentive, especially if the job is far from the place of residence. One of the above mentioned respondents also mentioned working from home. Sample statements indicating the expectations are below:

R01PL: Yes, but not only, I was looking for a different job that fits my schedule.

R02PL: Flexible work schedule and working from home, these are my main wishes for work.

R05PL: Yes, I have one thing, especially mothers will understand me. It is very difficult to find a job that matches with the opening hours of the kindergarten. In this regard, there are many offers that are good, but it is basically either far from the place where I live, or the working time starts sooner than the kindergarten, or the kindergarten ends earlier,

and the child must be picked up if there is no one available, if the employer was clear that it's not a problem for them, but it turns out that you either have to think of someone who will drop off, pick up the child, or find someone to do this job, because it ends later than the work of the kindergarten. Mismatch between the schedule of kindergarten work and my work.

Two respondents (a single woman, and a mother) indicated social security benefits as being important for the worker, and her family, in case of a sickness or an accident.

R03PL: When I was looking at job vacancies... The third is that I paid attention to the social package, how the employer will take care of me if I suddenly get sick or something happens to me, that is, the issue of health insurance, I paid attention to the work schedule, to the social package.

R04PL: Yes, health insurance is very important to me, at least for family members, that is, for my child.

The single women without children also indicated two other important aspects while looking for a job. Nonetheless, none of them can be considered as an employer incentive: company brand's recognition and positive opinions of the employees.

R03PL: When I was looking at job vacancies, when I was looking at companies, the first thing that was very important to me was the company's reputation, whether it was known in the market. Secondly, I tried to find reviews of employees who work there.

7. Expectations, perception, and needs associated with one's own education-related situation

7.1 Self-evaluation on the level of education in the context of the stay in Poland

*MOD: Are you satisfied with your level of education in the context of your stay in Poland?
MOD: If yes, please tell me why? / MOD: If not, please tell me why?*

Education is one of the basic variables that differentiates one's position on the labor market. We asked the respondents whether or not they are satisfied with their levels of education in the context of their stay in the host country.

Four of our respondents were satisfied with their level of education. Two of them stated that their knowledge or profession obtained in Ukraine before the migration was appropriate to find a job in Poland, as outlined in the statements:

R03PL: Because I received relevant knowledge in Ukraine, which allowed me to find a job in Poland.

R06PL: Because I learned the profession I wanted in Ukraine.

Two other interviewees stressed that having a higher education diploma and skills or qualifications from Ukraine allowed them to find a job in the new environment. One of the respondents stated that the completion of her studies in an international standard, with 50% of the classes in the English language, is particularly important in order to find a job and overcome communication difficulties in European countries:

R02PL: Because I have a higher education and, in principle, a profession in demand.

R04PL: Because, firstly, I have a master's degree and it is of an international standard, that is, with this diploma I have the right to work in any part of Europe, and secondly, is the fact that 50/50 of my studies took place in Ukrainian and English, and for me, this is currently the reason for the absence of a communication barrier in the European environment.

One of the respondents was undecided while answering the question. As a lawyer, she was satisfied with the level of education she obtained in Ukraine. Nonetheless, she stated that having such qualifications makes it difficult to find a job in Poland. Below are her responses:

R05PL: Well, I have a good education, but, unfortunately, due to my education, it is difficult for me to find a job here, or maybe I am just looking for it in the wrong place. (...) I mean, with this education, I would have worked in Ukraine, but, unfortunately, there are different laws and institutions here. I am a Ukrainian lawyer, and therefore my education, although I have basic rights, but it is not quite adapted to the reality of being in Poland.

Finally, only one of the respondents was dissatisfied with the level of education gained in Ukraine in the context of staying in Poland. She self-evaluated her English and Polish language skills as too low to be helpful in finding employment in the host country.

R01PL: Because it was necessary to learn better English and Polish, these are neighboring countries, and now it slows down the work process, because you do not know the languages.

7.2 Self-evaluation of Polish language skills and plans to improve them

MOD: What is your knowledge of the Polish language? Do you plan to improve your Polish language skills in Poland?

While knowing English may help Ukrainians with communicating in particular situations while staying in Poland, Polish is the official language. In many cases, a rapid, unprepared migration results in refugees arriving in the host countries with inadequate or completely lacking skills in the local language (van Tubergen and Kalmijn 2009; Kristen and Seuring 2021). Moreover, it is harder for refugees traveling with small children to invest additional time to improve their language skills in the host country, or partake in schooling or training that can help them in the labor market of the new country (Bernhard and Bernhard 2021). Therefore, we were curious how the respondents evaluated their knowledge of the Polish language and if they plan to improve their Polish language skills while staying in Poland.

One of the respondents answered that she doesn't know the Polish language at all:

R01PL: ...it was necessary to learn better English and Polish, (...) because you do not know the languages.

We haven't asked the respondents to evaluate their Polish language proficiency using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) reference levels directly, but the analyses of the responses allows us to use the guideline by categorizing the statements.

Four of our respondents expressed their Polish language proficiency level as: “beginner”, “elementary”, “weak”, and “everyday”. We may classify them as level A (“Basic user”): either A1 or A2, based on analyses of the following responses:

R03PL: ...I think I'm at a beginner level.

R04PL: I have a very elementary level, that is, I can communicate and ask basic things

R05PL: From the time I entered Poland, I have already learned Polish quite well at the everyday level, and at the communicative level, I am surprised by myself, in a year or more it is already a bit.

R06PL: At the moment, my knowledge of the Polish language is weak

Only one of our respondents rated the Polish language proficiency at CEFR B1 level.

R02PL: At the moment, I have a B1 average level of the Polish language...

All 6 of our respondents plan to improve their Polish language skills while staying in the Poland. Below are their responses:

R01PL: Yes, I plan to...

R02PL: ...I am planning and improving it in principle now, I am in the process.

R03PL: I'm trying to improve now...

R04PL: ... currently my child and I are learning Polish and trying to bring it up to a conversational level.

R05PL: I try to improve them every day...

R06PL: ... I am studying the language diligently.

The respondents provided reasons as to why they plan to improve their Polish language skills. Most of them plan to do so to: help to strengthen their position in the labor market (3 responses), improve social relationships (2 responses), help them in “all directions”, and improve communications in everyday situations (3 responses). One of the respondents also stated that it will help her to feel more confident. Their sample responses are below:

R01PL: In order to feel more confident, you can socialize better and count on a better job.

R02PL: For more free communication and for the opportunity to find a better job.

R03PL: ... I could at least maintain a conversation with my neighbors...

R05PL: I try to improve them every day, because it is in my interests, for communications, in everyday life, in kindergarten, and in general for communication with people, in this regard.

R06PL: It will be useful to me at work, and if I live in Poland, it will be useful to me in all directions.

Interestingly, two of our respondents stated that learning the Polish language is a form of respecting Poles while being in their country:

R03PL: Despite the fact that I work in the English language every day, I believe due to being in Poland, I do not know yet, maybe permanently, but for now I definitely live here, I think that learning the Polish language is about respect, I would like to respect the people around me more, (...) out of respect for the people around me.

R04PL: Because I believe that this is at least elementary respect on the part of Ukraine for the Poles, because we have to know their state language, because we are in that state.

7.3 Reasons for not engaging in education or training activities in the nearest future

MOD: Since you're not going to participate in any educational activity, what is the reason? Was it your personal choice, or were there any obstacles? If so, please tell me about the obstacles?

None of our respondents were interested in engaging in any educational or training activities in the nearest future while staying in Poland. We asked for the reasons for such an attitude.

Two of the respondents stated that it is a personal choice for them, since they don't feel any need for it (a single man and a married woman with a child). One of the respondents also stressed that he is only interested in work related activities, not the educational ones. Below are their responses:

R04PL: No, it's just a personal choice, I don't see any need for it.

R06PL: This is my personal choice. (...) Because I am only interested in employment and earnings.

Three other respondents declared the lack of free time due to childcare responsibilities as the main reason. Below are their statements:

R01PL: Because I don't have time for that. (...) I have a small child, and it slows down the process, because when I'm at work, I never get to work with her.

R02PL: Yes, most likely, these are obstacles in the form of lack of time and lack of help with children.

R05PL: I can't study anymore, let's say, because my free time doesn't allow it. (...) And so I cannot go to school because I have to work, and I have a small child who imposes certain responsibilities on me for his upbringing and development, because I cannot send him to a boarding school or return him to Ukraine, because I am not his only guardian, he has a father who is in Ukraine, and he also works.

The above respondent (a divorced mother) clarified that although she's not going to participate in any organized (formal or non-formal) learning or training, she was gaining new knowledge through self-learning using on-line resources. A similar statement was given by a single woman without children. Here are their statements:

R03PL: I plan to self-educate, I feel that the skills I don't have, I can learn through self-educating, so I don't need vocational courses or a university to acquire a single skill. And in educational institutions, no, because at the moment I have decided on a profession, and I plan to improve this particular profession, and educational institutions, they will not be able to give me the list of skills that I would need, because they change very dynamically.

R05PL: I can't study anymore, let's say, because my free time doesn't allow it. I study online, that is, when I have time, I also study Polish, and I am looking for some kind of education for myself personally for some kind of development.

7.4 Incentives that can help respondents to become involved in an educational activity in the host country

MOD: Are there incentives that would encourage you to participate in educational activities?

MOD: If yes, please tell me what are the incentives?

We asked if there are any incentives that can encourage our respondents to engage in any educational or training activities since none of our respondents were interested in engaging in such activities in the nearest future while staying in Poland,

One of the respondents (a single man) replied there are no such incentives. The other respondents agreed there may be initiatives that can help them to become involved in educational activities.

Two of the respondents mentioned initiatives that could help them to reconcile family responsibilities with educational activities, like providing additional financial resources for childcare or providing childcare facilities during weekends. Below are their responses:

R01PL: Yes, if there was an incentive for a better life, if there were conditions for this, for mothers, so that it would be possible to work and study and take care of the child, then maybe I would study.

R05PL: I would like to learn something new, but, unfortunately, as I already said, because of raising a child, the obligation that work imposes, even though my age does not prevent me, but let's put it this way, due to the obligations of being a mother, I am not able to leave my child with someone, I cannot afford to even on the weekend, because then on the weekend I have to send the child to a babysitter, but that requires additional payments, even with a polytechnic school that allows you to study on weekends, then, unfortunately, I have no one to take care of the child.

Three of our respondents mentioned initiatives that can help them improve their position in the Polish labor market, being also "tailor-made" to fit their individual interests and needs in obtaining particular skills. The aim of these incentives would be finding a job in Poland or finding a more stable job:

R03PL: If they will be relevant to the knowledge that I am looking for, for example, there is a certain skill that I want to acquire, so that studying at an institution covers this skill and can teach me this, only in this way it seems appropriate for me.

R04PL: This could be some improvement of my qualifications, for example, if it would enable me to work specifically on the labor market in Poland.

R05PL: Yes, to learn something new, it is possible to find some branch of education in order to get a more profitable and permanent, stable job here. It's not just to go somewhere to work, and then you can leave, go to other cities. I would like to learn something new...

One other respondent mentioned initiatives aimed at finding employment in other European countries:

R02PL: These are employment prospects in European countries.

8. Lifestyle and plans

8.1 Spending a typical day and free time in Poland

MOD: How do you spend your free time? How is your typical day?

We were curious how our respondents spend an average day or their free time since they were not involved in any educational or employment activities.

The sole male respondent stated that he spends a typical day job searching and free time on partaking in relaxing activities (spending time in the nature):

R06PL: I love nature very much, I like to go to the forest, walk by the river. / MOD: I understand, do you spend a lot of time in the nature? / R06PL: When I have free time, I spend it in the nature, if I have free time, if I am not looking for a job, when I am resting.

Respondents that are mothers declared spending an average day on taking care of their child or children needs' and doing housework. In their free time they engaged in relaxing activities (meeting with friends, doing sports, going to the movies). Below are the sample responses:

R01PL: I take my child to the kindergarten, and if our daughter is not sick, then I clean the house, meet with friends, cook, I can go to the volleyball court, to the movies, spend my time actively, I am not bored at home.

R02PL: I spend most of the day either (...) doing housework, or taking care of the kids. / MOD: And how do you spend your free time? / R02PL: Usually I just rest, we don't go anywhere, we just rest at home.

R04PL: I spend 50 percent of my free time with my child, because he needs support, it's various active physical activities, that is, the pool, neurocorrectologists, speech therapists and psychologists, and I devote my free time to myself and do yoga and meditation.

R05PL: Now, mostly, I take my child to a kindergarten, come home, do some household chores there, then sit down to look for a job, then, if I have any part-time jobs, if I managed to find them, I go and do these part-time jobs, if not, then I spend time at home looking for a new part-

time job, a new job, I do business, I study something there, I spend time at home, then I pick up my son from kindergarten, bring him home and do things with the child. During the day, I eat, perform some functions there, you yourself understand which ones, then I go to bed, and so it's a new day. Let's put it this way, a kind of working life, that is, a life like that of a robot. It somehow seems to me as if every day is like the others.

One of our respondents, being a single woman with no children, stated that she devotes her free time to perform volunteer activities supporting Ukrainian refugees in Poland and citizens who stayed in Ukraine. Below is her statement:

R03PL: ...I sometimes see colleagues or volunteer, collect volunteer aid for Ukraine and take it away, for example, to send it to a post office there, or help refugees, we have a chat, sometimes I connect and I answer the questions of people who just came to Poland, because it happens that no one can give them an answer, and I, for example, have already done it, and I communicate and support those people who are in Ukraine in this way.

8.2 Social relationships

MOD: Do you spend a lot of time with friends?

MOD: Are your friends mostly Ukrainians or Poles? If they are mainly Ukrainians, please explain why?

When leaving their home country, Ukrainian refugees lost their existing social ties (Tsolak and Bürmann 2023). We were curious if they still maintain relationships with their friends. Five of our respondents declared that they have not spend a lot of time with their friends. One of them (a divorced mother) expressed willingness to spend more time with her friends, nonetheless her current material and family-related situation does not allow her to do so. Below is her statement:

R05PL: Now I spend time with friends, mainly there is some communication on the phone, correspondence and so on, but we do not see each other, because then you think about where you will get money and how you will pay your bills and housing. Unfortunately, this Maslow pyramid, I feel it in action, because when you do not have the first needs such as payment, food, and so on, you do not think about entertainment, well, that is, taking into account my age, of course, some certain

acquired experience . Unfortunately, I would like to think about meeting with friends more, about self-development, but so far I can't. I thought about it when I thought I had a stable job, but when I lost that job, I think about something else, to be honest.

One respondent declared meeting friends from one to three times a week.

When asked whether the respondents' friends were mostly Ukrainians or Poles, all 6 of them stated that they are Ukrainians. When asked the reason for such a choice, three of our respondents mentioned language- related barriers:

R01PL: Because we can talk and when you speak freely, you can emotionally be closer to Ukrainians, but I am interested in making friends with Poles too, but so far the language level does not allow this to happen.

R03PL: I think it's more of a language issue here, because I think that if I say a word in Polish incorrectly, people will laugh at me, so I'm a little afraid to make friends with Poles for sure, but I communicate very well with the owner of the apartment, who I rent from, but we communicate in English, and so with my friends, because they are Ukrainians, and they all have the same problem, it seems to me.

R06PL: Because it is easier for me to speak Ukrainian, I understand them completely, and I still need to learn a little more Polish.

Another three respondents pointed-out close ties with Ukrainians and inability to make relationships with Poles. Below are their sample responses:

R02PL: Because when I lived in Ukraine, I communicated with Ukrainians.

R04PL: Because I grew up in Ukraine for 33 years and have very close ties there, until, unfortunately, I couldn't find friends here.

R05PL: This is not planned, I chose by nationality, I have such a limited circle of communication, it consisted of Ukrainians, and it still consists of them. I have Polish acquaintances, but I cannot yet call them my close friends.

8.3 Plans regarding staying in Poland

MOD: Do you intend to stay in Poland after the end of the war?

MOD: If you are going to stay in Poland after the war, please explain why?

Among our respondents, only one wanted to definitely stay in Poland after the Russian-Ukrainian war is over. The reasons she mentioned were a higher wage level, better standard of living, and a lack of segmentation of labor market between “good” and “bad” professions, as in Ukraine:

R01PL: Because the wage level is higher and allows you to live better here than in Ukraine. Because there is unequal pay for labor in Ukraine, where it is divided into good professions that take care of people, and bad professions that do not allow you to live normally.

Another respondent declared willingness to stay in Poland if certain conditions are met, like: finding a suitable job in terms of remuneration and career-related possibilities, and owning a house instead of renting one. If the conditions are not met, she preferred returning to Ukraine. Below is her statement:

R05PL: If I will find a stable job here, which will satisfy me, in terms of career, financially, and I will solve the issue here so as not to rent housing here, because I have my own housing in Ukraine, and somehow I will come up with it, I don't know the answer yet like, some sort of mortgage or something else, now it is also difficult, then I will, if the issue of stable, profitable work in Poland is resolved and closed, and the issue of housing, then I will be able to think about it. If I don't find a place for myself here, I will return to Ukraine.

The other four respondents declared that they are not going to stay in Poland (3 respondents) or would rather not stay (1 respondent). Among the mentioned reasons were: social ties (family or friends) in Ukraine (3 responses), and material ties (own housing) in Ukraine (2 responses). Below are their sample responses:

R02PL: Because I don't have any professional or social connections here, and because my family also stayed in Ukraine.

R03PL: I lived in Ukraine for a significant period of my life, I come from a small town, I always wanted to be in Kyiv, Irpin is just a neighborhood of Kyiv, you can say it is a part of it, like a district, so I love Kyiv very much and I earned my own housing.

R04PL: Because I have my own home in Kyiv, this is a house that I built for many years and I have a family and a husband there, so I would intend to return to my family.

R06PL: Because I was born in Ukraine, my parents and friends stayed there.

One of the respondents who declared that she will rather not stay in Poland, accepted such possibility if the war were to last for a prolonged period of time. Among the reasons for staying she mentioned the similarities between Ukraine and Poland in various aspects, such as architectural similarities and the mentality of the nations. Another reason was the developing IT industry in Poland, an industry with which the respondent was professionally associated. Below is the respondent's statement:

R03PL: Poland is probably the only option of a country in which I would be able to live for a long time, for the simple reason, firstly, because there are a lot of intuitively understandable things here, Poland is really very similar to Ukraine, not only for some architectural reason, but mentally and intuitively, in principle, many things are clear to you. And I had the experience of living in other countries, but I lived there for one and a half, two, three months, and the longest I stayed was for three months, after that I really wanted to go home, and at some point I made the decision that there is no need to confuse tourism with migration, and now I have been in Poland for a little less than a year, and I will tell you that in general I feel comfortable and safe, I work here, I pay taxes. I see that Poland is developing very strongly, especially in my field of activity, I work in IT, it seems to me that this would be a good option in case the war lasts a very long time.

Summary

The interviews were carried out in June-July, 2023 among 6 Ukrainian citizens (5 women and one man) aged 18-34 who crossed the Polish-Ukrainian border after Russia's invasion of Ukraine (February 24, 2022). The respondents were living in the following Polish cities: Warsaw (3 respondents), Kraków (2 respondents), and Łódź (1 respondent). Before the migration, the respondents lived in the following cities in Ukraine: Tetiiv (small town, Kyiv Oblast), Irpin (medium size city, Kyiv Oblast), Kyiv (Kyiv Oblast) – 2 respondents, Zhytomyr (large city, Zhytomyr Oblast), Khust (medium size city, Zakarpattia Oblast).

The main reason our respondents chose Poland as the host country was that Poland is Ukraine's closest neighbor (5 out of 6 respondents indicated this). The location of Poland was perceived as a positive, since it can help the refugee to quickly provide a safe bastion for children (1 respondent) and allow them to come back quickly to Ukraine after the war is over (1 respondent). The other reasons indicated were: having friends in Poland that can help arrange a place to stay and help after the migration (2 respondents), and positive attitudes toward Poles and a perceived similarity between Poles and Ukrainians (2 respondents).

All of our respondents indicated that they rent apartments in the Polish cities that they live in. Only one of the respondents rented an apartment with roommates and the other respondents rented the apartments only for themselves.

Three interviewees stated that their own savings were their main source of income while staying in Poland. One of the respondents indicated that besides relying on savings he also used benefits provided by a government entity supporting refugees. Among the others, two persons indicated earnings from activities performed remotely for an entity in Ukraine.

The interviewed group consisted of: a single man, two single women, one divorced woman, and two married women. The single man lived in Poland without any dependents, and so did one of the single women. The other respondents indicated that they live with a dependent child or children, and none of them lived with the elderly, the disabled, or the chronically ill.

Among the four respondents living with dependents, one of the married women living with two children indicated that they don't need any external support provided by Polish people or institutions (e.g. medical care, nurses, rehabilitators, psychologists, others). The single mother with one child indicated that she hasn't applied for any governmental or NGO support, but she needed help from a nanny that is paid for from her own resources. The woman living with a child indicated that her dependent needs constant medical and psychological support. The divorced woman living with a son replied that although no specialists' help is needed, her child attends at a private kindergarten.

The analyzed responses indicate that the refugees declared a relatively high interest in being active on the labor market despite the fact that most of the respondents took care of dependents. All the respondents have searched for a job since first arriving to Poland. The respondents tried to find jobs through many channels. All of them used the Internet (including specialized websites such as: LinkedIn, social media like Facebook, and chats), three of our respondents tried to find a job through their social networks

(friends, acquaintances), and one tried to find a job through organizations providing support for refugees.

Respondents were asked in the interviews what inconveniences they were willing to accept and to what extent in order to find a job. The first question was about the average number of days a week that they looked for a job. Four of the respondents indicated that they searched for a job every day of the week. Among the other responses, one respondent indicated a frequency of 2-3 days a week, and one 3-4 days a week.

In addition, the respondents were asked if they were looking for a job that matched their skills and if not, then why? If yes, had they found such job in Poland? Two of our respondents searched only for a job that matched their skills. None of the respondents found such job in Poland. Two other respondents tried to find a job matching their skills, but were also open to different labor market opportunities. One of the respondents was open to find other jobs and was successful. Another respondent decided to change her profession and was also able to find a job in Poland. The sole man in our sample was looking for any job with a salary high enough that would have allowed him to cover his expenses in Poland. He had not specified his financial expectations. Nonetheless, he was unsuccessful in finding a job in Poland.

One of the submissive behaviors on the labor market is working illegally, without an employment contract, without health insurance and social benefits. In Poland, we refer to such employment as being “in the grey zone”. All 6 respondents presented negative attitudes toward such a form of work. Four of them were firmly against it, while two were rather negative. Two of the respondents explained that their negative attitudes toward working „in the grey zone” stemmed from the illegal character of such practices. Another two respondents explained that such a form of employment may lead to different forms of exploitation of the disadvantaged refugee by the employer (such as: lowering the payments or not paying for the completed work, expecting to work over hours), and prevent them from obtaining formal documents that may be helpful, e.g. at banks, obtaining a legal status in Poland and prevent them from earning possible social security benefits.

We asked our four respondents living with dependents about their opinions on whether or not taking care of the dependent persons and doing housework affects their professional activities. All of the respondents indicated such relationship. The divorced woman explained that, in her opinion, it is not just in the case of living in Poland, but that taking care of small children affects her professional activities in Ukraine as well as any other country.

The respondents were asked to indicate what incentives employers could provide that would help them with finding employment in Poland. Based on the differing responses, employers may provide many such incentives. Two of the respondents (a single man without dependents and a single woman with a 7-years old child) indicated financial incentives. Half of the respondents (all mothers with one or more children) indicated that flexible working hours that fit their family responsibilities are the most desired incentive, especially if the job is far from the place of residence. One of the above mentioned respondents also mentioned working from home as a possible incentive. Two respondents (a single woman and a mother) indicated social security benefits as being important to them, and their families, in case of a sickness or an accident.

We asked the respondents whether or not they are satisfied with their levels of education in the context of their stay in the Poland. Four of our respondents were satisfied with their levels of education. Two of them stated that the knowledge or profession obtained in Ukraine before the migration were appropriate to find a job in Poland. Two

other interviewees stressed that having skills or qualifications and a higher education diploma from Ukraine allowed them to find a job in the new environment. Especially, as stated by one of the respondents, completing her studies in an international standard, with 50% of the classes in the English language, was of particular importance in finding a job and overcoming communication difficulties in European countries. One of the respondents was undecided while answering the question. As a lawyer, she was satisfied with the level of education she obtained in Ukraine. Nonetheless, she stated that having such qualifications makes it difficult to find a job in Poland. Finally, only one of the respondents was dissatisfied with her level of education she obtained in Ukraine in the context of staying in Poland. She self-evaluated her English and Polish language skills as too low to be helpful in finding employment in the host country.

We haven't asked the respondents to evaluate their Polish language proficiency using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) reference levels directly, but the analyses of their responses allows us to use the guideline by categorizing the statements. One of the respondents answered that she didn't know the Polish language at all. Four of our respondents expressed their Polish language knowledge level as: "beginner", "elementary", "weak", and "everyday". We may reference them as being on the A level ("Basic user"): either A1 or A2. Only one of our respondents rated her Polish language proficiency at the CEFR B1 level.

All 6 of our respondents declared that they plan to improve their Polish language skills while staying in Poland. The respondents provided reasons as to why they plan to improve the skills. Most of them plan to do so in order to: help to improve their position in the labor market (3 responses), improve social relationships (2 responses), help them in "all directions", and improve communication in everyday situations (3 responses). One of the respondents also stated that it will help her to feel more confident. Interestingly, two of our respondents stated that learning the Polish language is a form of showing respect towards Poles while being in their country.

None of our respondents were interested in engaging in any educational or training activities in the nearest future while staying in Poland. We asked for the reasons for such an attitude. Two of the respondents (a single man and a married woman with a child) stated that it is a personal choice for them, since they don't feel a need to engage in any educational or training activities. One of the respondents also stressed that he is only interested in employment related activities, and not educational ones. The divorced mother clarified that although she's not going to participate in any organized (formal or non-formal) learning or training, she was gaining new knowledge through self-learning using on-line resources. Similar statement were given by a single woman without any children.

We asked our respondents if there are any incentives that would encourage them to engage in any educational or training activities since none of our respondents were interested in such in the nearest future. One of the respondents (a single man) replied that there are no such incentives. The other respondents agreed that there may be incentives that would help them to become involved in educational activities. Two of the respondents mentioned initiatives that would help them to reconcile family responsibilities with educational activities, like providing additional financial resources for a childcare or providing childcare facilities during weekends. Three of our respondents mentioned initiatives that would help them improve their positions in the Polish labor market or the educational or training activities being "tailor-made" to fit their individual interests and needs in obtaining particular skills. The aim of the incentives should be to improve the chances of securing a job in Poland or to help in obtaining a more

stable job. One other respondent mentioned initiatives focused on finding employment in other European countries.

We were curious in what ways our respondents spent their average day or their free time since they were not involved in any educational or employment activities. The single man respondent stated that he spends a typical day job searching and his free time on partaking in relaxing activities (spending time in the nature). Mother respondents declared spending an average day on taking care of their children's needs and doing house work. During free time they would engage in relaxing activities (meeting with friends, doing sports, going to the movies). One of our respondents, a single woman without children, stated that she devotes her free time to performing volunteer activities which support refugees in Poland and citizens who stayed in Ukraine.

In addition, we asked if our interviewees spend time with their friends. Five of our respondents declared that they do not spend a lot of time with friends. One of them (a divorced mother) expressed willingness to spend more time with friends, but her current material and family-related situation does not allow her to do so. One respondent declared meeting friends anywhere from one to three times a week.

When the respondents were asked whether their friends were mostly Ukrainians or Poles, all 6 of them stated that their friends are Ukrainians. When asked for the reasons for such a choice of friends three of our respondents mentioned language related barriers, and another three respondents pointed-out close ties with Ukrainians and the inability to form close relationships with Poles.

Only one of the respondents wanted to definitely stay in Poland after the Russian-Ukrainian war is over. The reasons she mentioned were a higher wage level, better standard of living, and a lack of segregation of the labor market between "good" and "bad" professions, as she claimed was the case in Ukraine. Another respondent declared a willingness to stay in Poland if certain conditions are met like: finding a suitable job in terms of remuneration and career-related possibilities and owning a house instead of renting one. If the conditions are not met, she preferred to return to Ukraine. The other four respondents declared that they are not going to stay in Poland (3 respondents) or would rather not (1 respondent). Among the mentioned reasons were: social ties (having family or friends) in Ukraine (3 responses) and material ties (own housing) in Ukraine (2 responses). The one respondent that answered that she will rather not stay in Poland accepted such possibility if the war were to last for a prolonged period of time. She mentioned the similarities between Ukraine and Poland in terms of architectural constructs and the mentality of the nations as some of the reasons for choosing to stay in Poland. Another reason was the developing IT industry in Poland, an industry with which the respondent was professionally associated.

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