

## Ukrainian Refugee Crisis in Europe: Not an easy decision

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5.3 million people were displaced from Ukraine between the onset of the war and April 25, 2022, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This is the greatest influx of Ukrainian refugees into Europe since World War II. Many people fled to nearby countries such as Poland, Romania, Moldova, and Hungary for safety, while others wished to reach the UK. An economic struggle intensifies as military confrontations intensify, civilian deaths increase, and proof of horrendous war crimes emerges. Thousands of Ukrainian immigrants have flooded into the EU, creating a number of social, economic, and political concerns and challenges. However, it has also received unprecedented political support.

### **Challenges and issues for the European countries:**

As Ukraine's security situation has deteriorated, large numbers of its citizens have been displaced both within and outside of its borders. Protecting, directing, informing, and providing emotional support for these individuals - primarily women and children - are critical. Activating the Temporary Protection Directive has allowed (mostly Ukrainians) access to integration-related services and jobs. Governments in European nations must now overcome a number of challenges to realize such access.

Firstly, **logistics and coordination challenges** are to be dealt with. Inadequate government funding prevents the high number of Ukrainian refugees from being properly housed and protected. Refugees have typically been welcomed in many nations on a local level, combining unplanned citizen activities. This prompt citizen reaction raises a management and coordination challenge to ensure that initiatives are successful.

This crisis has led to an **economic challenge both for the member states and for the EU**. At this early stage of the crisis, no neighbouring country has an estimate of how many additional Ukrainian refugees may cross their borders or how long they will stay there. Due to this, it is challenging to calculate the financial burden of sheltering these migrants. Amounts from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the REACT-EU fund, and €20 billion from the Cohesion Fund have already been allocated by the EU to help member states support the

acceptance of migrants. It comes at a time when the EU is still recovering from the COVID-19 outbreak, which has interrupted supply chains and required a financial shift to the energy transition. This expenditure is in addition to the other economic effects of the conflict in Europe.

Third and most crucial is the **challenge for social integration**. Apart from the duration of the conflict and the extent of migration, the number of refugees seeking asylum in the European Union is unknown. As time spent abroad decreases, the host country becomes closer, and the gap between the living standards of the host organizations and the host countries as a whole narrow. Access to housing and employment are the two most difficult aspects of medium- and long-term integration. Both are poorly distributed in many European cultures. Compared to these two aspects, it is very easy to obtain other public products, such as access to health and education for young people, but they face unique problems such as language and government immunization of the Ukrainian population. Access to temporary urgent sponsors can be very difficult for women who have fled Ukraine with young children, as they are difficult for parents' responsibilities other than language problems.

#### **Europe's response to this problem:**

The political establishment's choice reflects the significant support for accepting Ukrainian immigrants that exists throughout Europe. In no European nation, not even by racist parties, have there been protests against this approach. The contrast between the responses evoked by these immigrants and those elicited by refugees arriving in Europe from other parts of the world, especially the Middle East and Africa, is highlighted by such remarkable optimism. And last, among those European countries that were formerly a part of the Ottoman Empire, Islam is considered as a characteristic of the imperial power from which they were freed. Physical proximity, views of cultural proximity to Ukrainian culture, and—most importantly—how Europeans identify with the Ukrainian people's struggle against the Russian invasion all support extending a warm welcome to Ukrainian refugees in Europe. The political backdrop against which discussions about the EU's refugee policy are set has significantly shifted as a result of the EU's Eastern members bearing the bulk of the refugee admissions this time.

It is difficult to foresee how the arrival of millions of Ukrainians would influence the host countries of the EU. A significant number of business and governmental initiatives have been

mobilised as a result of the EU's unprecedented generosity and quick response. Their reception presents a variety of problems over the long run. The integration of newcomers and the availability of organisational, administrative, and financial resources designated for them and other refugees are the first and second factors, respectively. It is crucial to prevent this crisis from monopolising the existing capacity, which were already limited, in order to fulfil the needs of those fleeing crises in other parts of the world.

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