FROM MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION CHALLENGES TO GOOD PRACTICES: PRACTITIONERS' PERSPECTIVES

Edited by
Gregg Bucken-Knapp, Manana Gabashvili and Karin Zelano

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INTRODUCTION

Managing migration and the integration of migrants remains one of the most salient issues in European Union member states and several Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries. Over the past fifteen years, these regions have witnessed a number of dramatic events that have resulted in large-scale flows of migrants within and across state borders, including the ongoing Syrian civil war, as well as military conflicts that both Georgia and Ukraine have experienced with Russia. In the short term, the flows of migrants seeking safety resulting from such conflicts brings about immediate challenges for receiving states and regions: including temporary housing, emergency medical care and food. In conflicts where migrants are forced to flee across state borders, formal application for refugee status become relevant, whereas in situations characterized chiefly by internally displaced peoples (IDPs) – such as those in Georgia and Ukraine – the administrative challenge of determining an individual's formal legal status is no less demanding, albeit different (Global Protection Cluster, 2010). Over the longer term, for those migrants who are officially granted the right to remain having fled conflict, the challenges become complex for the individual as well as the host society: how to ensure meaningful integration through the development and implementation of appropriate policies across the full spectrum, including access to continued education or validation of existing educational qualifications, appropriate job training, and measures designed to enhance social inclusion (Bucken-Knapp, Omanovic, Spehar 2020).

Even EU member states with comparatively low numbers of refugee admission, such as the Baltics, have had to grapple with these challenges given the comparatively less developed nature of refugee integration programs, as well as persistent cultural ambivalence regarding refugee admission (Yatsyk 2018).

However, it is not only unforeseen crises that have produced migration and integration challenges for these regions. The expansion of the European Union in 2004 and 2007 stands as a particular example in this regard. Both for the larger number of states that employed transitional measures to ensure a more controlled flow of mobile EU citizens, and for those few that sought to embrace EU mobility without exclusion, the challenges have been substantial. For the vast majority of mobile EU citizens who have become comparatively well-established, the needs may not have been dramatic, but have certainly been real: locating relevant information in other EU member states regarding rights and services, particularly with regards to labour market access, rules for establishing businesses, access to targeted language education, and the ability to have one's educational qualifications quickly validated all stand out as priorities. In a much smaller number of cases, albeit vastly more salient in the public debate and media discourses, the focus has been on the smaller number of vulnerable mobile EU citizens who have made their living via begging, and whose transient status by and large excludes them from being formally included in the regulatory and social fabric of the EU countries to which they have relocated (Bucken-Knapp, Hinnfors, Spehar, Zelano 2018).

Against this backdrop, the aim of this toolkit is to provide a practitioner's perspective on some of the key challenges currently facing certain EaP and EU member states when it comes to migration and integration. The focus is emphatically on the practical. While debates regarding overarching policies and societal attitudes are indeed important, each of the chapters in this toolkit is primarily concerned with identifying a concrete challenge that public sector or civil society actors face when working with migrant communities and then highlighting how it might be realistically addressed so as to bring about a more positive result, both for that given case, but also for practitioners who face potentially similar challenges in other geographical settings.

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The chapters have their origin in the Swedish Institute's 2018 Summer Academy for Young Professionals (SAYP) module held in Tbilisi, Georgia with the theme *Migration and Integration in the Eastern Partnership and the Baltic Sea Region: Policy and Administrative Challenges for the Development of Inclusive Societies*. Each year, the SAYP programme allows for young professionals for EaP countries and the Baltic Sea Region (including Sweden) to gather for two weeks and undergo intensive training in a theme closely-related to their professional sphere of interest. As the follow-up project to this module, select participants have continued work on themes and cases of interest and produced these chapters, with an eye towards ensuring that their insights can be shared with the broadest possible community of practitioners working within the field of migration and integration across Europe.

The Importance of a "Good Practice" Approach, for Practitioners and Scholars Alike

A central theme underpinning each of the chapters is that of good practice. Or stated somewhat differently, the chapters very purposely do not attempt to argue on behalf of there being a definitive best practice emerging as a result of their respective case study. Yet, while understanding that even the term "good practice" has been contested for being either excessively vague or serving as a marker of what should be the highest quality (Coffield and Edward 2009), the chapters in this anthology opt for use of good over best practice in an effort to underscore how different forms of context can limit the broader applicability of a given solution. Indeed, the chapter authors work from a logic that policies, programs and administrative practices are all highly dependent on a number of factors – including the current policy landscape, the relevant institutional framework, the actors involved and their prominence in the field, the salience of the issue within the broader society, and recent or longer-term historical background. The varying importance of these factors in the different cases suggests very clearly that potential solutions in one organisational or geographical setting may not necessarily translate smoothly into

other settings. However, the chapters all make an effort to provide conclusions that clearly spell out what might be general insights valuable also to other contexts.

It is worth emphasizing that the design of the chapters is not informed by methodological approaches that question the utility of single-nation case studies for making broader contributions. Rather, the authors all work from an assumption that practitioners in the diverse field of migration and integration have an inherent curiosity for learning more about other cases and settings – partly for increasing one's familiarity with that which one did not know previously, but also for the manner in which exposure to new cases can provide inspiration for rethinking how the challenges one works with on a day-to-day basis can be more effectively met. By the same token, this lack of a formal methodology and the emphasis on the practical contribution to meeting societal challenges, as opposed to speaking chiefly to scholarly debates, do not imply that the toolkit chapters are not of interest to scholars as well. While acknowledging that scholars and practitioners are often framed as occupying two very discrete universes quite distant from one another, these seeming differences can be understood as creative tensions across occupations, which can be navigated to the mutual benefit of both (Bartunek and Rynes 2014). Indeed, the chapters lend themselves to being read fruitfully by a broad range of audiences. For practitioners, of course, the chapters speak to concrete situations that are dealt with on a daily basis – locating housing stock for new arrivals, providing information specifically required by highly-skilled migrants, assisting lawyers representing asylum seekers in considering the full scope of legal options for securing a favourable outcome. Yet, it is apparent that the cases dealt with in these chapters also have much to offer scholars working within the multidisciplinary fields of migration and integration studies. Indeed, the authors frequently offer otherwise rare glimpses inside the black boxes of public sector bodies and civil society organisations, providing valuable insight into how challenges are problematized, why some strategies are considered inappropriate candidates, and how new ways of thinking could be framed to garner support from relevant actors and the broader public. As such, the chapters provide migration and integration scholars with material that speaks in detailed ways to the role of institutions, the autonomy of street-level bureaucrats, the legacy of previous migration events, and the constraints imposed by political culture and public

opinion. Along these lines, the chapters should also be of particular interest for students of migration and integration studies. Pointedly, we would argue that each chapter contains the well-developed embryo of a small-scale research project, and that in many cases, these themes could easily be operationalized and explored across a range of geographical settings.

The Contributions

The first four chapters of the toolkit consider the development of good practices across a range of integration issues for Ukraine's IDPs, which since the start of the conflict with Russia in the eastern portions of Ukraine are estimated to number between 800,000 and 1,500,000.

Semenenko, Borova and Halhash provide a fitting open to the toolkit by putting the spotlight on the importance of social cohesion, which in broadest terms can be understood as the individual's relation to relevant groups in society – in this case, her or his community. Making detailed use of the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) Index, which has been developed to measure social cohesion in conflict areas, the authors present findings from three separate measures of social cohesion in Eastern Ukraine that were conducted in 2015. While the data is highly nuanced, the authors call attention to the comparatively higher degree of social cohesion that exists in the regions of Eastern Ukraine as opposed to other conflict zones throughout the world. Even with that encouraging finding, there is a clear realization that there is still substantial scope for activity to foster increased social cohesion and reconciliation in Eastern Ukraine, which constitutes the focus of the latter portion of the chapter. The authors detail the use of public dialogues and focus groups as part of a United Nations Development Programme Initiative in these regions, which allowed for a finer-grained understanding of challenges to be gained, and which has subsequently served as the basis for a multi-year programme focusing on increasing good governance through the engagement of citizens in the affected regions.

Matveieva, Ivanova and Vershynina focus on what is often seen as one of the most vexing challenges for the integration of migrants in any setting: ensuring that meaningful employment opportunities can be provided. In the case of Ukraine, less than a third of IDPs have regular employment, which is further compounded by the need for job retraining, given the large number who had previously been involved in mining and other forms of extraction – industries that simply do not exist to the same extent in the individual's new host community. The authors highlight one particularly effective good practice that has emerged, the Helping Hand Programme, which operates along three prongs to integrate IDPs in the local economy: through grants to start small businesses, opportunities to take part in community service initiatives, and receiving assistance with locating new employment opportunities. Along similarly encouraging lines, the authors note that while there have been limits to the ability of state initiatives to achieved desired employment outcomes for IDPs, there are a number of success stories at the local level, particularly in terms of collaboration between local citizens and civil society organisations. The authors conclude by calling attention to a need for further action to be taken at the local level, but for this action to very clearly involve local actors who can meaningfully support IDP integration in ways appropriate for both individuals and these communities.

Levchenko's chapter provides a powerful argument that making use of restorative justice has the potential to be a particularly effective strategy for bringing about conflict resolution, a sustainable peace and refugee integration. Taking its point of departure in recognizing that both victims and societies have specific interests that must be respected, but also that perpetrators need to be socially integrated, the restorative justice approach spans a diverse set of strategies for meaningfully involving all parties in the efforts to being about an encompassing sense of justice. While acknowledging that there does not exist one shared understanding that is exhaustive in terms of classifying restorative justice practices, mediation does emerge as a particularly advanced form, and the author provides a compelling case for how mediation can be meaningfully employed at different phases in the restorative process. In the latter portion of the chapter, Levchenko shifts the focus from the conceptual to the concrete, with a discussion of how restorative justice programs have been implemented in Ukraine with regards to IDPs. She concludes

by outlining two critical goals – integration and peacebuilding; and the use of employment and business networks, underscoring how these broad goals can only be achieved by working with more detailed sub-projects focusing on reconciliation, with experienced facilitators playing a central role in the process.

In the toolkit's final chapter dealing with Ukraine, Ferlikovska emphasizes the importance of developing adequate housing solutions for IDPs. She emphasizes that even in a situation where a substantial constraint exists in the form of ineffective central government regulation, it is still possible to devise innovative solution that have the potential to be implemented at other levels of governance. Ferlikovska notes that an especially promising strategy is not to opt for new builds, but rather to look at the existing housing stock that is under-utilized. Such housing stock will naturally differ from case to case. However, in the case of Ukraine, abandoned Soviet-era housing complexes, derelict housing and escheat properties all serve as a valuable source of potential housing for IDPs. Yet, it is not simply a question of existing housing stock. In order to creative viable long term accommodations for individuals, a detailed strategy for adequately making use of this stock must be developed and implemented. Ferlikovksa proposes a three-step strategy that begins with a comprehensive stock-taking exercise, transferring ownership (or right of usage) of the properties to local communities, who can then engage in a similar exercise for IDPs, and the ensuring that adequate funding exists for renovation of the newly-transferred housing stock. It is important to note that Ferlikovksa's proposed approach offers a meaningful role to local government actors, which also allows for the engagement of IDPs at the level of governance closest to them.

Following this, the toolkit shifts focus to the two of the states in the Baltic Sea Region – Lithuania and Estonia. Makaveckaitė emphasizes one of the key hurdles for any asylum seeker hoping to build a new life in the destination country: persuading the authorities to grant legal residence for either the shorter or longer term. Her specific focus is on the European Union principle of subsidiary protection, with a particular emphasis on the Lithuanian case. Makaveckaitė's chapter can be regarded both as a detailed to-do list and roadmap for individuals seeking refugee status, but who are instead granted subsidiary protection. Chiefly a form of temporary status, subsidiary protection can be withdrawn even after many years of legal residency,

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often leaving affected individuals unprepared for how the formal process to remain can be successfully navigated. Given that, her emphasis is on the specific ways in which individuals with subsidiary protection can convert their status to other forms of legal residency. Central to this is an awareness from the outset that subsidiary protection is temporary and that the individual must not only seek to be broadly integrated into the host society (through work, studies or relationships) but that she or he must maintain sufficient documentation of this integration into the host society, so as to be able to make a persuasive claim for a new permit status when the time comes.

In putting the spotlight on the Estonian case, Spiegel presents us with an interesting puzzle of enormous practical significance – how can support be fostered for admitting refugees to a small EU member state that has historically taken a very small number of individuals seeking protection, and whose political culture is partially characterized by a skepticism to refugee admission and integration? Making use of both interview data with relevant elites and official documents, Spiegel calls attention to the discursive challenge that confronts those who would seek to increase the number of refugee admissions, noting that refugees to Estonia are often times constructed as threat in the public debate and media discourse, rather than a positive force for Estonian society as a whole. Through her interviews, her argument about potential good practices suggests that challenging this skeptical discourse is perhaps best addressed through more concrete measures that foster integration of refugees into the labour market, provide them with the necessary language skills and also ensure their involvement in the local communities. At the same time, it is clear that meeting the discursive challenge of skepticism to refugees also involves emphasizing the future labour market needs of Estonian society, and how these cannot be met without an additional influx of human capital.

The two next chapters explore migration dynamics that are comparatively under-explored – both for practitioners and for scholars – the continuing relationship of states to their diaspora communities. Several EaP states have witnessed diasporas of varying sizes in recent years, particularly as large numbers of working-age citizens look for employment opportunities abroad (legal or otherwise). This situation has also been confronted by several of the states that acceded to the European Union

in 2004 and 2007, as well as some states who have been members for decades (such as Ireland, Portugal and Spain). Gorgoshidze's chapter addresses the case of Georgia, which has witnessed multiple waves of emigration since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Even with improving economic conditions, especially since Georgians have been able to make use of visa-free travel to the European Union from 2017, emigration from Georgia is significant. She details the way in which both the Georgian state, and also one of the leading international organisations involved in migration issues in Georgia, the International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) have each (and often collaboratively) meaningfully engaged with the Georgian diaspora community so as to ensure better communication and to foster their inclusion in projects that are of importance both to Georgia and their host societies. Her contribution lays out a successful roadmap for working with the diaspora communities, that involves gathering data on the characteristics of the diaspora community, ensuring meaningful lines of communication that can be either direct or mobile, making use of high-profile diaspora community members, and ensuring that the relevant Georgian state agencies can improve their level of coordination to bring about a more effective inter-institutional cooperation. This broadly encompassing strategy is argued to have the potential of assisting diaspora community members with protecting their rights, tapping into their potential to promote Georgian society abroad, and allowing for their involvement in the future development of Georgia itself.

Katselkina's chapter addresses the current status of diaspora policies in all six of the EaP states, both as a mapping exercise of their current extent, but also so as to highlight gaps that might realistically be addressed through targeted measures. Her detailed overview of the current policies and practices of the six EaP states shows certain commonalities both in terms of the issues that are being addressed, but also commonalities in terms of issues which are not yet a priority across the EaP. Most notably, she demonstrates that EaP states understand the economic potential of their diaspora communities – who have often emigrated in search of more lucrative employment opportunities. In this case, EaP states often have well-established programs to encourage economic investment from diaspora communities. Policies to strengthen the link between diaspora communities and the country of origin are also common, including access to the country of origin's labour market or education.

By the same token, Katslekina identifies three key gaps that exist to varying extents across the EaP when it comes to engaging with their respective diaspora communities: the quantity and quality of information provided to these communities, the lack of a focus on cultural factors similar to that of the economic relationship, and the lack of clear programme targets, which makes evaluation highly difficult.

The final chapter in the toolkit considers the case of Sweden. While much of the emphasis on integration in the Swedish case over the past decade has had to do either with vulnerable mobile EU citizens or asylum-seekers from states involved in ongoing conflicts, most notably Syria, Bychkovska focuses our attention on another important integration challenges, and one that has received less of a detailed focus: welcome information targeting highly-skilled labour migrants in Sweden. She documents that there is an impressive amount of initiatives that already exist intended to assist highly-skilled migrants with navigating their new lives in Sweden. Yet, she hones in on that way in which scope and quality of information provided to this type of migrant is, at times, insufficient. Here, Bychkovska highlights multiple factors, including the target group not being available that information exists, that information may be too general or sparse, that information quickly goes out of date or is poorly translated into target languages. When considering good practices, she is quick to point out that there is much to be had in the way of inspiration – yet that much of the possible initiatives are in place outside of Sweden, particularly in North America and other European Union countries. Indeed, her rich overview of potential good practices can be read almost as a shopping list for any agency tasked with improving information provided to highly-skilled immigrants.

LOOKING FORWARD

While we have argued that toolkits do not necessarily divide practitioners and scholars as much as they potentially unite them, there is no question that the logic of the toolkit itself differs from that of the traditional scholarly publication. In most cases, even when scholarly publications conclude by pointing out the road

forward for other researchers, or even practitioners, that is often a minor focus within the overall conclusion. By contrast, the nature of the toolkit is not to provide a definitive account of the degree to which a scholarly argument has been substantiated. Rather, the hope is that these chapters can provide inspiration and persuasion to a diverse range of practitioners to re-visit the challenges that they have been unable to solve yet, and to reconsider them in light of the approaches proposed throughout the chapters. Moreover, we would argue that the chapters should also inspire practitioners to realize that there are integration challenges within their own national context that have not yet been problematized, but yet are worthy of attention. This might include the needs of highly-skilled migrants, who are often pushed to the administrative and policy sidelines given the needs of those migrants who are more immediately vulnerable; the value of diaspora communities for states who wish to more broadly reframe migration narratives, or the necessity to look at different levels of governance for solutions to policy problems that have traditionally only been examined at one, often national, level – such as housing.

Lastly, we stress that this toolkit comprises evidence of the impressive degree of expertise and engagement that already exists among young professionals throughout the Eastern Partnership countries and the Baltic Sea Region. The level of nuance and rigor on display in these chapters, as well as the creativity and genuine enthusiasm for meeting challenges head on and finding practical solutions is laudable. Certainly, the pressing issues of migration and integration will always mean that there are tough challenges to be met. But the spirit of rising to those challenges that is evident throughout the chapters of this toolkit suggests that we have real reasons to be hopeful.

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2 || SOCIAL COHESION AND PEACEBUILDING: INCLUSION OF IDPS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITIES IN THE LUHANSK REGION

Inna Semenenko, Ganna Borova, Ruslan Halhash

Since 2014, Ukraine has suffered from conflict influenced by the Russian occupation of Crimea and parts of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions (Eastern Ukraine). Occupation of significant territories led to mass internal migration. During this time, about 1.5 million people became internally displaced persons (IDPs), moving from the Luhansk and Donetsk regions and Crimea to other regions of Ukraine. The Luhansk region received the second largest influx of these displaced persons in the country, hosting more than 290 thousand of them. A lot of governmental and private institutions moved to other cities and united with local institutions. As many conflicts between local and displaced populations emerged, working towards including the IDPs into local communities, strengthening social cohesion and peacebuilding became vital.

Social cohesion shows the nature of relations of people and groups of people including the sense of affiliation of an individual to the group (Lefko-Everett, 2016). Cohesiveness is essential to any community's sustainable development as it contributes to solving social and ecological problems and promoting the economic performance of this community. According to the OECD report, entitles *Perspectives on Global Development 2012: Social Cohesion in a Shifting World*, a cohesive society "works towards the well-being of all its members, fights exclusion and marginalisation, creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust and

offers its members the opportunity of upward mobility" (OECD, 2012). Thus, the cohesiveness of a society becomes the key factor for people's interaction and their ability to reach mutual goals and also provides respect for diversity and the protection of human rights while supporting community members' welfare and the realisation of their opportunities. The research and practical cases prove that the increase of social cohesion leads to an increase of tolerance among people as well as the resolution of conflicts and peacebuilding (Cox et al., 2014; UNDP, 2009; UNICEF, 2011; OECD, 2012).

A variety of factors influence social cohesion, including an individual's sense of belonging, inclusion, involvement, recognition, legitimacy, equality and security but also opposite issues such as isolation, exclusion, non-participation, rejection, illegitimacy, inequality and insecurity (Jenson, 1998; Bernard, 1999; Lefko-Everett, 2016). The dimensions of social cohesion include social inclusion (together with employment and access to different resources – financial, social services, medical treatment, technological, etc.), cultural and ethnic homogeneity (influenced by the linguistic factor and values recognition), trust, participation and solidarity (taking into account volunteering, charity, participation in elections) (Jenson, 2010; Lefko-Everett, 2016).

For Ukraine, social cohesion of local communities became a challenge due to significant internal migration as the result of the military conflict and occupation of significant parts of Crimea and the Luhansk and Donetsk regions. The total number of internally displaced people is estimated to be around 1.5 million, 20% of whom reside in the Luhansk region (Figure 1).

Mass internal migration caused the changes in all of the aforementioned dimensions and factors of social cohesion. The main challenges of the inclusion of IDPs into local communities became the following:

Distrust by local populations and those of the native territories. The IDPs were considered as "traitors" from both sides as they did not stay and protect their territories. Some of the local population of the new communities stated their belief that the displaced people should have stayed in their native cites and protected

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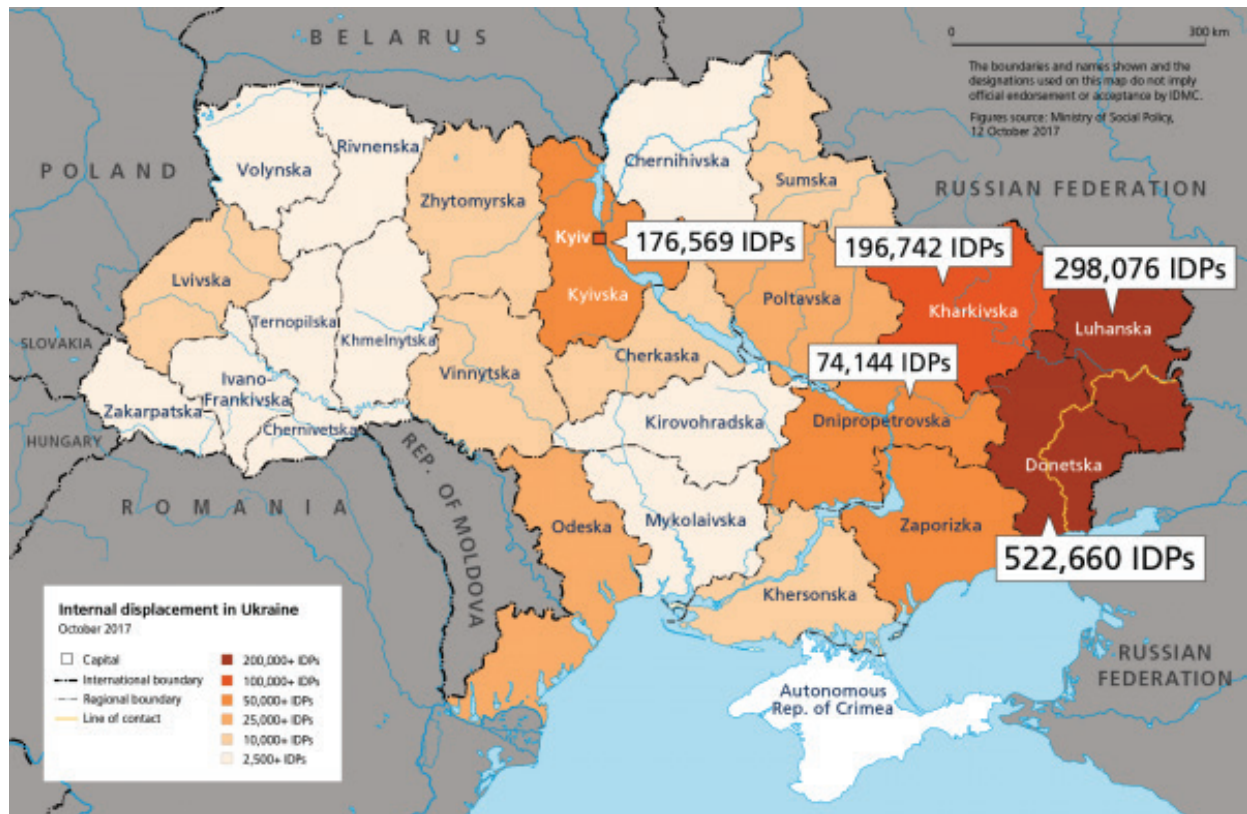
Figure 1. Regions of Ukraine Hosting Largest Numbers of IDPs (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2017)

their homes from invaders. At the same time, some people who remained in the occupied territories made the same argument. However, in both cases the idea of the "invader" depended on personal political views and could mean both Russians and Ukrainians.

Competition for working places in the labour market. In the Luhansk region, there are a lot of IDPs from the city of Luhansk itself who are more qualified than non-displaced residents from rural areas or small towns and thus create competition in the local job market. Since the regional conflict caused businesses to close and the number of vacant positions to decrease, local populations experienced significant difficulties competing for the same working places with IDPs.

Competition for resources within institutions. Because of the conflict, many institutions – governmental, educational, medical and others were displaced to cities in territories under the Ukrainian government's control. They were either

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united with local institutions of their kind or placed into the buildings belonging to other institutions. Such amalgamations resulted in competition for resources and created tension between local and displaced workers.

Differences in culture and ideology. Amalgamation of local and displaced institutions increased the quantity and diversity of personnel. Such diversity created strife between the groups as they each had their own beliefs, traditions, work ethic, etc. Such a merger in fact often divided the personnel into two groups: the "lazy, incapable locals" and the "bossy, interloping IDPs." The tension and conflicts between these groups negatively affected the productivity of institutions and left businesses disorganised. These differences negatively influenced social interaction outside of the workplace as well.

Increase in demand for rental houses. Demand for rental houses increased exponentially which led to the increase of prices and the decrease of available housing in some cities. Severodonetsk, a city in the Luhansk region, experienced this phenomenon because it became the new capital of the Luhansk region and hosted a lot of displaced people and institutions. Native residents who rented apartments started to pay in some cases up to ten times more than they used to before 2014. As the influx of IDPs became the main reason for the changes in the housing market, it increased tension between the locals and the IDPs.

Exclusive government support to IDPs. IDPs with relevant IDP registration certificates receive monthly payments while people without IDP status, even those who suffered because of the conflict, cannot receive it. IDPs had priority for receiving some social services (for example, medical assistance, registration of a child in kindergarten, etc.), which again increased the negative attitude of the local population towards IDPs.

Violation of IDP rights. At the same time some of the rights of IDPs are violated which forms the negative attitude of IDPs towards the local population and the identification of oneself with a certain vulnerable group rather than with a member of a new community. These rights include the right of free movement in the regions close to the demarcation line, the right to vote in the local elections (and in some

cases the realisation of this right would totally change the situation and power balance at local administrations) and the right to receive pension or other social payments without the IDP registration certificates, among others.

The tension between local and displaced populations negatively affects social activism, the performance of institutions and the sustainable development of the Luhansk region as a whole. Inclusion of IDPs into the local population and the increase of social cohesion between these groups of people will contribute to the better performance and prosperity of society. Thus, the inclusion of IDPs into local communities in the Luhansk region became vital for its further sustainable development and, therefore, prompted regional officials to include the improvement of social cohesion and the promotion of social dialogue at the regional and local levels as specific objectives of the Strategy of Luhansk Region Development, effective until the year 2020 (*The Luhansk…*, 2016). This alerted the region's stakeholders to the issues of social cohesion and peacebuilding.

The Luhansk Regional Partners' Forum in the Sphere of Safety, Social Cohesion and Peacebuilding, in their report, entitled *Luhansk Region: The Path to Peace and Justice*, defined the main challenges to the region's sustainable development which are connected with social cohesion and peacebuilding in Luhansk region communities (*Report…*, 2017):

- Passiveness of community members and the inability to attract them to mutual work,
- Lack of motivation,
- Poor interaction of local authorities and population, and
- Intolerance.

Among their findings was the idea that less active communities need the support of more active communities in order to increase social cohesion. This could be accomplished by encouraging community members to share experiences through exchange visits, forming mobilisation trips, creating platforms for dialogue and including community members in the creation and realisation of community

projects. The main idea was the necessity to "ensure that everyone is included in the process of discussion and resolution of the problem, so that no one is left out, and all decisions are taken together" (*Report…, 2017*). The forum made recommendations to the local authorities and civil and international organisations to correct the issue.

Many international organisations operating in the Luhansk region aimed their work at improving the lives of IDPs in different areas: economic, social, political, etc. Various UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, IOM and others), as well as USAID, International Women's Fund, British Council and other organisations, ran various programmes and projects specifically aimed at social cohesion, reconciliation and peacebuilding of the local and displaced populations. They hold projects which promote dialogue in the region, form a network of peace ambassadors, mediators and negotiators who can promote the peaceful resolution of the conflicts, and support the local projects which contribute to the increase of social cohesion of a region or a specific area.

Among such projects is the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) Index which was developed to understand the root reasons for the relationship of people in conflict areas (SCORE, n.d.). This project assigns a numerical value to each community based on a scoring system that takes into account various factors vital to social inclusivity in order to help illustrate how far a community is from in achieving social cohesion. Originally, it was developed for Cyprus by SeeD (Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development) supported by UNDP and USAID but was later modified and calculated for other countries suffering internal conflicts. The methodology for calculating this index is rather complex and includes the participation of local experts in designing the indicators and their significance. There are a lot of factors that determine certain indicators to form the aggregate index. The aggregate index measurement is from 0 to 10 where 0 is the worst value and 10 is the best value.

There were three main waves of calculation of the SCORE Index in Ukraine. All three of them took into account different factors and presented different results. The first wave of the SCORE Index calculation was carried out in 2015 by USAID

and illustrated local community support to IDPs. The values of the aggregate index all over Ukraine varied from between 6.1 and 7.6 on a scale of 0 to 10 (Figure 2). The value of this indicator in the Luhansk region was 6.8 which was lower than in the Donetsk region at 7.0. Separatists occupy parts of both regions with a demarcation line dividing each of them.
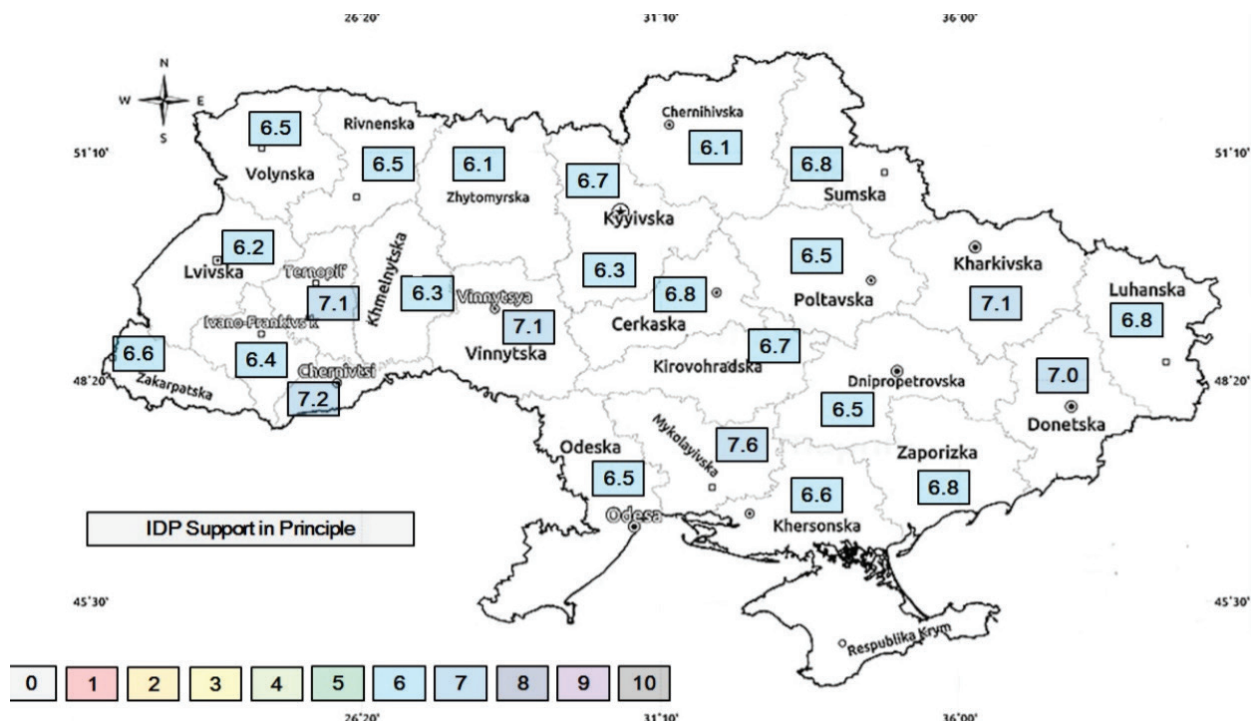
Figure 2. 2015 SCORE Index Implemented by USAID (IDP support) (SCORE. Executive Brief on Internally Displaced Persons, n.d.)

The results of this research proved that tension between the local and the displaced populations in the East of Ukraine is lower than in the regions located far away from the conflict. The harmony of IDPs with host communities is the highest in the Luhansk region (9.3) as compared to other explored regions (for example, 3.9 in the Odessa region) (*SCORE. Executive…*, n.d.). At the same time, according to the research of a group of experts for the USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy (Jennings et al., 2017), residents of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions are more sceptical of reforms in Ukraine and the future European path of the country and demonstrate pluralistic political views, having pro-Russian, pro-Ukrainian

and undecided citizens, which in their turn are tolerant, neutral or intolerant of each other. All of this grouping influences social cohesion in the regions.

The second wave of the SCORE Index calculations was implemented in 2016 and sponsored by UNDP, UNICEF and IOM. This time it was aimed at providing information about the origin of the conflict in the East of Ukraine, its transformation and its social dynamics. The research covered only five regions of Ukraine: the Luhansk and Donetsk regions, which were directly affected by the conflict and whose residents accepted the majority of the IDPs, and the neighbouring regions of Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia and Dnipro. The methodology for calculating the SCORE Index included the participation of local experts and SeeD developers and the realisation of several consultative meetings with discussions of the factors, indicators, etc. (SCORE, n.d.). During the discussions, representatives of academic institutions, local authorities and civil society expressed concern regarding the structure of the factors that were included in the SCORE Index and proposed that it should be adapted for Eastern Ukraine. In addition, scientists and representatives of civil organisations expressed the desire to implement specific projects to improve social cohesion and reconciliation in the East of Ukraine.

Calculation of the aggregate index in the East of Ukraine included several components (SCORE, n.d.):

- *Population survey,* which covered 5,300 personal interviews in the Luhansk, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia and Dnipro regions;

- *Expert interview,* which covered 72 in-depth interviews with experts in different spheres from these regions;

- *Survey of teenagers in schools,* which polled 3,300 school students, aged 13 to 17 years, in 48 secondary educational institutions;

- *Polls at the checkpoints*, 1,500 personal interviews at five checkpoints at the demarcation line in the Luhansk (1 checkpoint) and Donetsk (4 checkpoints) regions.

All surveys and interviews were conducted in the territories under the Ukrainian government's control. After data processing, the indicators were grouped as follow (SCORE, n.d.):

- Psychosocial adaptability,

- Reduction of negative migration trends,

- Social cohesion and a sense of affiliation, and,

- Tolerance and socially responsible position.

The average values of social cohesion and the sense of affiliation index for all five regions of Eastern Ukraine is shown in Figure 3. The overall average index for all five regions is 6.6.

Eastern Ukraine
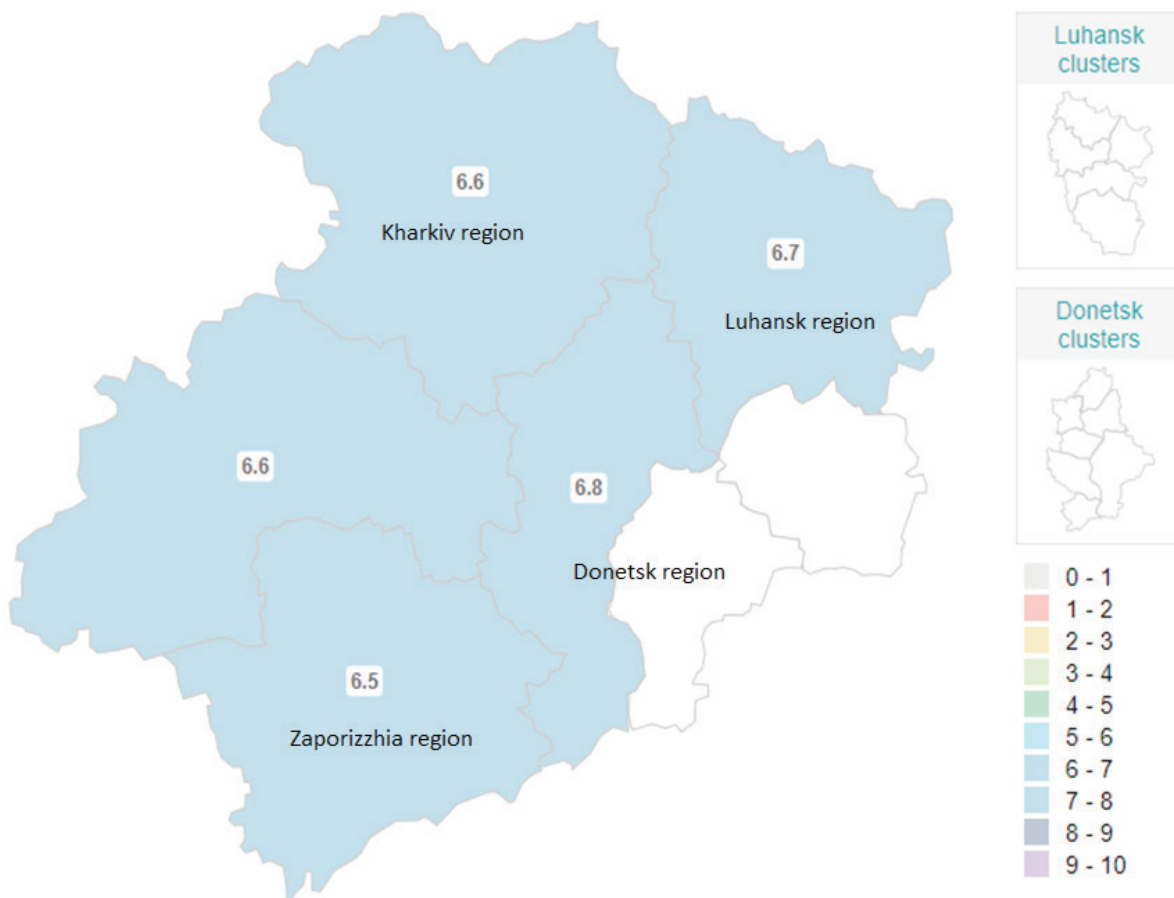
Figure 3. Values of Social Cohesion and Sense of Affiliation Index in Eastern Ukraine (SCORE, n.d.)

The Luhansk region value is slightly higher than the overall average for Eastern Ukraine. At the same time, the Luhansk region itself was divided into four clusters, each of which has its own value of social cohesion and sense of affiliation index (Figure 4).

Luhansk Clusters
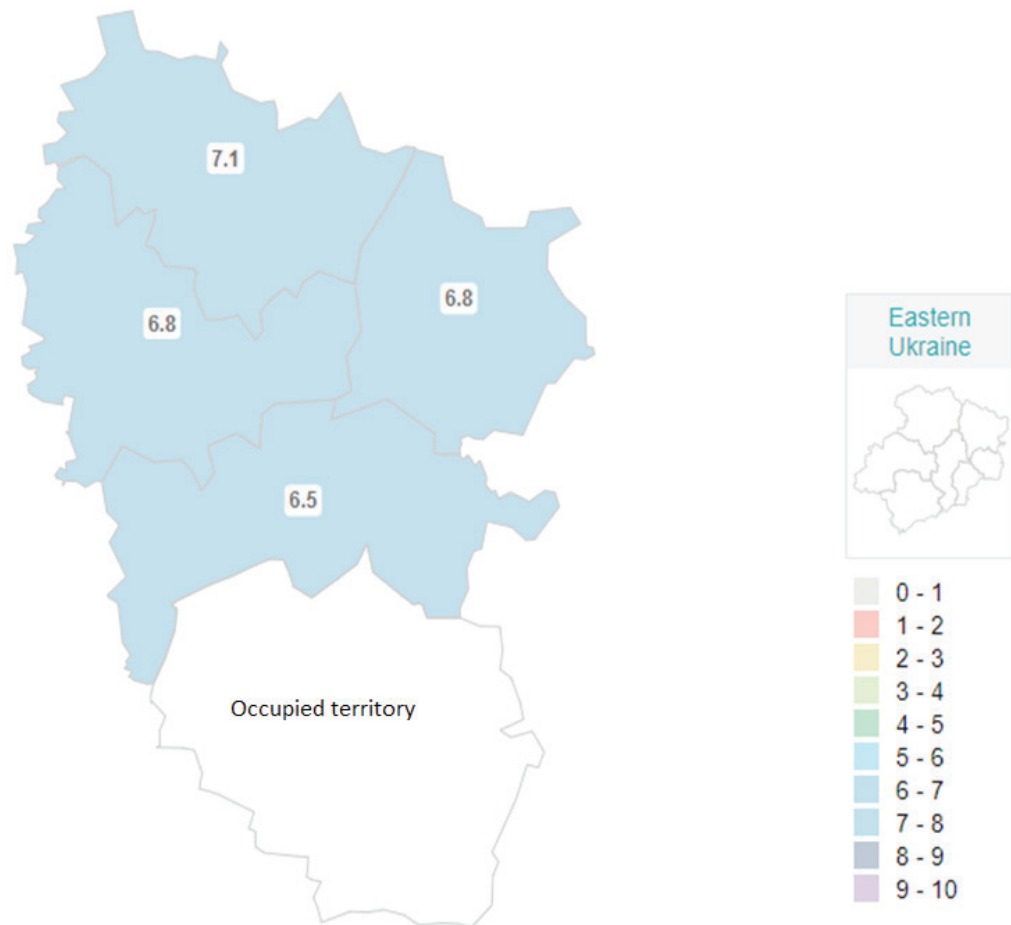
Figure 4. Values of Social Cohesion and Sense of Affiliation Index in the Clusters of the Luhansk Region (SCORE, n.d.)

The results from the Luhansk region clusters show that social cohesion and a sense of affiliation in the south of the region close to the demarcation line and the occupied territory is lower than in the north of the region and in the middle parts. The interesting fact is that the northern parts of the Luhansk region had a stronger anti-separatist and nationalist mood as compared to the southern parts of the region.

The detailed analyses of the factors that influenced the indicator showed that:

- women and men in the Luhansk region have the same social cohesion index although on average in the East of Ukraine, women have a slightly larger index value of social cohesion;

- The greater the age, the greater the cohesiveness of people;

- Pensioners turned out to be more cohesive than the unemployed, the employed or students;

- The higher the level of education, the lower the cohesiveness. People with junior specialist (associate) degrees are more cohesive than those who have Master's or PhD degrees;

- The smaller the town or village, the greater the cohesiveness (SCORE, n.d.).

Further, the people who cross the demarcation line, going back and forth to the occupied territories, and those who live close to the checkpoints, are more inclined to support solving the conflict peacefully and have a more positive attitude towards the rest of the population, including those who live in the occupied territories (SCORE, n.d.).

Regions of Eastern Ukraine have a rather high social cohesion and sense of affiliation index as compared to other countries: 5.2 in Cyprus, 4.4 in Bosnia and Herzegovina and 2.6 in Nepal. Only Liberia with the index value of 7 exceeds the value in the East of Ukraine (6.6) and the Luhansk region (6.7) (SCORE, n.d.). However, despite the fact that the index of social cohesion and the sense of affiliation (especially as compared to other regions of the world) is rather high, conflict in the region still exists and so does the tension between the local (host) and displaced populations.

The results of the calculations became the basis for the new UNDP project in the Luhansk region which is being implemented together with other actors: university, civil society and local administrations. A group of local experts – active citizens who are engaged in different spheres of activities and belong to the Advisory Board on Social Cohesion at UNDP, which makes suggestions and shares opinions on

different international projects being carried out in the region, initiated this project. UNDP within the project, entitled Restoration of Governance and Reconciliation in Crisis-Affected Communities of Ukraine, which is a part of the overall Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme supported jointly by the governments of Sweden and the Swiss Confederation (SIDA and SDC) (UNDP, 2018) and the Luhansk regional state administration supported the suggested project.

The project oversaw the organisation and the holding of public dialogues and of pilot focus groups in certain communities in the Luhansk region. A group of local experts engaged in research on social cohesion and conflict resolution attended both events (*Publichni…*, 2018; *Vidbuvsya…*, 2018). Public dialogues were carried out for groups of people from different districts of the Luhansk region and included a presentation and a discussion of the SCORE Index and its results for the East of Ukraine, a general discussion of the social cohesion issue, a collection of opinions and observation, and the formation of an analytical report for each participating community. Pilot focus groups were held in smaller groups in specific localities and also included the presentation of the SCORE Index but with more detailed discussions of its value, the collection of information, interviewing people about their values and specific features and a discussion of specific events which can be held in these communities to increase the social cohesion of the populations which live there.

The localities of the public dialogues were the following:

- The town of Novoaidar (for residents of Novoaidar, Popasnaia and Stanytsia-Luhanskaia districts),

- The town of Svatovo (for residents of Svatovo, Troitske, Bilokurakino, Kreminna districts),

- The town of Starobilsk (for residents of Starobilsk, Novopskov, Markivka, Milove, Bilovodsk districts), and

- The city of Severodonetsk (for residents of cities Severodonetsk, Rubizhne, Lysychansk).

The localities of the pilot focus groups were the following:

- The town of Zolote,

- The village of Nyzhnia Duvanka,

- The village of Chmyrivka,

- The town of Schastiie.

All of these communities, located in different areas of the Luhansk region and having different SCORE Index values, were among the target or potential target communities of UNDP and included the localities close to the demarcation line where the lowest values of social cohesion and the sense of affiliation index were observed (Figure 5).

Luhansk Clusters
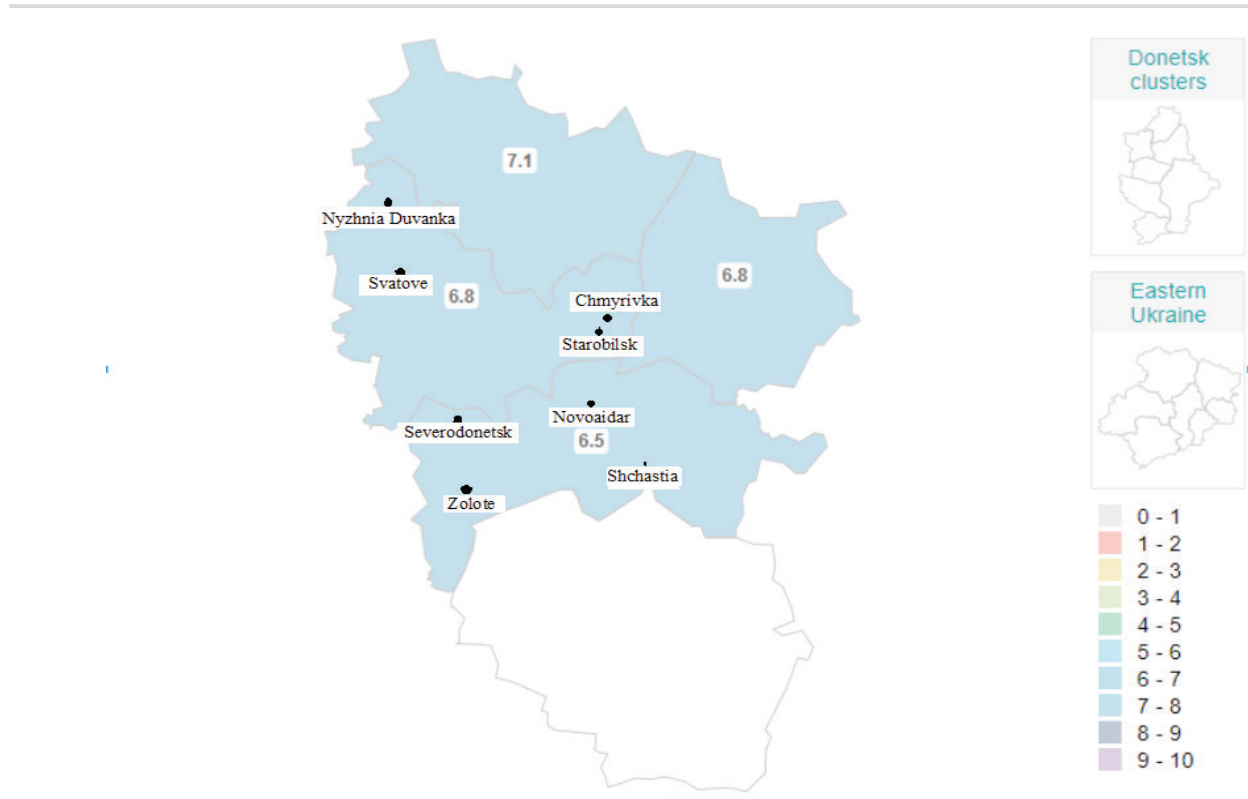
Figure 5. Target Communities of the Activities Aimed at Increasing Social Cohesion and a Sense of Affiliation

The methodology for these public dialogues and pilot focus groups is presented in Figure 6.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES AIMED AT SOCIAL COHESION

Public dialogues	Pilot focus groups

Target communities

Novoaidar *Svatove* *Starobilsk* *Severodonetsk*	*Zolote* *Nyzhnia Duvanka* *Chmyrivka* *Schastiie*
Presentation of the SCORE Index and presentation of the SCORE results for the East of Ukraine; General discussion, discussion of the results; Collection of opinions, observation, Questionnaire	Presentation of the SCORE Index and presentation of the SCORE results for the East of Ukraine; Questionnaire, Detailed discussions of the SCORE Index, Collection of information, interviewing people about their values and specific features, Discussion of specific events aimed at social cohesion of population

Drafting of reports	Identification of directions on the increase of social cohesion for each community; Drafting of the programme of activities aimed at the increase of social cohesion for each community

Realisation of plans, suggestions and activities	Organisation and facilitation of social cohesion and reconciliation activities for each community in the Luhansk region; Assessment of the efficiency of the activities aimed at the increase of social cohesion and reconciliation; Presentation of the results of change of social cohesion in communities where the proposed programme of activities was implemented

Figure 6. Methodology of Public Dialogues and Pilot Focus Groups

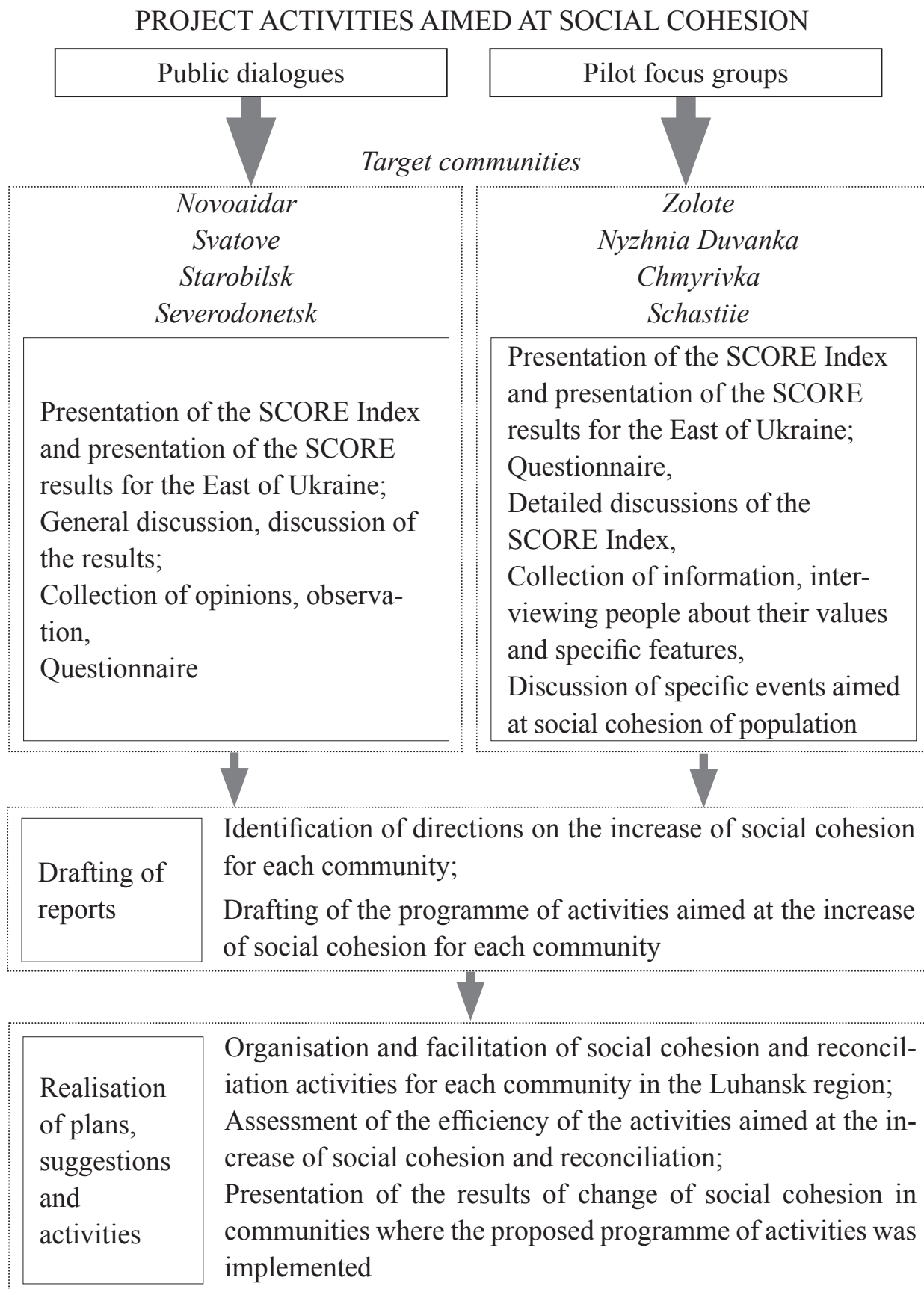The participants of the focus groups, together with experts, discussed the possible reasons for the different values of the SCORE Index in different clusters of the Luhansk region. The main reason (in their opinion) was the uniqueness of every community. According to the reports, each community has peculiarities and its own factors that can influence the cohesion of a community as a whole and separate groups of people. The discussion of the reasons why it is necessary to increase the social cohesion of the community and the results of such work for the community itself were important as almost all participants noted that social cohesion affects a community's efficiency in solving problems, its ability to resolve conflicts and its overall development. Participants also viewed a presentation on activities promoting social cohesion in foreign communities. Observing that such activities were being held not only in the conflict-affected countries and regions but also in developed countries with a stable economy and political situations, such as Great Britain, Australia, the USA and Canada (*Community Cohesion*, 2005; Australian Human Rights Commission, 2015; Mir et al., 2010; Lefko-Everett, 2016) proved to the participants that each activity matters and that an increase of social cohesion affects the overall performance of any community.

The participants of the public dialogues and pilot focus groups associated certain terms with social cohesion (Figure 7). The process of identification of associations made it possible to start the brainstorming for detecting the main activities aimed at social cohesion in specific communities. Listing of associations made it possible to realise the very essence of the cohesiveness of the participants of the events, identify the main problems that interfere with the cohesion of each particular community and identify the main measures for increasing social cohesion and the sense of belonging of each inhabitant to his or her community.

During the brainstorming process, the participants of the focus groups defined communication as the main challenge in the interaction of members of their communities as each individual has his or her own accumulated experience, worldview and perception of different life situations. Based on the analyses of the work of the focus groups and the summary of the survey results, it was possible to define the main factors influencing the social cohesion of specific communities. Such factors include:

Figure 7. Terms Associated with Social Cohesion Made by the Participants of the Public Dialogues and Pilot Focus Groups

- Personal values and emotions,

- Lack of social activities,

- Lack of dialogue with the local authorities and low citizen participation in decision-making processes at the local level, and

- Lack of resources (knowledge, information, time and funding).

The focus groups in Zolote and Schastiie (the towns which are close to the demarcation lines and which still suffer shelling from heavy artillery of the occupying military forces) proved that proximity to the conflict in the occupied territory, insecurity, the lack of well-organised checkpoints, shelling and destruction of buildings negatively influence the social cohesion in these communities.

The discussion of the associations and the factors that negatively influence the social cohesion of the population and communication with each other contributed to the identification of directions and specific measures and events which would enhance

social cohesion in specific communities. These directions and events prove the two main aspects of social cohesion increase by Berger-Schmitt (2000): (1) reducing inequality, discrepancy and social isolation and (2) strengthening social relationships and interactions. These specific measures were suggested during the group brainstorming process and they would allow for an improvement of social cohesion and peacebuilding in specific areas in that the population there is eager to realise them.

Based on the acquired information, it was possible to combine and define the main directions which will contribute to the increase of social cohesion, peacebuilding and the spirit of reconciliation in the communities:

- Creation of spaces where people can spend time together, learn something new, play games or sports and communicate,

- Organisation of holidays that the community would celebrate together,

- Realisation of projects that foster a sense of community through teamwork like creating flower beds or improving the landscape,

- Organisation of eco-activities,

- Organisation of hiking tours and tourist trips,

- Organisation of exchange visits and sharing successful stories,

- Promotion of civic engagement in different activities, and,

- Organisation of communication between different age groups.

Members of both the public dialogues and the pilot focus groups filled in the questionnaire with specific questions which also proved the directions of the abovementioned measures and projects.

The expert group that organised and held the public dialogues and pilot focus groups prepared a special report after each event. These reports included detailed descriptions of the activities, the results of the discussions in the communities including the values of the population, their preferences, their sense of affiliation to the community, their attitude towards different groups of people, their satisfaction

with their surroundings including their work environment and their neighbourhood, the willingness to leave their hometown, the main challenges and problems of relations with colleagues and the neighbourhood and the reasons which consolidate and separate people. Holding these public dialogues in four geographical clusters and the focus groups in four pilot communities in the Luhansk region allowed project leaders to define the main challenges at the local level which still exist after the beginning of the conflict in the East of Ukraine:

- *The weakness of the new local authorities in amalgamated communities and the lingering process of the amalgamation of territorial communities* which not only hinders peacebuilding but also retards the strategic sustainable development of communities in the Luhansk region, restricts citizens' participation in decision-making processes and limits the accountability of the authorities.

- *Poor participation of citizens in the development of conflict-affected areas*. Local authorities are the closest governmental body to the citizens and this closeness should produce a high level of participation of citizens (including women and youth) in local affairs. The degree of participation of citizens depends on two main factors: (1) raising citizens' awareness and understanding of their civil rights and obligations; in particular, in a conflict situation, and (2) developing effective and stable dialogue platforms.

- *Lack or low quality of services provided at the local level*.

These challenges are interconnected and prompt an address of the important issues of trust and social cohesion within and between communities. The low level of trust of institutions and service providers exists because community members do not participate in the decision-making process for the development of the service sector, for control over the quality of services and for advocacy of improvements. At the same time, when the level of participation is low, there is lack of trust vis-a-vis democratic institutions.

The results of these expert visits to communities in the Luhansk region were discussed in September 2018 at the Social Cohesion Regarding Decentralisation

Reform: Current Issues of Concern to Civil Society Forum organised and held by UNDP. Social cohesion and decentralisation at the boundary line was among the panel discussion topics at the Forum with representatives from the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine as well as other governmental bodies, local administrations, civil society, mass media and international organisations (*Analytical report…*, 2018). Among the target communities where the focus group was held was the town of Zolote which is a conglomerate of five small towns. One of the five is situated on the occupied territories and the other four are on the territory under the control of the Ukrainian government but very close to the demarcation line. One of the four towns, which is almost at the demarcation line, is constantly under shelling from heavy artillery of the occupying military forces. The issue of social cohesion for this area is vital not only between IDPs and the local population but between local people themselves as their lifestyle is significantly influenced by safety and a sense of safety.

The exposed problems were documented in the relevant analytical documents of the UNDP's Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme in the East of Ukraine and provided the basis for the development and implementation of new ideas and projects for communities in Luhansk region whose implementation is expected to result in the increase of the SCORE Index value by the end of 2019. All of the recommendations would be taken as well as the realisation of the new Good Governance and Citizen's Engagement for Justice, Security, Environmental Protection and Social Cohesion in Eastern Ukraine, 2018-2021 project at the local level with a total budget of USD 12,401,000 (*Denmark…*, 2018). The project aims at facilitating the resolution of the key issues of the weak implementation of the rule of law and the right to justice, physical and environmental insecurity, and the distrust toward institutions that dominate the territory of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions and which restrict or restrain social cohesion and peacebuilding in these regions affected by the conflict as well as their overall long-term sustainable development.

The experiment with the communities on the presentation, discussion and adaptation of the SCORE Index allowed once again to show the flexibility of the programme which helped to intervene and adjust its working plans and develop new projects for the East of Ukraine and the Luhansk region, in particular, considering local

peculiarities. This project allowed the programme to attract the attention of and engage stakeholders – the communities themselves and their representatives from different spheres; namely, the local lowest level of beneficiaries of UNDP and its donors. It also made it possible to focus resources more effectively on priority actions to be implemented in order to meet the most significant needs through the implementation of current programme projects. The aforementioned project, Good Governance and Citizen's Engagement for Justice, Security, Environmental Protection and Social Cohesion in Eastern Ukraine, 2018-2021, has already been supported by donor agencies. Another plan foresees to move the programme's activities closer to the demarcation in order line to meet the needs of those most affected by the conflict.

The main results which are expected to be reached include the increase of the percentage of inhabitants of the Luhansk region who actively participate in civil life. This indicator is planned to grow by 30% by 2022, which can be checked by consulting SCORE Index calculations provided such calculations are continuously funded.

In 2018, there was another wave of SCORE Index calculations. At the same time, the variety of factors and the resulting indicators were different from the 2016 wave. The methodology included general interviewing of the population and revealed fewer values and indicators than in 2018. These interviews and calculations were made during the visits of the expert group to eight communities in the Luhansk region and the suggestions made in the results of the visits are still being implemented or are under future implementation. Thus, it is not possible to estimate the results of the project. The second wave of SCORE calculations defined the basic desirable outcomes for establishing a social cohesion model in the East of Ukraine, among which are civic engagement, tolerance and pluralism, support for reforms and reintegration with the occupied territories (SCORE, n.d.).

Thus, the project on discussing the SCORE Index in the participating communities foresaw the organisation and holding of public dialogues and pilot focus groups discussing the necessity of social cohesion, the results of its calculations and the adaptation of SCORE results to specific communities according to their

peculiarities and needs. These activities contribute to presenting the results of this study of social cohesion and reconciliation in the East of Ukraine to a wide section of the population and local authorities (rural, district, regional). As the SCORE Index is an analytical tool for understanding the dynamics of change in society and, in particular, in certain communities that have been subjected to conflict, it made it possible to set the starting points for the development of approaches and programmes aimed at strengthening social cohesion and peacebuilding in specific communities in the Luhansk region. Both public dialogues and pilot focus groups had more than 300 active community representatives and had the following results:

- Public opinion on the correspondence of the obtained data of the SCORE Index calculations to the real state of affairs in specific communities has been studied;
- Proposals for improving the existing state of affairs regarding social cohesion and peacebuilding have been developed;
- Directions and specific tasks for improving the social cohesion of the population in specific communities have been suggested (which could be sponsored either by UNDP or by other donors or institutions);
- A plan of the activities aimed at the social cohesion and the reconciliation of each target community which has its own peculiarities, features, problems, traditions and lifestyle and which necessitated different directions for increasing social cohesion and corresponding activities has been suggested;
- The foundation for tolerance, promoting dialogue, peacebuilding and reconciliation among ordinary citizens has been created.

This project has become the basis for the development and implementation of new ideas and projects not only in the communities of the Luhansk region where the public dialogues and focus groups were conducted, but also at the regional and national levels. The implementation of these activities would result in an increase of the SCORE Index at subsequent evaluations in the future. The achievement of all of these results will contribute to the sustainable development of the Luhansk region.

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3 ‖ FEATURES AND GOOD PRACTICES OF POLICIES ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT: THE CASE OF UKRAINE

Olga Matveieva, Olga Ivanova, Valeriya Vershynina

INTRODUCTION

Internal displacement in Ukraine as a kind of internal migration movement, from the social science approach, could be seen as an indicator of citizen reaction to the crucial changes in the local economic, political and social life as well as people's sense of safety in the local environment. From the managerial approach, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) became a potent labour force for the economy, 'especially for those communities where the institutions and enterprises from the conflict territories were transferred' (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2017).

Traditionally, the main factors driving internal displacement and migration in Ukraine until 2014 remain the current unfavourable economic situation, geopolitical uncertainty, the narrowing of the labour market with the lack of jobs and the low motivation for legal employment due to a high tax burden (Pozniak, 2007). After 2014, the term IDP obtained a new meaning: 'A citizen of Ukraine, a foreigner or a stateless person who legally resides within the territory of Ukraine and may reside in Ukraine on a permanent basis, who has been forced to leave his/her place of residence as a result of the negative consequences of the armed conflict, temporary occupation, widespread violence, infringement of human rights and natural or man-made emergencies or in order to avoid the same' (President of Ukraine, 2014).

The internal displacement crisis in Ukraine started in 2014 – 2015 as a result of Crimea's annexation by Russia and the following military operation in Eastern

Ukraine – the Donetsk and Luhansk regions – which could be seen as the territorial platform for the collision of opposite geopolitical interests. The current situation here could be described as a deep crisis with all of these circumstances: mass poverty, economic decline with the total militarisation of the national economy, political uncertainty and social imbalance. All of these circumstances affect social stability and public expectations in this regard. These became strongly negative in and nearby the zone of conflict.

This results in a high unemployment rate, an unbalanced structure of specialisations on the internal labour market and the growth of circular migration (Hrynkevich, 2009). In addition, there is secondary displacement in Ukraine driven by the problem of employment by specialisation, economic independence and safety with the overall well-being of Ukrainian citizens and a lack of conditions for the realisation of an individual's potential (Maxymenko & Talalayeva, 2012). The war in the eastern part of Ukraine also shows its reverse side where the conflict allows providing a new cycle of the developmental spiral, upgrading the instruments of its support in the direction of higher social utility, on the one hand, and modernising relevant policies, on the other (Matveieva, 2017).

According to the State Statistics Service (2018), 1.7 million Ukrainians changed their place of residence in 2014-2017, becoming internally displaced persons because of the ongoing conflict; thousands of them left the conflict zone and moved to nearby territorial communities. Generally, the negative consequences of the forced displacement as a new type for Ukraine are as follows:

- IDP migration negatively impacts overall socio-economic development (Hnybidenko, 2008; Bryliova, 2013).

- The ageing population (mainly elderly people remain in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions) with an increased tax burden on the working strata with a wide range of interrelated demographic threats.

Obviously, to solve the problem of IDP integration, it is necessary to create conditions for the realisation of the creative potential of the population throughout

Ukraine (with no discomfort to host communities) to prevent the outflow of the labour force, including highly skilled personnel (Maxymenko & Havrylova, 2014) in near-conflict zones and countrywide.

Challenge and Background

To outline the background of the challenge, the ongoing internal displacement crisis in Ukraine arose from the armed conflict triggered in March 2014 by Russia's annexation of Crimea, an autonomous republic of Ukraine, and the subsequent self-proclamations of independence by the areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in Eastern Ukraine in violation of the Constitution of Ukraine and the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine in Eastern Ukraine. Over two million people have been internally displaced from the conflict area (Maxymenko, 2015). With no clear prospects of conflict resolution, displacement is becoming increasingly protracted (Migration Policy Centre, 2014). The largest group of Ukrainian IDPs (1 million people) are living in nearby regions of Ukraine, being in a process of integration into local communities. As of 2018, approximately 800,000 IDPs are living permanently on the government-controlled territory (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2018).

The International Organization for Migration in Ukraine in Round 11 (September, 2018) of the National Monitoring System (NMS) states that the share of IDPs who reported that they had integrated into their local community amounted to 43% while 36% of the surveyed IDPs stated that they had been partly integrated. Generally, the total share (79%) of IDPs who reported a partial level of integration is almost the same as in the previous two rounds (80%). The majority (68%) of key informants reported that IDPs were partly integrated into their local communities and 24% stated that they were completely integrated (Figure 1). The change towards more moderate responses has also been observed since Round 9 (International Organization for Migration in Ukraine, 2018).
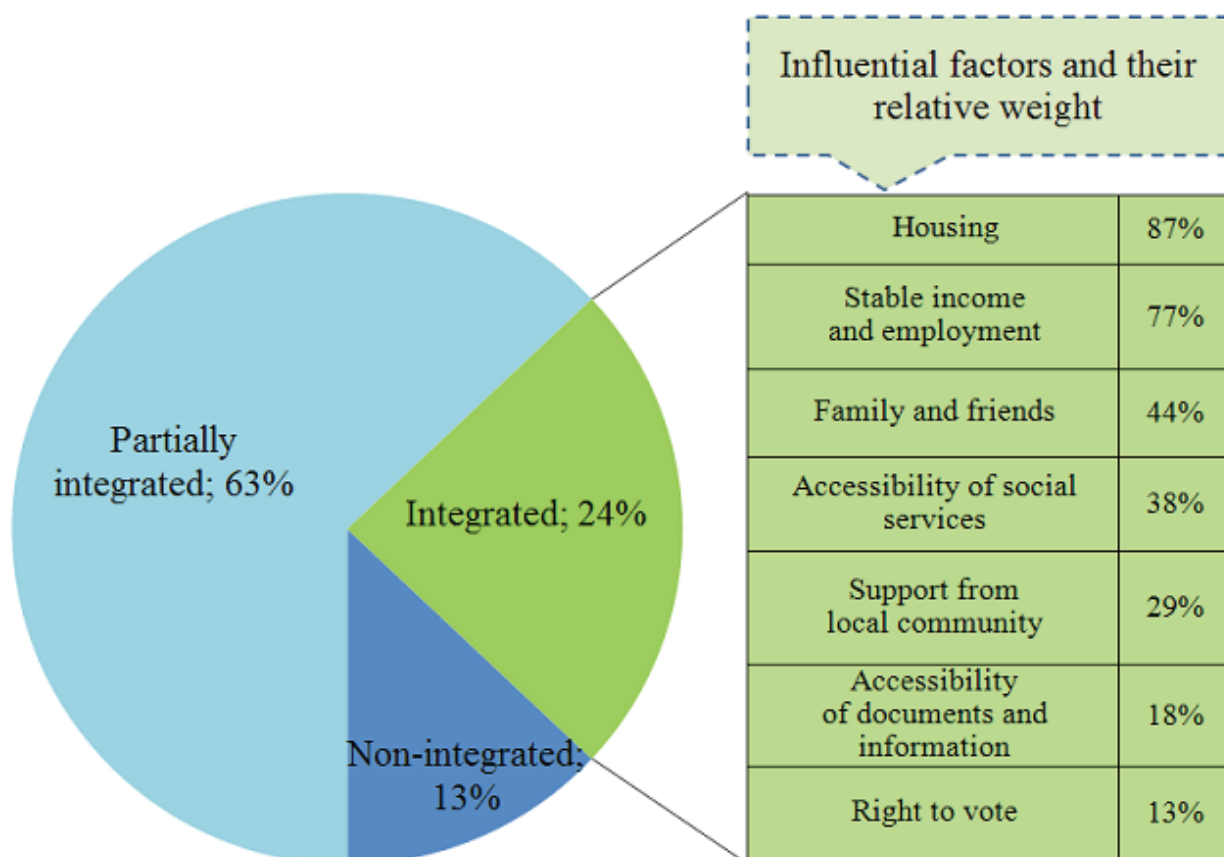
Figure 1. IDP groups distribution by the integration level and the main factors which influenced integration

The main conditions (factors) for successful integration, as indicated by the IDPs, were housing (83%), regular income (69%) and employment (48%) which have remained consistent throughout all NMS rounds. Other frequently mentioned conditions were family and friends being in the same place (44%), access to public services (37%), support from the local community (27%), easy access to documentation (22%) and the possibility to vote in local elections (17%).

Geographically, indicators of IDP integration are not equally distributed throughout the regions of Ukraine as the International Organization for Migration in Ukraine stated (2018) (Fig. 2).

According to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine (2018), only about 16 million out of the total of 26 million of the working age population in Ukraine in 2018 are officially employed which makes about 52.6 %. It is not possible to find

IDPs' self-assessment of their integraton in the local community, by geographic zones, %
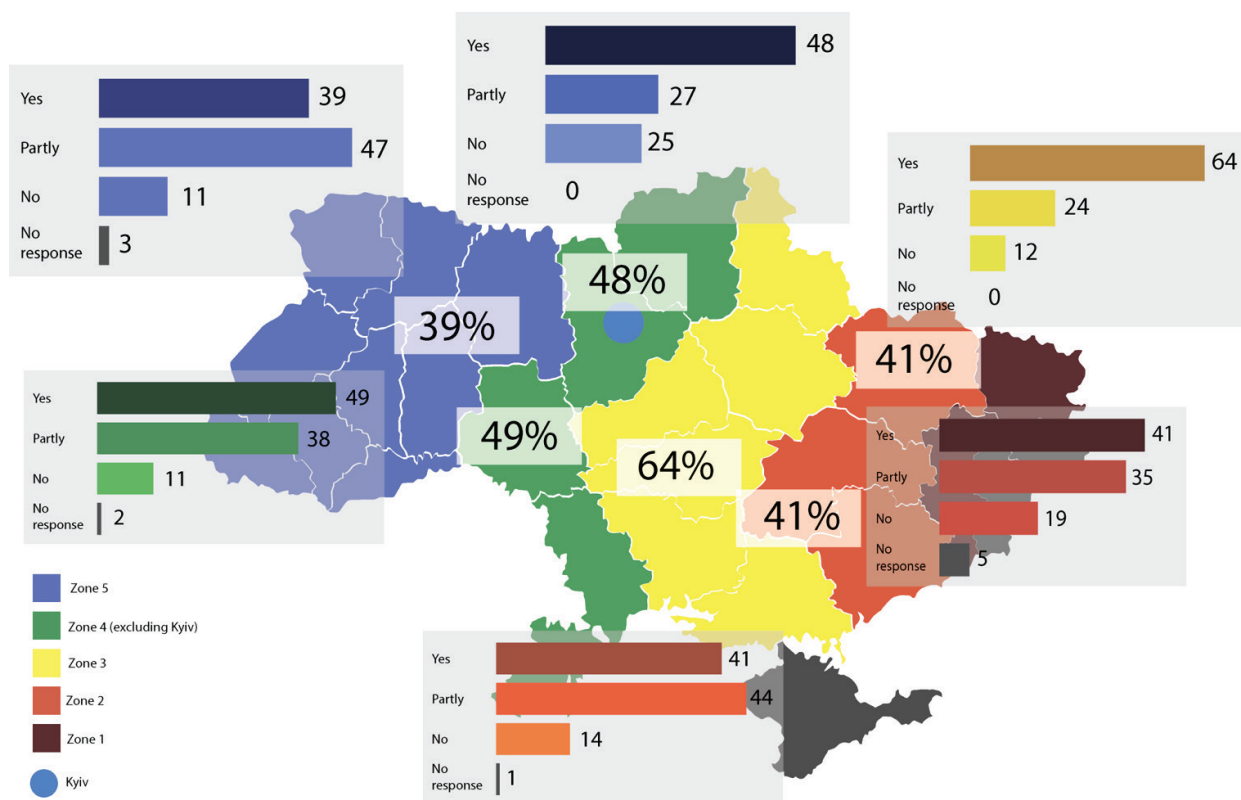

Figure 2. IDP self-assessment of their integration in the local community by geographic zones of Ukraine, %

out how many people are IDPs because neither the State Statistics Service nor the Employment Service nor the MoSP collect such statistical data (according to the official responses from these agencies). At the same time, the number of officially unemployed people in Ukraine amounted to 337,900 as of November last year according to the State Statistics Service (2018).

Labour migration driven by economic reasons and the peculiarities of the job market, happening in parallel with the internal displacement, is a process which affects the possibilities for internally displaced persons to become integrated into the host communities and compete on the labour market.

The main factors that determined the nature of labour migration in 2014-2018 were the annexation of Crimea and the occupation of part of the territory of Ukraine by Russia. Ukraine lost over 20% of its GDP (Ministry of Finance of Ukraine,

2018). It is difficult to provide an exact number of the lost companies and jobs in 2018. The relocation of a significant number of the working age population from Donbas and the shrinking of labour markets at the same time cause an increase in the supply of the workforce with a simultaneous decrease in the supply of salary. Highly qualified professionals in different industries mostly chose regional centres (oblast capitals) and bigger cities for relocation.

According to the statistics of internal displacement, it is only in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts (regions in Ukraine) that a rather significant number of people choose to live in rural areas. In other oblasts, the IDPs mostly settled in oblast capitals and bigger cities. Mariupol city, which is an industrial centre in the Donetsk oblast, had several thousand job offers available at the city's employment centre before the conflict started. In 2017, the number of registered job offers was at its historical lowest at less than 300. At the same time, 3,600 people were registered as unemployed with 650 of them IDPs. In 2018, the number of registered job offers remained at about 400.

The increase of labour migration was promoted by decisions made about providing a budget for local educational and healthcare institutions under the reform of decentralisation. On December 20, 2016, as a part of the national decentralisation reform, the Parliament of Ukraine – the Verkhovna Rada – voted for Law № 5131 on Amendments to the Budget Code of Ukraine (on the improvement of forming and implementing the budget)' (Verkhovna Rada, 2016).The law fixed the liabilities of the local government but the state budget financed only medicine and education at the local level. Therefore, programmes for labour migration supporting the resettlement in 2017 remained in the budgets of the communities which failed to implement them due to the narrowing of their own financial base.

After the law was passed, many of these programmes had to be closed which led their employees to look for new jobs. In particular, large numbers of IDP professionals in the medical sphere who chose Mariupol as their place of relocation in 2014 moved to oblast capitals in central Ukraine after Russia-supported separatists shelled the city in 2015-2016 alongside a decrease in financing for the medical sphere.

By professional groups, the highest demand for workforce by the end of September 2015 was observed for qualified workers with tools and for workers who do maintenance work, and oversee technical equipment as well as those who assemble equipment and machinery (19.1% and 19% of the total number of registered vacancies, respectively) and the lowest demand was for qualified workers in the fields of agriculture and forestry, fish farming and fishing (1.3 %) as well as technical staff (4.2 %) (Ukrainian Statistics Service, 2018).

In 2014, the key problem for IDPs when searching for jobs was the distrust of employers who thought that the conflict would be over after several months and that employees would return. Starting from 2015, the long-term nature of the conflict became obvious. At the same time, the level of hate speech against IDPs has changed. Among a large number of accusations, there were also those directly oriented at the labour market; in particular, that IDPs cannot be accepted for positions which require being accountable for assets (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre., 2018) because of their supposed unreliability.

As a result, the most pressing issue for the modern state policy of Ukraine in this sphere is in providing effective measures for the territorially restructured society to solve the problem of post-war 'reconstruction' and revitalising society in the Ukrainian government-controlled territories.

What Has Been Done

Current Ukrainian policy on internal migration could be described as a system of governmental measures and local decisions on meeting the mass migration from the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. But it should be mentioned that in spite of the foundation of the Ministry for Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs of Ukraine (MTOT), a new governmental institution started in 2016, there is still no complete holistic policy regarding IDPs. Strategies and plans drafted and approved by the government are practically of a formalistic nature, shifting the main

responsibility to local authorities. Local authorities are forced to allocate funds from their budgets to meet these challenges. Eventually, since programmes focus upon achieving quantitative rather than qualitative indicators and it is extremely difficult to assess their effectiveness and impact at the local level.

Ukraine's first law addressing internal displacement, entitled Act on Ensuring the Rights and Freedoms of Internally Displaced Persons, was adopted by the Parliament (the Verkhovna Rada) of Ukraine on October 20, 2014. On December 24, 2015, the Parliament adopted the current version of this Act and it entered into force on January 6, 2016.

In 2017, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted the Strategy for the Integration of Internally Displaced Persons and the implementation of long-term policy measures on internal migration for the period until 2020 (the Strategy). That document lies in line with the directions of the programme on state's target recovery and peacebuilding in the eastern regions of Ukraine (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2016). None of the above mentioned documents, as other legal acts of Ukraine, defines 'integration,' however. These documents were aimed at restoring and developing peace in the conflict affected regions and stimulating the socio-economic development of the territorial communities in order to improve the quality of local life through strengthening social capacity and sustainability and stimulating economic activity.

The Strategy calls unemployment one of the key problems faced by internally displaced persons and mentions the importance of the access of IDPs to the labour market as a part of their access to livelihoods.

Less than a third of internally displaced persons have regular jobs. The situation is complicated by the need for the retraining of some internally displaced persons who were formerly employed in extraction industries. As a remedy, the Strategy offers:

- Improvement of the work of the offices of the State Employment Service in terms of information provision, registration of those unemployed who seek employment assistance, job search and the employment of economically active internally displaced persons;

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- Creation of new jobs and tax exemptions (tax vacations) for small and medium-sized businesses re-established or created by internally displaced persons;

- A mechanism for the re-issue of documents that certify labour and/or pension insurance records;

- An effective financial and credit mechanism to support IDP businesses;

- Professional retraining and advanced training for internally displaced persons and expanding employment opportunities for IDPs (Ministry of the Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons of Ukraine, 2018).

The report on the status of the Strategy's implementation is expected in June 2019.

In March 2015, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine voted for the Law on Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine to Enhance Social Protection of Internally Displaced Persons № 245-VIII aimed at solving the problem of employment of IDPs. The law includes a number of measures to promote the employment of IDPs (Horshkova & Alkova, 2017).

On July 8, 2015, the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine № 505 established the Main Directions of Solving the Problems of Employment of Internally Displaced Persons for 2015-2016 (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2015). The programme ensures new approaches that will be implemented by the State Employment Service with a budget from the Fund of Obligatory State Social Unemployment Insurance of Ukraine; in particular, by introducing the mechanisms and procedures to:

- Provide employers who employ IDPs with compensation for paying salary to such persons as well as a means to cover travel costs for them to relocate to a different area for employment (to ensure the mobility of the unemployed people and motivate entrepreneurs to employ IDPs);

- Provide compensation for the cost of the re-education and training of IDPs who are registered as unemployed if the employer offers them the job for at least one year;

- Issue vouchers to support competitive advantage by re-education, acquiring specialisation, training for demobilised military, ATO (anti-terrorist operation in Eastern Ukraine) participants and internally displaced persons who have no suitable job (to increase the competitive advantage of this new social strata and promote its productive employment).

On September 8, 2015, the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine № 696 introduced additional measures to promote employment of internally displaced persons. They included providing compensation to employers for creating new workplaces as well as compensating IDPs for the cost of medical examinations and a part of their transportation costs.

Some oblasts such as Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, and Lviv, have complex regional population employment programmes for 2018-2020. Such programmes are aimed to:

- Preserve the labour potential of the oblast and increase the quality and competitive ability of the labour force;

- Introduce innovative technologies and ensure an increase in the productivity and the level of income of the working population;

- Promote the rights of workers and prevent unofficial employment and 'shadowing' the income while increasing motivation for legal employment;

- Return officially unemployed citizens to economically feasible activity;

- Promote the employment of citizens who cannot compete in the labour market under equal conditions, including demobilised ATO combatants, IDPs, young postgraduates and people with disabilities;

- Decrease unemployment in the agricultural sector; in particular, between seasons, and preserve human resources in rural areas;

- Coordinate local executive authorities, local self-government, united territorial communities, employers unions and trade unions in the oblast and, increase their role in structurally changing the labour market and developing social dialogue.

After four years of war, the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, where most IDPs live, lost three-quarters of their self-employed population living there before the occupation. The available support programmes for self-employed people proved unsuccessful to restore the level of self-employment of the population.

GOOD PRACTICES

Considering the case of the IDP integration policy provided in 2015-2018 (Table 1), we still could not describe it as a synergistic complex of decisions for effective integration because these decisions could be visualised in a range of social and economic indicators such as an employment growth, labour market saturation by working specialisations, positive changes in the age structure of the population and others. An observation of the several attempts of the Ukrainian Government to solve the IDP problem leads us to the conclusion that they are in line with a common strategy. In its turn, it is oriented on achieving the SDG10 'Reduced Inequalities'.

In 2014, city councils of some Ukrainian cities started looking for ways to include internally displaced persons with certain qualifications or of a certain age in their communities. For instance, in the city of Mariupol in the Donetsk oblast, the Executive Committee of the City Council provided corporate accommodation to families of 50 medical professionals who moved there from Donetsk according to its Decision No 88 of April 24, 2016. Such accommodation could not become private property (according to the legislation, corporate accommodation can only be privatised after living there for ten years). In the Chernihiv oblast in the village of Danylivka, five families with schoolchildren were provided with free accommodation. The IDPs saved the village school from being closed. In the village of Novhorodka in the Kirovohrad oblast, 20 IDP families with children were provided with accommodation to preserve not only the school and the kindergarten but also the health centre that was also about to be closed. In the Malovyskivka district of the Kirovohrad oblast, 121 families were provided with detached houses.

Table 1. *Main Features of Ukrainian Internal Displacement Policies in 2015-2018*

Policy measures proposed	Results planned	Effect expected	
		Social (for IDPs)	Economic (for state and local host community)
Stage 1. Direct displacement of people from the conflict areas			
Housing	Formation of the basic conditions for living in a new place *(through implementing multilevel governance programmes, direct assisting)*	Physical belonging to the housing territory	Resettlement/ localisation of the of the labour force
Stage 2. Economic background formation and strengthening the territories of IDP allocation			
Subsidising	State support payments	Meeting basic needs for food, clothing, housing	Provision of initial manpower
Employment	Primary employment *(through local programmes, direct assisting, a public-private partnership, mentoring)*	Providing a sense of IDP belonging to the local community	Injection of labour workforce in the local market Fulfilling the vacant niches of the local labour market
Stage 3. Integration/Assimilation (natural process as a result of sustained policy)			
Educational programmes and focused trainings	Specialised courses, programmes for local educational institutions	Integration to the local economy and local community through the knowledge base and skills development/application	Human potential development
Skills development initiatives	NGO and specific organisation initiatives Focused projects		
Stage 4. Enhancing IDP role in local public policy framing			
Development of platforms for social initiatives, E-governance tools Projects and initiatives of NGOs	NGO and specific organisation initiatives Focused projects Individual initiatives	Involvement in local policy making Being agents of change	Human capital development Value of local production

In every case, the decision to allocate housing was made by the village council. Newcomers took the houses that have mostly been abandoned for decades.

'Helping Hand' is one of the pilot projects aimed at promoting the rights of IDPs including ATO participants in gaining employment. This could be seen as an example of a synergy between foreign organisations and the Ukrainian Government. According to the government's decision, it continues operating in the Kharkiv oblast (CMU Resolution dated 02.12.2015 No. 1154 as amended). The project was initiated by the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine with the support of the World Bank and is implemented in the Kharkiv, Poltava and Lviv oblasts. Since 2019, it is being implemented in several amalgamated territorial communities of the Zhytomyr, Chernihiv and Donetsk oblasts. The government stipulates that its participants may be internally displaced persons and members of low-income families receiving state social assistance to low-income families. The number of low-income families receiving assistance in the Kharkiv oblast is 15,000 and the average amount of assistance for the family is UAH 3,931). Participants are involved in the following ways:

- Financial support to organise one's own business (in the amount up to 40 subsistence minimum for persons of a working age per one participant to buy equipment and materials in order to organise one's own business (in 2017 – up to UAH 64,000 and in 2018 – up to UAH 70,500);

- Participation in community service;

- Employment assistance, including to new workplaces.

In order to participate, a citizen with the appropriate status should apply to the department of social protection or the employment centre at the place of permanent or temporary residence and write an application. In addition, since April 2019, financial support may be obtained by existing business entities to create new workplaces and to hire participants in the pilot project or those dismissed from military service after ATO.

Currently, 1,600 people are participants of the pilot project. Of these, 900 are members of low-income families and 700 are internally displaced persons. More

than 800 participants of the pilot project have already been hired or have earned additional income by participating in community service.

Since the pilot project's implementation, the Regional Commission has selected 56 business plans of the participants and four business entities. The amount of assistance received for their own business is UAH 2.5 million. Additionally, UAH 20million will be provided in the state budget for financial assistance to all pilot regions within the project in 2018.

State and regional programmes (without the support of foreign donors) for workplace creation support have covered less than 3% of IDPs who are able to work. At the same time, cooperation between IDPs, local citizens and NGOs proved effective enough and there is evidence of the potential of such activities. In particular, the Lviv social enterprise, 'Rukomysly,' created an opportunity to develop self-employment not only for IDPs but also for local women from rural areas in 2015. The enterprise solved the key problem of most craftswomen who are doing handiwork – the search for access to markets and selling their products. More than 100 women were trained and started their small businesses.

However, the attitude to IDPs started changing at the beginning of 2015. The second wave of displacement and the active informational hate campaign (as part of the hybrid war and as a reaction to the lasting crisis) led to a considerable decrease in the number of projects to provide IDPs with temporary housing. The projects to involve professionals started being developed more actively by business organisations rather than local self-government authorities. In 2017, local programmes for the support of migration and the involvement of experts in the regions with money from the local budgets was not available but projects with international support still are.

For instance, 67 families (about 200 people) were provided accommodation with the financial support of the international organisation KfW in 2018. The accommodation was provided to families of professionals who are in demand in the region.

Generally, IDPs made labour markets in the regions younger and added qualified professionals to them. Nonetheless, without the systematic development of small

and medium businesses in the eastern regions, it is impossible to ensure the employment of the population at a normal level.

An example that could constructively address the above mentioned challenge in the administrative sphere is as follows: IDPs from Donetsk and Luhansk are placed in the region and automatically become members of the national-wide programme of the provision of social (or secondary) housing and employment. In this way, they pass the first stage of starting their integration into the local community. But considering the fact that the final goal of state policy is the full or best possible integration of IDPs into the local space if the opportunity to return them back to their homes will not come soon, the second stage should consist in the framing policy on how to assist people in adaptation and integration. The main vector of the policy is the creation of conditions for a comfortable stay, re-training and decent work for IDPs.

Finally, the third stage of IDP flow management is around multilevel solutions on how to assist displaced people in obtaining basic, advanced or focused knowledge for finding themselves in the local economic system. For the country, IDPs should be seen as a productive resource for the economy due to their potential, previous experience and desire to work intensively which makes them competitive in market conditions.

Conclusion

The case of Ukraine gives evidence that focused state policy measures could be applicable in conditions when people are displaced from conflict (and also depressed industrial areas) to the area where the services are more developed and IDPs need comprehensive support for adaptation, resocialisation and requalification. As the IDP policies development in Ukraine is still in process, it is rather difficult to assume concrete future results. But taking into account that resources (human, financial, economic) are stably limited here, investment in social capital is the main prerequisite for any positive changes in a resilient healthy society.

The first lesson from the Ukrainian IDP migration and integration case along with state policy adaptation is that far greater attention must be paid to preventive measures for any imbalance in the political and social sphere. If Ukraine and the international community had spent as much time devising a plan to stop the war as it spent distributing aid, many more lives could have been saved here.

The second lesson is that IDPs should not be separated from the host community either territorially or socially in order to avoid further mass disorganised migration. They might be seen as a perspective and productive strata of the local society and a valuable economic resource which could play an important role in local public policy framing and decision-making. The matter is that the probability of the opportunity to let people back on their territory never could be 100% (due to the political prerequisites and the infrastructural capacities of the destroyed areas). It is also likely that they stay on the new territory for their whole life. If such an opportunity could be, the IDPs could decide by themselves either to come back or stay in their new home being integrated fully into the local society – both economically and socially. Stimulating labour migration can help IDPs to get integrated and balance the labour market in the host community as shown by the Mariupol case.

The third lesson is about the attention paid to shaping the knowledge and skills base of IDPs to help them integrate into the local labour market, find a decent job or start their own business. The local community should promote integration (organisational, institutional, and motivational) for supporting IDP learning and training initiatives. All efforts in this direction could be seen as investments in future local development. In this direction, it is expedient to apply the following measures: creating conditions for the proliferation of legal employment, especially in those territorial communities where are the largest number of IDPs leaves; ensuring the rights and social protection of migrant workers, creating an effective alternative to those circumstances that encourage working Ukrainians to move abroad where the situation on the labour market is discriminatory for them and creating job places purposefully in sectors such as agriculture, light industry, textiles and chemicals. The more stable the national business environment is and the more dynamic the market is, the stronger are the motives for immigrants to return to their homeland. This could be seen as a basic engine for policy framing in this sphere.

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4 ‖ RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AS A TOOL FOR THE SOCIAL ADAPTATION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE AND REFUGEES

Mariia Levchenko

INTRODUCTION

The concept of restorative justice has attracted more public attention recently. It has been adopted as an approach to criminal justice in a number of countries (USA, Canada, United Kingdom), usually as a response to dissatisfaction with the traditional system of criminal justice: its inability to reduce the level of relapse in crimes, provide psychological rehabilitation of the offender and the victim, to introduce compensation for the victim's/offender harm. Such things are crucial in times when Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees are being integrated into the new communities, and therefore the need for a new approach for their successful consolidation and integration arises.

Increasing the presence of Ukraine on the European and world agendas demands from our state adapting national legislation to international standards and commitments. This is especially true for the criminal process through which the protection of important constitutional rights, freedoms and interests is taking into account the realities of the development of Ukrainian society and the ways to integrate the refugees and IDPs into the host communities.

The Scale of the Problem

In the context of conflict in Ukraine, the protection of IDP rights and their integration and reintegration take on special significance. Their status is determined by the

Law of Ukraine on Security Rights and Freedoms of Internally Displaced Persons, which describes an IDP as a citizen of Ukraine, a foreigner or a stateless person who is either legally residing or has the right to permanent residence in Ukraine and who was forced to leave his/her place of residence as a result or in order to avoid the negative consequences of an armed conflict, temporary occupation, ubiquitous manifestations of violence, violations of human rights and natural disasters (Krakhmalova, 2018).

The main problem of practical integration of IDPs, which is related to the legal status of the specified category of persons, is the identification of the real number of IDPs: firstly, not all IDPs, who arrived at the Government's controlled territory, are registered for obtaining their corresponding status; secondly, many IDPs, after having been registered in Ukraine, returned to the occupied territory or where hostilities are still taking place; thirdly, some are buying housing in new places, thereby losing de facto their IDP status, while continuing to enjoy the respective benefits.

One of the significant problems is that no state authority can "boast" today a clear database on the number of IDPs and the provision of their rights. Information provided by human rights defenders and international foundations working in Ukraine is more objective, reflecting the reality more accurately. According to OSCE and the International Renaissance Foundation, as of 1 September, 2018, the number of victims of the conflict in eastern Ukraine is approaching 3.7 million people (580 thousand of them being children) – which is equal to the population of Berlin. Around 9,553 people were killed within the period of mid-April 2014 to August 31, 2018, more than 22 thousand were injured. The downing of the Malaysian Airlines airplane (July, 2014) killed 298 people. At present, 1,783,649 people (of whom 228,049 are children), which is equal to the population of Vienna, have been officially registered (Krakhmalova, 2018). The total area of the occupied territories is 44 thousand square meters, equivalent to the territory of Switzerland or the Netherlands.

Numerous reports of the human rights organisations record the violations of IDPs rights in the following areas:

1. Obtaining an IDP status.

2. Prolonging the status.

3. Obtaining relocation assistance.

4. Registering migrants' pensions, subsidies and other social payments at the place of actual residence after resettlement.

5. Introducing the right to inheritance.

6. Finding a job and official registration according to the labour legislation (quite often IDPs are denied employment, illegally motivated by the fact that they do not have an official residence permit).

7. Searching for housing: both renting and the purchase of housing for IDPs are accompanied by a range of problems, including the deception of IDPs through illegal agreements and non-existent fees.

8. Restoring of documents (passports, birth certificates, diplomas, information from universities on student training, work books etc.) lost as a result of leaving the territory, uncontrolled by the government.

On December 16, 2015, it was approved the Social Support Programme on the adaptation and reintegration of Ukrainian citizens who moved from temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine and areas of anti-terrorist operation in other regions of Ukraine. The purposes of the programme were to solve the main problems of Ukrainian citizens who moved from the territories mentioned above and reduce the level of social tension among them and the local communities, promoting their integration and social adaptation into the new places of residence; help in creating decent living conditions, promoting rights and capacity utilisation; provision of social, medical, and material support; creation of the prerequisites for compensation for the property (material; creation of favourable conditions for voluntary return to places of previous residence).

The Methodology of IDPs' Social Adaptation in Ukraine

Under the concept of social adaptation, relevant for IDPs, we imply the following:

Social adaptation is a basis for successful integration of individuals into the new communities/societies in the process of which individuals, living their own life but faced with new circumstances, constantly acquire new social experiences. Social adaptation means that IDPs develop new behaviours that are most relevant to corresponding conditions and situations (Martynenko,2019). Social adaptation includes cultural adaptation and professional adaptation. Cultural adaptation is the process of individuals' self-determination in new social life through breaking stereotypes, changing forms of social organisation and regulation, adjusting norms and values as well as acquiring new forms of communication and new social experience. As for professional adaptation, it is a (re-)entry into profession, which may have the working conditions which differ from the past experience. Likewise, there may be no demand for their profession at a new place of residence which consequently determines the need for vocational guidance and job search, usually provided by centres of employment. Moreover, IDPs need social services regarding development of new social conditions: information, counseling, social learning, exchange of experience in support groups. The last but not the least, social adaptation of IDPs depends on successful psychological adaptation to a new place of residence. Therefore, it is closely linked with the reconciliation.

Support of social adaptation is one of the main tasks of restorative justice in Ukraine. It is required to ensure an effective and comprehensive national mechanism for the protection of the rights of victims of massive human rights violations, and their successful integration into the host communities.

It is certainly difficult or even impossible to determine a single "compensation and integration formula" that would meet the needs of all victims. Therefore, to ensure implementation of the "mechanism for integration" in a transitional period, various stakeholders should be involved in the process: not only law enforcement agencies and human rights organisations but also public bodies and non-governmental organisations.

According to data of international organisations, it takes five-10 years to integrate a migrant into a new place of residence. However, IDPs in Ukraine may need less time since they stay in their own country, know the language, have mostly the necessary qualifications to find work, know how to solve problems with the registration of documents, how to send a child to school or how to get health services (Arakelova, 2017). However, the feeling of being a second-class citizen still arises in IDPs. There are examples of difficulties in finding accommodation and/or employment or schooling for children. In parallel, there are cases of blaming IDPs for hard conditions of life or death of relatives in eastern Ukraine (Hnatyuk, 2014). The resettled, who are "unaccepted" here and "superfluous" there, are keenly willing to adapt to new conditions and become equal members of Ukrainian society (Krakhmalova, 2018). This aspiration results in stress resilience and social activities, labour and entrepreneurial behaviour.

One of the priority directions of improvement of the situation in Ukraine is civil society develpment and its active participation in governance at all levels. The number of civil unions engaged in resolving IDPs' problems shows a significant upward trend. However, in general their effectiveness is not very high, despite some well-functioning and constructive organisations. The approach of restorative justice can contribute to strengthening of social cohesion in communities of the eastern and southern regions.

Restorative justice can contribute to:
- Integration of individuals and groups who have suffered from conflict and express increased readiness for peacebuilding;

- Strengthening the economic situation of the most vulnerable groups affected by the conflict through restoring their livelihoods with sustainability perspective;

- Strengthening communities' resilience through social cohesion and empower-ment.

Restorative justice combines elements of psychosocial assistance, elements of social cohesion (bringing groups and communities together) and, in case of

conflicts, elements of reconciliation. In this regard, there is a need for a new approach to respond to crimes – introducing procedures for mediation in criminal cases, based on the principles of reconciliation, end of the conflict through mutual apologies, repentance of the conflict committed, the mitigation of IDPs emotional, material and physical losses, and the perpetrator's liability for the offenses.

Restorative Justice as a Tool

The approach of restorative justice has been developed for over 25 years in many countries around the world, in particular in New Zealand, Norway, Germany, France and Poland, where restorative justice programmes are legally included in criminal processes as an alternative or complementary to the justice system (Zehr, 2015). Ukraine is currently at the stage of forming a national model of restorative justice. One can hear more and more voices for the maximum integration of this approach into the criminal justice as a tool for reconciliation and integration of IDPs in the communities.

Research papers (Trenczek, 2015; Levad, 2012; Dignan, 2017; Zehr, 2015) confirm that restorative justice, applied separately or in parallel with traditional measures, lead to the following consequences:

- Reduction of the crime relapse rate;

- Preventing new crimes by persons previously involved in crimes of lesser severity;

- Increasing efficiency of re-education of offenders and returning them to normal life through psychological assistance and inclusion into life of local communities;

- Partial or full reimbursement to harmed parties and their psychological rehabilitation.

Recovery justice programmes are based on the following basic principles:

a) Reparation harm and pursue justice. The point is that victims and their needs should be central in justice process and pre-conflict situation needs to be restored.

b) Offenders should accept responsibility for their actions, i.e. consider the needs of victims, acknowledge their guilt and compensate the damage caused. Responsibility is interpreted as offenders´ "response" to their own actions, which inflicted damage to another person. Thus, these are actions aimed at correcting the consequences of unlawful conduct. The starting point of restorative justice programmes is the damage that was inflicted upon and should be compensated by the offenders themselves, and not a formal violation of the law.

c) Self-determination of the parties, based on assumption of people's desire to agree. The right to independently make decisions is delegated to the parties. Victims should be able to participate fully in the process if they wish. Restoration of justice seeks to reintegrate all stakeholders, opens the door for effective participation of those who, as a rule, have no voice in traditional criminal justice systems: criminals, victims, their families and neighbours. The results of the decision should be fair and understandable for all participants (Zehr, 2015). At the same time, the role of the government is to preserve the public order and maintain justice.

d) Engagement of the closest social environment and representatives of local communities (family, school, circle, etc.) in the process. Strengthening the community to prevent further damage helps to heal victims and helps offenders to correct the problem, change their behaviour, redevelop, and prevent spreading of crime among other community members.

Restorative justice is focused on the future. The focus is not on punishment, but creation of healthy and safe environments, empowerment of affected communities in the process of administering justice (Trenczek, 2015).

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There are many models of restorative justice. The most common of are: reconciliation programmes for victims and offenders (also known as mediation, conferences for victims and offenders); circle of justice – programmes based on the traditions of them the North American Indians (held predominantly in Canada); family conferences (natives of New Zealand); victim assistance programmes; programmes for facilitating integration of ex-criminals; restitution; involvement in public works.

Mediation is the most advanced model of restorative justice. As a rule, victims and offenders have the opportunity to face-to-face meeting under controlled conditions and with the participation of a specially trained mediator who has a background in psychology and jurisprudence (Zehr, 2015). In cases where one or both parties do not want to meet, tools such as video messages or letters can be used. During meetings, both parties have the opportunity to ask each other questions about the crime and get a chance to better understanding of the crime impact on each of them.

The following mediation models are commonly found in the criminal justice system:

- Ecclesiastical-oriented mediation, since many religions consider the idea of restorative justice as a spiritual way of healing the participants of the conflict;

- Mediation through private agencies, i.e., special non-profit organisations set up precisely for the needs of local community members, regarding criminal mediation;

- A model-based test facility is typically used for juvenile offenders. Often the procedure for mediation may be conducted by a probation officer;

- A model used in special centres for mediation, focused on self-solution of minor criminal cases and other disputes.

It is important to note that today all restorative justice measures taking place in Ukraine are usually initiated and implemented by a network of civic organisations and practically do not have any support at the state level in terms of both – legislative regulation and any technical assistance (Woroniecka-Krzyzanowska &

Palaguta, 2016). Thus, mediation between IDPs and local communities in Ukraine is mainly an autonomous process, implemented by the interested parties at the local level. These restoration programmes are the result of pilot initiatives supported primarily by foreign donors and in some cases by local authorities.

In general, further development of restorative justice, based on a variety of mechanisms, such as the contract between IDPs, refugees and local communities, mediation of the public, targeted compensation, could provide the following benefits:

- It will not only encourage reconciliation, but create a new way of dealing with offenders (in a form of personal responsibility in accordance with a peace treaty);

- In relation to criminal cases, an additional mechanism for addressing the damage inflicted upon the victim will be put into effect;

- It will provide offenders with social and psychological support through directing them to various kinds of social and psychological services and public monitoring. The timely rehabilitation of juveniles is especially important;

- Citizens participating in restorative justice programmes acquire skills to utilize this civilized and timely form of conflict resolution.

A thorough analysis of development of restorative justice in the European countries is an important prerequisite for the development, regulation and implementation of this process in Ukraine. Ukraine has no other prospect of effective and harmonious development of social relations, and, consequently, legal relations, other than the way that other states of developed democracies are advancing. In this context, we are talking about the implementation of restorative justice (Hnatyuk, 2014). Therefore, we should deeply and critically study the accumulated experience and creatively adapt it, considering of course our own historical features and current realities.

Firstly, we will sum up the disadvantages of internally-displaced families, typical problems of which, identified through observations and interviews and generalizing of official data, are the following:

- Psychological problems:

   a) Common, characteristic to all family members: a sense of uncertainty about both – the future and the present; psychological trauma from witnessing destruction and violence, war; fear of losing their identity; the feeling of sacrifice and victimisation as a result of compact accommodation; low self-esteem or aggression, anxiety, complicated grief and pain, fear of change, a sense of helplessness and insecurity or anger; psychological difficulties with new experience of living in places of compact residence; the loss of parental security for their child as a result of helplessness in an extreme situation; change in family values; lack of critical thinking; problems with managing their own psychological state, emotional manifestations, emotional violence; isolation and deep feelings. There are personal life crises and family crises that are superimposed on one another, worsening the livelihoods of the family;

   b) Children's problems: disturbed emotional development due to direct witnessing of military events and/or forced migration: fears, increased stress, anger, aggression, feelings of insecurity and helplessness, anxiety, low self-esteem and feelings of guilt. It is hard for children to express their own feelings and ideas. Anger, conflicts with local children, alienation and isolation are observed: resettled and local children play separately. Possible interrupted learning, loss of preschool and extracurricular education as a result of resettlement, problems of attention, memory, learning, traumatic dreams and sleep disorders, psychosomatic symptoms that, in the absence of medical and psychological assistance, can eventually become a persistent health issue.

Regional challenges for IDPs are also worth noting: low motivation to adapt at a new place vis-a-vis a desire to return to their own homes; low motivation to find new jobs due to the impossibility of compensating for the earnings of miners (pre-dominant industry in Donbass), highly skilled workers in other territories where there are lower salaries and no relevant enterprises; often separatio inn families when one part remains in the occupied territories and the other part – in places under Ukrainian control.

The situation of resettlement, itself, causes a state of maladaptation. The established relationships with environment, work and friends are broken (Arakelova, 2017). Forced relocation is accompanied by significant psychological and material problems that determine the vulnerability of IDPs, families and children. But the degree of their vulnerability is different and depends on the adaptive capacity of families.

However, it is important to mention that not all communities are economically prosperous, therefore, they require some assistance from social services in reconciliation which previously were not provided by social workers. The services may include round tables, party dialogues and meetings and their basis should be social contracts between all participants in reconciliation – with responsibilities and lists of planned activities and actions.

The restorative justice approach includes:

- Restoration of relations to their previous state;

- Strengthening and expanding "strong points" and the points that "worked" for reconciliation;

- Transformation, when restorative relations and restorative culture not only carry on "repairing", but creates opportunities for growth, increasing its potential.

The philosophy of restorative justice is a way of life (Zehr, 2015), and is a combination of values, on which the practice is built together with principles that describe the way to implement values in practice, and methods (practical tools, procedures) that are used for this purpose. Restorative practices are those that involve communities or those which are implemented in situations of isolation, before making a decision on terms of respect, understanding, care and responsibility; these four main conditions are the common values upon which a restorative approach is based.

There is still no commonly accepted classification of restorative practices. In fact, any practices that contribute to restoring or building community relationships are restorative and can vary from completely informal (such as the expression of feelings

and the use of "I-statements") to the most formal, involving many participants and foreseeing serious planning, preparation, structuring and complexity. It is possible to combine them according to the areas of implementation (Table 1).

Table 1 – Classification of restorative practices (in the sphere of implementation)

Restoration practices in criminal conflicts (restorative justice)	Mediation between victims and offenders; Public justice circles; public forum justice.
Restoration practices in communities	Mediation in resolving conflicts and disputes; family group meetings; procedures for building consensus in the community; Circles
Restoration practices in the family conflicts	Circles. Family conferences, family group meetings; mediation.
Recurrent training practices Organisations	Mediation and peer mediation Circles

What Makes Restorative Justice the Most Conducive Way for Social Adaptation in Modern Conditions?

First of all, one of the important parts of the restorative justice is to orient the mediation procedure to the interests and needs of the parties. During mediation, the parties remain the "owners" of their conflict and retain control over the process of its solution. Working out and making decisions, that is in line with the interests of the parties of the conflict, depends on themselves. It is based on a human-centered approach and can resolve the conflict without imposing strict obligations on the parties.

Restorative justice allows parties to find conflict resolution at the "win-win" level, develop a mutual understanding and reach a new level of trust. Another benefit of restorative justice is that the parties of the conflict communicate directly, not

through their representatives (lawyers, legal advisers), and therefore do not lose control on the process. Thus, it helps to save time and money and gives people the opportunity to discuss the issue in a safe situation. Naturally, it can open up the hidden motive forces – motivations, fears, interests – blocked before the start of restorative justice. The ability to listen when people talk about conflict provides a great opportunity to unleash these forces.

Principles of restorative justice:

- *Voluntarity.* The mediation procedure is purely voluntary. No one can force the parties to mediation. Restorative justice is a voluntary process based on the aspirations of the parties to achieve an honest and fair deal. It is manifested in the following:
    - No party is forced to participate in restorative justice;
    - Any participant may withdraw from the process at any stage;
    - Agreement with the outcome of the restorative justice process is also purely voluntary;
    - The parties themselves control the course and results of process;
    - Mediator services are accepted by both parties voluntarily throughout the entire procedure.
- *Impartiality.* The restorative justice facilitator always has to act absolutely objectively with respect to each of the parties, to carry out their work objectively and honestly, to mediate only those cases, in which s/he can remain impartial and fair. The facilitator is neutral in relation to the conflict.
- *Confidentiality.* The facilitator must confidentially store all information received during the process. Any information confidentially notified by the facilitator to one of the parties should be communicated to the other party, unless otherwise agreed by the other party or this is required by law.
- *Distribution of responsibility.* The process of restorative justice is characterized by the fact that the parties, themselves, are voluntarily taking part in the procedure, and producing possible solutions to the problem. The

facilitator does not accept, endorse or impose any ready-made decision. S/he directs the process of interaction between the parties, creating conditions for better understanding by the disputants each other.

Restorative justice is appropriate for the following prerequisites:

- There are arrangements between the parties that they cannot or do not want to reveal to the third one, and want to keep confidentiality;

- Irritation and emotions of the parties to the conflict hinder their effective communication;

- The resolution of the conflict has come to a standstill;

- Disputants are interested in good relationships in the future;

- All participants seek an agreed solution to the conflict;

- All parties are represented;

- It is not about fundamentally valuable benchmarks, fundamental rights or just about the decision "yes / no";

- There are no sharp differences in power of the parties. If there are, then the weaker ones should strengthen their power position (for example, by developing good alternatives for discussing, searching for allies or doing non-violent resistance) or stronger must be prepared to abandon the power position within the framework of restorative justice;

- There is enough time to develop a coherent solution to the conflict;

- Opponents have minimal opportunities for self-expression and self-affirmation. Also, they have no pronounced mental illness or limitation, there is no strong dependence, they are not abusive.

Practice of IDPs Social Adaptation in Implementing Restorative Justice Programme

Different regions of Ukraine develop different models for implementing restorative justice programmes. This includes the various stages of the criminal process in which cases are handled for mediation, as well as cooperation with various state bodies that transfer these cases. However, most of the programme deal with reconciliation, preventive work with juvenile IDP offenders and establishing cooperation between city court, city prosecutor's office and administration of internal affairs (organisation in Ivano-Frankivsk "Faith in the Future"; the Ukrainian Center for Understanding and the Mediation Group in Mariupol; Kharkiv Public Center "Youth for Democracy"; Western Ukrainian Center "Women's Prospects").

In Khmelnitsky, the flagman project for the implementation of restorative justice was conducted together with the American non-governmental organisation "River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding" and the Ukrainian NGO "Youth for Global Progress". During the implementation of the project, supported by the Community Solutions Programme, the local activists and mediators were trained to work with the restorative justice circles with an aim to restore peace in the community, and keep active in conflict resolution by assisting and supporting the parties in the processes. The project included mediation theory, along with the specifics of restorative mediation and the knowledge of these standard and the course on mastering basic mediation skills.

In 2019, a presentation of the Methodological Recommendations for Assessing the Risks of Conflicts in Communities Affected by Armed Conflict was held in Donetsk Oblast with a particular focus on restorative justice programmes. The Recommendations were developed by the Ministry for Temporary Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons and presented by Yusuf Kurkchi, First Deputy Minister for Temporary Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons. He said that to a certain extent each community of Ukraine feels the consequences of an armed conflict, but the Donetsk and the Luhansk oblasts are also in need for constant monitoring of social sentiments and mediation.

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There are approaches in restorative justice that different from conflict management and are more inclined towards conflict transformation. We support the latter because conflict management, as we see it in the example of Ireland and the Balkans, does not produce a solution to the actual conflict. This is an attempt simply to manage the conflict but to resolve it.

The restorative justice programmes represent a chance for a dialogue between the host community and IDPs. What is even more important, they influence understanding of the conflict by society. The specialists refer to restorative dialogue as a procedure through which people in conflict should go. Conflict transformation is more effective but more difficult because it depends on transformation of people in society, individuals have to undergo their transformation – to grow up, to become more tolerant, to understand and to accept.

Embarking on social adaptation programmes, the state can come from different directions – working with key people, opinion-makers which in turn have the power to influence society ar large, – to change their position. We believe that involvement with restorative justice programmes benefits communities, as we saw that basic reconciliation began when Ukrainian NGOs worked with ATO veterans and their families. Restorative justice is a kind of conflict transformation training for families on how to resolve interpersonal conflicts and start the process of reintegration and reconciliation.

Recommendations and Conclusions

Within the framework of the implementation of restorative justice programmes in Ukraine, there are two goals:

Goal 1 – Integration and Peacebuilding

a) Providing psychosocial counselling to individuals and groups. The activities include: short-term crisis intervention to address the most pressing issues and

long-term social support to solve the complex problem situation, improve their welfare and socio-economic integration. Psychosocial support for target groups (individuals and groups). Non-violent communication and restorative justice trainings for beneficiaries to help them in transformation of conflict situations, avoid violence and develop individual mediation skills.

b) Open actions aimed at reconciliation and peacebuilding. The activities include: conflict mapping and analysis of monitoring and social research of the implementation of restorative justice programmes on a regular basis. The informational activities on the restorative justice programmes will address the issues of concern by inviting people whose lives are linked to a well-defined theme on which they are working. When they share their life stories or experiences with other people during an open event, it often leads to the situation where other participants reveal their own weaknesses and change their interpretation of the issue. The activities are aimed at overcoming the stereotypes or misperceptions of people involved in conflict situation from the western regions of eastern Ukraine and vice versa.

Goal 2. Livelihoods (employment and business networks)

Within the framework of this goal, it is recommended to create the business centers all across Ukraine to improve employment opportunities and develop self-employment skills.

The effect of restorative justice programmes depends on understanding of their importance and active support from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. If seen as a part of social integration strategy, and if assisted in carrying out the coresponding activities at the national and regional levels with involvement of professionals with practical experience in restorative justice, the effect will be stronger and higher. The theoretical and methodological materials on the issues of Peacebuilding and mediation developed by foreign and domestic experts will also contribute to the results that have significant relevance for the country, society, communities, individuals and citizens.

Academic research and practical work, conducted together with American non-governmental organisation "River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding", Ukrainian NGO "Youth for Global Progress" and Khmelnytskyi National University in the Khmelnytskyi region during the last two years, allow us to conclude that due to the complex socio-political situation, psychological problems such as acute emotional disorders, complicated grief, associated with loss of relatives, disorientation and panic attacks are spreading among IDPs, adolescents, students and other members of the local community which in its turn contribute to increase of the conflict level.

Consequently, there is an urgent need to find effective solution to conflict situations. Restorative justice practice contributes to it broadly, since it is aimed not only at resolving the existing conflicts, but at preventing their aggravation or creation of new ones. In this process, the role of experienced facilitators, in our opinion, is very important for practising non-violent peaceuilding measures and creation of safe environmens.

The prospects of further implementation of the restorative justice is seen in dissemination of experience among educational spaces of universities, in particular – through trainings of facilitators. Experience exchange between mediators and representatives of educational institutions and organisations, local authorities and non-governmental organisations is also crucial. All this will contribute to building a peaceful, safe environment based on the principles of understanding, constructive dialogue and peacebuilding.

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5 ‖ HOUSING SOLUTION FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE IN UKRAINE: SHIFTING FROM THE CENTRAL TO THE LOCAL LEVEL

Oleksandra Ferlikovska

INTRODUCTION

In many countries around the world, conflicts and natural disasters force millions of people to flee from their homes. International or internal armed conflicts, hybrid wars and natural disasters cause the movement of significant numbers of people to safer areas. These movements are forced and are commonly referred to as "displacement". The majority of those displaced by natural disasters or armed conflicts remains within the border of their country when feasible. As a rule, such individuals are referred to as internally displaced people or IDPs. Culture, language, family links and economic reasons are often thought to prevent these individuals from leaving their country of origin.

As of the end of 2017, 40 million people were internally displaced throughout the world.[*] Over the last ten years, the drastic increase in displacement occurred due to the conflicts in the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa. A series of typhoons in South and East Asia and the Pacific resulted in a vast displacement of people in 2017. Acknowledging the increased scope of the global displacement and the protracted nature of the majority of the conflicts behind them, it would be too optimistic to expect that the global displacement issue will be solved in the upcoming years.

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[*] *Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre,* 2018 Global Report on Internal Displacement.

Displaced peoples face numerous challenges in terms of their protection, including access to shelter, food and other basic services. Displaced peoples in urban areas struggle with poverty, the lack of public services and often ambiguity regarding their legal status. Violence, abuse and exploitation often exist alongside their forced displacement. Finding and securing durable solutions for such individuals is challenging. In theory, displaced peoples should be provided with the opportunity to find long-lasting solutions through 1) voluntary repatriation to the areas from which they were displaced, 2) integration into host communities or 3) further resettlement within the country or beyond its borders. These options are mentioned in hierarchical order as they are not equally preferable.

Voluntary repatriation is considered as the first priority; however, reality shows that it is often impossible to achieve this due to political and security reasons. The second option, that of integration into host communities, is based upon the assumption that displaced peoples are willing to remain and are able to start a new life with their rights protected and equal opportunities provided as compared to the rest of the population. In the case of internal displacement, local integration seems to be justified when the repatriation scenario is not possible. The option of resettlement usually applies to cases when the displaced person is not in a position to stay in the place of asylum.

No matter what option is applied, the critical importance of housing for displaced peoples is increasingly acute. Often facing highly limited resources, displaced peoples have to accept substandard housing and conditions which do not provide adequate living conditions. Their housing options tend to narrow over time as they deplete their assets, leading many to join the ranks of the urban poor. IDPs may also resort to living in hazardous or violence prone locations where they have limited or no access to services and are exposed to the risk of secondary displacement. Despite the recognition of the housing problem by governments, international agencies and civil society groups, there is often little practical guidance on how to address this complex and potentially controversial issue.

Ukrainian Context

The 2014 conflict in eastern Ukraine resulted in the loss of control over the Donbas region and the large displacement of locals who fled to government-controlled territory. The Minsk I and II agreements, signed in 2014 and 2015, did not pave the way to an immediate ceasefire and the gradual return of the disputed territories to Ukrainian control. After years of conflict, the fighting and shelling along the contact line continue to cause loss of life, displacement and damage to civilian infrastructure. According to statistics from the Ukrainian Ministry of Social Policy, there were around 1.5 million officially registered IDPs in early 2019.[*]

With no clear prospects for conflict resolution, displacement is becoming increasingly protracted. Since the start of the conflict, IDPs continue to face various difficulties integrating into host communities. Unsurprisingly, many territorial communities with a large number of IDPs experienced an additional burden on the limited local infrastructure as well as a significant rise in housing and food prices, compounded by low wages and the complexity of the employment situation.

Housing remains the most important type of support with this being provided to 84% of IDPs while monetary assistance from the state and employment are provided to 75% and 66%, respectively.[**] Regional administrations in Ukraine have provided IDPs with collective accommodations such as summer camp facilities, hotels, dormitories and communal buildings for a small fee. IDPs also live with relatives and friends, in accommodation offered by host communities or in rented housing. As of December 2018, more than 60% of IDPs continued to live in rented premises.[***] Many IDPs report difficulties in finding housing which in many cases stems from the reluctance of landlords to lease a home to internally displaced peoples and also to an increase in rental rates.

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[*] Official website of the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine: https://www.msp.gov.ua/news/16534.html

[**] *International Organization for Migration,* National Monitoring System Report on the Situation of Internally Displaced Persons December 2018.

[***] *Ibid.*

A large amount of IDPs have been unable to overcome these challenges: 10-12% of them have returned to the non-controlled territory, 16-18% consider returning and 25% fear that they may have to return for economic reasons.[*] As some IDPs are not able to afford living in the government-controlled area, they are forced to return to non-government controlled territories. Since 2016, the number of returns has increased, given depleted savings, delays in the payment of social benefits and pensions, and the inability to pay increased utility costs. Further, 85% of returnees explained that their decision was based on the need to pay rent while still having private property in the non-controlled territory.[**] For those who reside in the controlled territory, housing remains one the sharpest obstacles to integration.

The Government of Ukraine, local administrations, the humanitarian community and the IDPs themselves are thus challenged to find a durable housing solution in order to provide shelter to the many people who fled the conflict and prevent them from further displacement and an involuntary return to the non-government controlled territory. Such housing should satisfy not only the basic needs of the individual but also provide a dignified standard of living. It is especially important in terms of local integration as the people who live in conditions worse than those accepted in the local community are frequently subject to marginalisation. In the Ukrainian context, this means that such housing should at least be equipped with running water, electricity and a gas supply. It should be able to withstand harsh winter temperatures and be geographically available to public services.

WHAT WAS DONE: CENTRAL LEVEL LEGISLATION, COLLECTIVE CENTRES, LOCAL PROGRAMMES

Most of the actions taken by the Ukrainian government were dedicated to providing an immediate response to the affected population such as the provision of a

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*   *Ibid.*
** *Ibid.*

monthly housing compensation (albeit not sufficient to secure payment for rental housing) and subsidies for fuel during the winter. However, no systematic solution was provided to address the challenge of massive internal displacement until the adoption of the *IDP Integration and Durable Solution Strategy* in November 2017. The strategy provides more general directions regarding conflict response development but not concrete actions. The list of such actions was introduced in November 2018 within the *Action Plan for the Strategy Implementation*. Regarding the right to housing, the *Action Plan* differentiates between the right to social and temporary housing and that of access to permanent and affordable housing.

In terms of social and temporary housing, the *Action Plan* provides the following:

1. Annual state budgetary subventions for the creation of IDP temporary and social housing stock is to be provided.

2. The government is to conduct an IDP housing needs assessment.

3. An inventory is to be conducted of the available real estate which can be used to form an IDP housing stock.

4. The creation of registers of potential housing stocks in local communities.

5. The development of vulnerability criteria to insure that the most vulnerable IDPs will be the first ones receiving housing.

The key shortcoming of the state response is that the strategy covers the period until 2020 while the *Action Plan* was introduced only in November 2018. In other terms, most of the provisions of the *Action Plan* can hardly be expected to be implemented in a timely fashion. The other problem is that the social and temporary housing is provided to a vast circle of social groups and not solely to IDPs. Under Ukrainian legislation, 20 social groups are eligible for priority rights to social housing while representatives of 12 other social groups – including war veterans and those disabled during war – are granted the 'absolute priority' right to social housing. At the same time, even these latter groups often cannot obtain social housing due to limited housing funds. Under such circumstances, it is clear that nearly 1.5 million IDPs will not be able to access social housing unless provided with a well-funded programme designed to provide housing exclusively to IDPs.

In terms of permanent and affordable housing, the *Action Plan* provides the following:

1. A new budgetary programme for IDPs featuring preferential mortgage loans with a 7% yearly interest rate and the development of other credit mechanisms for insuring the access of IDPs to affordable housing.

2. Increasing the funding for the 'Affordable Housing' programme.

3. The further development and implementation of existing state programmes on rural housing opportunities with regard to the current needs for IDP housing.

When it comes to the 'Affordable Housing' and rural housing programmes, these are chiefly available to social groups apart from IDPs. However, the 'Affordable Housing' programme – under which half of the housing price is paid by the state and a preferential loan is available for the remaining half – provides priority access to IDPs and war veterans. However, since it is intended to provide applicants with newly built housing, it is an expensive policy and cannot be considered as a solution for the significant number of IDPs.

Apart from the nation-wide programmes, many local IDP housing initiatives operate on the 'collective centre' idea, settling IDPs into specially designated housing blocks. In these housing blocks, IDP families have separate living spaces but share kitchens, toilets and bathrooms. IDPs are supposed to share the utility fees and maintain the premises together. In practice, this concept leads to multiple difficulties, including, the uncontrolled consumption of utilities and a lack of control over the quality of the utilities and fair billing practices. As a result, these premises often fall into decay. Utility providers often arbitrarily increase utility fees which IDPs refuse to pay, leading to the suspension of the utility services. These problems magnify one another leading to a progressive decline of living standards and the marginalisation of the IDPs.

Another form of response is the regional or local housing programmes. Funded either by local municipalities or supported by donors, these programmes aim to

facilitate the integration of local IDPs into host communities. In Ukraine, there is no unified information register of local housing programmes. According to an analytical review prepared by Charitable Fund Right to Protection in partnership with the UNHCR,[*] regional housing programmes were introduced in ten of the 24 regions of Ukraine as of August 2018. For example, the biggest number of housing provided to IDPs is in the Kharkiv and Odessa regions – 358 families and 750 persons respectively. However, this amount of housing needs to be considered in light of the roughly 127,000 IDPs registered in the Kharkiv region and the roughly 42,000 IDPs registered in the Odessa region.

As well as the nation-wide response mechanisms, this model chiefly considers the construction of new housing within the costs of local and state budgets or with the assistance of international donors. As a result, it faces similar dilemmas: the amount of available funding is insufficient to provide such an expensive housing solution to all IDPs. Naturally, local initiatives are designed to approach the issue at a local level and are not conceived as a broader solution. In cases where this policy is implemented effectively within a certain area, local programmes have the potential to cause further displacement of IDPs hosted in surrounding regions where housing is less accessible.

It is easy to notice that regardless of the model used to address the housing challenge for IDPs – a central or local approach – it is the overall cost of the housing solution which makes it inappropriate to serve as the full-scale solution to the need for housing by IDPs. Under such conditions, these mechanisms are efficient for providing housing only to a limited group of IDPs. To rectify this situation, the solution needs to be based not on the construction of new housing but on utilising resources that already exist within the communities and that are ideally to the advantage of the community itself. Transferring property rights back to the local municipality (escheat) and communal property can be such a solution.

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* http://vpl.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ENG_IDPs_housing-programs_review.pdf

Proposed Practice

This section aims to explore how the housing issue could be addressed at the local municipal level under circumstances of ineffective central regulation. The proposed solution consists of three key steps and is based on the idea of utilising real estate funds that already exist within local communities but which are not being used for a number of reasons. The proposed model proposes transferring the formal control of unutilised real estate to the respective local community and then passing ownership to the IDPs. Before considering the procedure, the potential types of properties that the real estate fund that could be used to acquire need to be specified. The first key type is the premises that were abandoned because of the conflict – including damaged premises and premises left because of the risks associated with the conflict or natural disasters leading to massive displacement. The second key type is premises that have been abandoned regardless of the conflict. This group of potential IDP housing stock differs from context to context. In Ukraine, it mainly consists of three subgroups of premises:

- *'Soviet heritage'* – premises abandoned after the collapse of the Soviet Union for a number of reasons including complications of legislative reforms, the lack or duplication of regulation and administration or the disappearance of legal entities who owned or administered the property.

- *Derelict premises* – located mostly within the countryside and suburban areas, such premises are abandoned mostly because of the lack of interest from their owners and often because of a lack of the market interest in the property.

- *Escheat property* – premises abandoned because of a lack of heirs interested in the property after the death of the original owners.

Returning to the 'three-step-solution,' the first step would be to conduct an inventory of the real estate funds that can be potentially used to provide housing to IDPs. Humanitarian interventions and even the central government rarely have adequate information on the real estate available in a given society after the breach

of the crisis. Depending upon the origin of the real estate that is being considered for use, there are of course different underlying reasons. Although time-consuming and resource intensive, acquiring this data is vital if permanent housing solutions are to be found for the entire population. The process of the conducting such an inventory should include a number of steps, including:

- Gathering information on buildings whose conditions allow them to be used as housing for IDPs after certain renovations. This process should include both the regular inspections of the real estate funds by the local communities and the development of a mechanism for reporting this information. In both cases, it should include an obligatory technical inspection of the premises to identify whether or not it is safe for use as potential housing and what the cost of potential renovation would be.

- Evaluating the status of the related infrastructure, including the access to utilities, education, employment opportunities, healthcare and safety within the respective area.

- Assessing the legal status of the premises and the complexity of potential procedures required to transfer ownership to the local community.

- Then evaluating whether or not it is reasonable to include the object in the programme. If at any of the stages it is already clear that it is not reasonable to consider the object anymore, there is no need in its further evaluation.

- Including both qualified and non-qualifying objects in a special register – although with different categorisations.

It is important that the real estate that was not necessarily constructed to be housing should be considered as possible IDP housing. Commercial premises, such as factories and trade centres, can also serve as housing after certain renovations in order to ensure that they meet the necessary standards of adequate housing. The renovation is most likely to include the connection of the premises to utility services and some redesign of the premises, both requiring significant expenditures. However, in many cases, such renovation would still be substantially cheaper than the alternatives.

After the identification those real estate objects that can potentially be used as housing for IDPs, the second stage of the model should be implemented although these processes can in some cases run concurrently. It is reasonable that those real estate objects which require the smallest investments in order to be converted to IDP housing should be the initial focus. It is also worth noticing that conducting an inventory of the potential housing stocks and the creation of the appropriate register is prescribed by the *Action Plan* for the *Implementation of the Strategy on IDP Integration and Durable Solutions* mentioned above.

In evaluating whether or not the object can be potentially used to serve as IDP housing, it is crucial to consider if the object is a premise damaged during the conflict or lies within the potential area of hostilities. Depending upon the degree of the risk, certain objects will have to undergo additional renovation in order to make them applicable for the programme. This rule should also be applied to objects whose surrounding environments fail to correspond with safety standards or have inappropriately low access to infrastructure and services that cannot be amended without substantial costs.

Once the relevant real state is identified, the next step is to transfer the relevant real estate objects into the local community's ownership and then transfer them to the IDPs. Depending upon the regulation in the state where the IDP housing issue is being addressed, there are different mechanisms for transferring the real estate located within the community to its ownership or use. This is the most crucial step of the model since without its implementation, the model is impossible. In most contexts, it is likely to include judiciary proceedings and depends upon the origin of the real estate and its legal status. In the case of Ukraine, this procedure will include the following:

- *Local council addressing the local court to request transfer of the object into the communal property*. The transfer is possible in limited cases on certain grounds.
  - The local council is usually required to prove the need for the transfer of property. The possible rationale may include references to a lack of use

and care of the object and related harm to public interests as well as the need to solve the IDP housing issue.

- It is also often reasonable to announce the council's request of the transfer in local newspapers, information portals and to send official requests to the registered owner of the object. These steps will demonstrate to the court that the council has fulfilled its burden to address the owner before initiating the ownership transfer. Another possible measure is to present evidence to prove the abandoned character of the object, including witnesses.

- The court will usually request that a certain period of time expire prior before approving the request and transferring the object to local council property.

- When adopted, the court decision has to be submitted to the state enforcement service to update the ownership status of the object.

- The local council adopts the decision on transferring the ownership of the object to an IDP.

What were previously public/social housing resources are sometimes privatised during conflicts as was the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Republic of Georgia and Kosovo.* In some instances, newly privatised homes are transferred from the public to the private sector while these units are being occupied by secondary occupants with official title being conferred to the secondary occupant without the knowledge or approval of the original dweller. Changes to the tenure type of housing, generally from the public to private sector, need not necessarily be malicious in intent and may simply be part of a larger, longer-term process of privatisation. However, even in these cases, care must be taken to ensure that those with legitimate claims to return to their original homes are not excluded from the financial benefits associated with the privatisation of their original homes.

After transferring the right to possession of the real estate to IDPs, the final step is allocating funding for the rehabilitation of the housing. The most preferable

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* *Housing, Land and Property Rights in Post-Conflict Societies: Proposals for a New United Nations Institutional and Policy Framework*, Scott Leckie, UNHCR Consultant, Legal and Protection Policy Research Series

option is to carry out the rehabilitation using the financial resources of the IDPs themselves. Certain IDPs have substantial savings or are paid high salaries which are still insufficient in order to purchase housing. They could, however, be used for the rehabilitation of the housing which is cheaper and has longer term positive integration consequences than simply renting apartments. This option is less time consuming and requires less involvement from municipalities and the private sector.

Another option is to make use of funds from local and state budgets. Emphatically, however, these funds should not be taken from the specialised part of the budget intended to support housing programmes for IDPs. Rather, they could be taken from general budget posts for covering routine maintaining of housing stock or planned construction work such as the *reparation, reconstruction, rehabilitation, renovation* of *social object/housing stock/premises* and other. Financial support could also be provided through targeted state subventions to local budgets at the request of municipalities. In this case, municipalities would have to apply for state funds explaining the reason for the request and how these funds will be spent.

Financial assistance from NGOs, IGOs and other humanitarian and development actors constitutes a promising opportunity. Such assistance could be provided through specialised housing projects for IDPs based on a needs assessment, proposed plans and costs of rehabilitation, support for local municipalities and a general practice of implementing similar projects in the selected area. In this case, the personal commitment of IDPs and the effective support from municipalities would play a decisive role in achieving positive outcomes for the project.

ROLES OF THE INVOLVED ACTORS

Local communities play a key role in the model. Having established links to the central government and (often) less bureaucratised, local communities can at times act in a rather swift manner. They are also informed of local peculiarities such as the status of the available real estate stock and the geological and social context of

the community. The proper consideration of such details often determines whether or not the project will result in a success story or become a textbook example to be avoided.

Host communities are also deeply interested in the full integration of IDPs residing within the community for a number of reasons. First, depending upon how the potential is managed, IDPs can become either an immense resource for development or a heavy burden. Naturally, when lacking housing and employment IDPs – as any other individuals – are at risk of social and economic marginalisation, creating an additional burden for the community in terms of social protection, the provision of healthcare, and law and order. On the other hand, having come from the comparatively large cities of Luhansk and Donetsk, many of the IDPs possess valuable educational and professional backgrounds as well as the experience of working in progressive fields with modern technologies. Therefore, they can become a valuable asset in the development of local communities, especially when residing in villages and small towns.

Second, local communities are interested in the use and maintenance of the available resources including real estate. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, a huge amount of assets, including real estate, were abandoned due to legal and bureaucratic complications. There are situations where even entire blocks of premises were left abandoned. Forgotten by local authorities, these buildings have the negative potential to increase marginalisation and criminal activity in the surrounding environment. They can also transform into informal landfills or be a base for growing numbers of street animals. At the same time, many of these buildings are still in acceptable condition. While they need renovation to become habitable, the construction itself is often solid and safe.

Apart from these housing resources, a significant part of the housing stock has become derelict following the conflict. Many owners have left their housing with no intentions of coming back. Depending upon the country and the legislation, there are different ways to transfer such property to communal ownership or simply allow its use by the community. In some cases, owners of the premises have died and no heirs have appeared to inherit the property. Taken jointly, these

cases represent a significant amount of real estate that can be utilised to assist in providing a solution to the IDP housing problem. It is worth stressing again that both the residential property stock and the IDPs themselves can either be a huge asset or become a burden on the community, depending upon how the situation is managed. Understanding how they can potentially complement one another can be argued not just to be a possibility but even a logical necessity.

Internally displaced persons, unlike most of crisis response models, should play one of the key roles. For instance, IDPs would be expected to approach local municipalities to initiate the process. To make it easier for the IDPs, the humanitarian actors would provide certain support but IDPs would still be required to participate in the process actively. This may include suggesting possible premises for the housing solution, paying in full or partially for the cost of the renovation and participating in related judicial and documentation proceedings that are necessary to transfer the ownership. IDPs could also participate in the advisory body to be established to advise the local municipality on the implementation of the housing solution and ensuring public control over the programme. This would also represent an additional mechanism for circulating information about the programme within the IDP community.

Non-governmental and inter-governmental organisations and other humanitarian and development actors should also contribute to the process. This could be done by several means. First, these actors could advocate for the implementation of the model. It is generally the central or local government – depending on the legislation – that is supposed to initiate the process. However, in practice, these levels of government are often consumed with the immediate response tasks or suffer from a lack of political interest or even conflict among multiple competing interests. Therefore, NGOs, along with humanitarian and development actors, can advocate for the implementation of the mechanism.

Second, these actors can provide support to the central or local government and also training to IDPs. Apart from advocacy, technical and other support to central or local governments is likely to facilitate the process. Clarification of the mechanism, sharing best practices developed abroad or already implemented in other regions of

the state, facilitating the sharing of experience between representatives of different state and public bodies involved into the mechanism implementation are all steps can be taken by humanitarian and development professionals. On the other hand, as IDPs play one of the key roles in the model, it is absolutely crucial that necessary training is provided to the IDP community and that proper informational campaigns are organised in order to engage IDPs. It is important to understand that because of cultural reasons and vulnerability, many IDPs will not be able to express a firm and lasting initiative to lead the process. Therefore, these trainings should also be designed to empower IDPs to stand up for themselves.

Third, an appropriate supervision over the implementation of the model is required. Negative results of pilot projects, either because of a lack of knowledge, motivation, corruption or other reasons, are most likely to foster a public perception of the whole model in the eyes of the government and the conflict-affected population. While representatives of IDPs are supposed to participate in public bodies within the local municipalities in order to contribute to the process, NGO and humanitarian and development staff should be highly encouraged to join these public bodies as well, since they have certain qualifications and experience which IDPs may not have.

The *central government* should not play a leading role in the model. There are many reasons for this, including limitations resulting from political considerations, the high cost of the state's operationalisation and risks of corruption. However, the central government should provide legislative and informational support for the implementation of the model. This may include the development of necessary regulations and procedures and public campaigns aimed to raise IDP awareness of the programme and also to increase trust among the local municipalities and the broader population towards the housing solution. Such campaigns will also reduce the force of criticism from actors who prefer alternate uses for the real estate stock. Another way in which the state can assist in the implementation of the model is in ensuring the lawfulness of the process as a whole. However, the extensive bureaucratisation of the process should be avoided as this would delay the final provision of the housing to IDPs.

POSSIBLE RISKS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE PRACTICE

The length and efficiency of the related procedures need to be taken into account. The functioning of the model requires coherent and timely actions from a substantial number of actors. If there is no legal mechanism for transferring property to local communities, the central government will need to develop this. Further, local municipalities will have to obtain the necessary information and technical resources required to implement the model and then initiate the implementation by adopting relevant decisions. The mechanism of transferring the ownership of the property depends upon the context and regulations but most often includes judiciary procedures. In some cases, this process could last for months and even years. It may even include an appeal of the decision by the interested parties. When transferred to the local community, the ownership must then be further passed to an IDP and only then it is reasonable to start the renovation process. Yet, most of the cases will be of a more routine nature. As such, it is reasonable to expect that the whole process will be highly standardised and can even be partially automated; therefore, decreasing the cost and the risks of the procedure. When operated by local municipalities instead of the central government, the process is also less expensive in terms of time than the alternatives.

Additional investments are still required. Although some of the IDPs will be willing to handle the renovation of the property with their own funds if offered priority access to the model, a significant number of IDPs will still require external assistance in order to carry out the renovation. However, these costs will still be significantly lower than costs of alternative housing solutions that would require the construction of new housing.

The *risk of further marginalisation in the case of poor execution* must be addressed. As mentioned before, a certain portion of the escheat and derelict real estate stock is likely to be in marginalised or higher crime locations. If these conditions are not addressed, the provision of housing in such environments will only worsen the situation for IDPs and undermine the trust between them and the government as well as between IDPs and the local community. Thus, it is absolutely necessary to

renovate not only the real estate but the surrounding environment. It is important to understand that such environments, when not improved, constitute a heavy burden for the community regardless of whether or not IDPs are located there. Therefore, the expenses associated with addressing this challenge should not be considered as an additional burden as such problems need to be addressed by the community regardless.

Limited access to services must be resolved. In cases where the provided housing stock is located in the distant countryside or in suburban areas, there is likely to be limited access to utility services and necessary infrastructure. In this case, solving the IDP housing issue would also provide a strong impulse to solve long-standing problems in rural areas and disenfranchised communities regarding infrastructure.

SUPPOSED OUTCOME OF THE PRACTICE IMPLEMENTATION

If implemented carefully, the model is likely to provide substantial benefits to all participants in the process. Apart from housing being the key need for a strong majority of IDPs in most of the contexts, it also leads to improved access to other crucial features associated with a stable life such as employment, safety and healthcare. When provided with safe housing for the long run, IDPs are in a much better position to act in a strong and dignified way and develop a durable solution on their own. Having their families protected, individuals are more likely to consider such investments as education and building a perspective career instead of merely looking for 'survival options.' Each of these benefits reinforces the probability of achieving another one, leading to a lasting and comprehensive empowerment of IDPs.

As already mentioned, utilising the potential of IDPs means shifting from the extensive expenses associated with social protection to developing a new powerful resource for economic growth in society and generating additional budget revenues. The model is also a strong solution to the problem of weakened communities and

abandoned environments. It is important to notice that these benefits should be assessed not in isolation but as compared to an unsolved IDP housing issue and the problem of the disenfranchised environments.

It seems that this model could represent one of the cheapest solutions to large scale IDP housing challenges, both in terms of the housing itself and the operationalisation costs. It also creates strong connections between local communities and IDPs, leading to the integration of the latter which should be one of the state's key concerns in cases of massive internal displacement. It also stimulates the economic and social development of the state and prevents the risk of secondary displacement and forced return.

CONCLUSION: WHY THIS MATTERS FOR UKRAINE AND OTHER CONTEXTS

For Ukraine, finding a durable housing solution is important for several reasons. People who were displaced by the conflict and who have a fear of returning to non-government controlled territory, or are unwilling to do so, would be prevented from involuntary return. Being citizens of Ukraine, they are entitled to enjoy the protection of the state on the territories under the effective control of the government. Moreover, human capital is underestimated, especially given that millions of Ukrainians migrated to European countries in search of work. Well-educated IDPs who fled from big and well-developed cities like Donetsk and Luhansk could be a driving force for economic development of other regions, especially those located in the controlled part of the east.

Housing is a common problem for all conflict and post-conflict settings. Policies and practices differ from country to country, depending upon local peculiarities and needs. The model of the utilisation of abandoned real estate in the possession of local communities could be applied to well built up areas where housing stock is available. The amount of financial resources necessary for rehabilitating unutilised

housing stock may vary, taking into account the local standards of living, climate, etc. For example, in tropical or subtropical climates, rehabilitation could be cheaper as housing does not require additional winterisation and the installation of heating systems. The model could work not only for internally displaced people but serve the needs of refugees as well, although the refugees will need stronger support from other actors due to cultural and languages barriers.

The role of internally displaced people in the proposed solution is also noteworthy as they are expected to play an active role and take back control of their lives following the profoundly negative events that they have experienced. The active involvement in the housing process will facilitate better integration into host communities and prevent negative coping strategies. Obviously, only certain portions of the IDP community have sufficient material and psychological resources to partake in the process, even with the active support of the NGO sector. However, this proposed solution could be implemented as a part of a wider and more comprehensive local housing strategy or be at least one of the important tools available for those in need of housing solutions.

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6 ‖ SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION: TEMPORARY SHELTER OR A CHANCE TO SETTLE IN?

Ginta Makaveckaitė

INTRODUCTION

"Refugee" is a commonly used term in describing a migrant seeking protection although not everyone who is granted international protection is a refugee. Subsidiary protection is a lesser known form of international protection even though it is granted to a large number of asylum seekers in many European Union (EU) countries. There are some substantial differences between refugee status and subsidiary protection. One of the main differences is that as compared to a refugee status, subsidiary protection is more temporary. There is a real chance that after several years, subsidiary protection will be withdrawn which means the end of the legal basis for residence in the host country. However, countries promote integration of all foreigners, including beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. An analysis of legal regulations shows that a person who has actually integrated into the host country is provided with opportunities to stay in this country even after the end of subsidiary protection. There are conditions when it is possible to apply for a residence permit. These conditions can be met if actual integration in the host country has been achieved while having subsidiary protection status. The fact that people very often return to their home country when their subsidiary protection is withdrawn, instead of applying for a new residence permit, leads to the assumption that people are not prepared for this withdrawal. That is, they do not understand how real the possibility of the withdrawal of subsidiary protection is or they are not aware of other options for residence in the host country after the withdrawal. This shows that there is a lack of information about the status of subsidiary protection, its temporality and the possibilities in the host country beyond this status. If this information was provided at the appropriate time, which is when the subsidiary protection is granted,

the beneficiary of subsidiary protection could consciously participate in the integration activities, collect proof of completion and be prepared to apply for a new residence permit based upon this formal integration. Therefore, this paper emphasises the need for a simplified set of practical information about what may happen after the end of subsidiary protection which should be presented right at the beginning of this protection. It should be noted that given that subsidiary protection is regulated at the EU level, this paper presents the general situation in all Member States with specific examples in Lithuania (which is also a member of the EU).

DEFINITIONS

The foundation of international protection is provided by the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention). It defines the term of a refugee and lays down the basic minimum standards for their treatment. The Common European Asylum System of the European Union is based upon the Refugee Convention and explicitly acknowledges this Convention as a fundament of the international obligations of the EU Member States towards refugees (Janků, 2017). However, the scope of the Common European Asylum System was intended to be wider than the Refugee Convention. This led to further legislation at the EU level, one of the main instruments being the Council Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004 and later its recast – Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection and for the content of the protection granted (Qualification Directive). The Qualification Directive provides minimal standards to be adopted by Member States. This implies that the norms of the Qualification Directive determine the general situation of international protection provided to asylum seekers in all Member States of the EU (including Lithuania), keeping in mind that in some countries the level of protection may be even higher. The Qualification Directive extends beyond the remit of the Refugee Convention by setting out two forms of protection available under EU law: refugee status, for persons qualifying as refugees under the Refugee Convention

definition, and subsidiary protection, for those who do not meet the criteria for refugeehood but face serious harm due to certain human rights violations in their country of origin. Through this dual form of protection, the EU creates a complementary legal category of protected persons distinct from refugees (AIDA, 2016). The Qualification Directive defines a person eligible for subsidiary protection as a third-country national or a stateless person who does not qualify as a refugee but as one where substantial grounds have been shown for believing that the person (if returned to his or her country of origin, or in the case of a stateless person, to his or her country of former habitual residence) would face a real risk of suffering serious harm as defined in Article 15 and to whom Article 17(1) and (2) does not apply and is unable or, owing to such risk, unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country (Article 2(f)). Serious harm consists of: (a) the death penalty or execution, (b) torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of an applicant in the country of origin or (c) serious and individual threat to a civilian's life or person by reason of indiscriminate violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict (Article 15). The national legislation in Lithuania has essentially the same definition of subsidiary protection (Republic of Lithuania Law on the Legal Status of Aliens, Article 87).

REFUGEE STATUS VERSUS SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION

As stated above, under the EU law both refugee status and subsidiary protection are types of international protection. The content of protection that is guaranteed by the Qualification Directive in the majority of instances is the same to both refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection. In general, the rights and benefits attached to both international protection statuses are the same, reflecting the fact that the requirements of all persons in need of international protection are broadly similar (Bauloz, Ruiz, 2014). For example, the Qualification Directive guarantees some rights to all beneficiaries of international protection (people who have been granted either refugee status or subsidiary protection status) including, but not limited to, protection from refoulement and access to information, employment, education, healthcare, accommodation, integration facilities and freedom of movement within the state.

However, refugee status and subsidiary protection should not be understood as one and the same. The Court of Justice of the European Union has clearly affirmed that the subsidiary protection provided by the Qualification Directive is complementary and additional to the protection of refugees enshrined in the Geneva (Refugee) Convention (case C-604/12). It is understood that there is a hierarchy of forms of protection, securing the primacy of the Refugee Convention and its refugee status. Given that the Qualification Directive makes it explicit that beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are those who do not qualify as refugees (Article 2(f)), it is clear that an examination of the refugee status has to precede that of subsidiary protection. In order to grant refugee status, a well-founded fear of persecution as well as one of the specific reasons for this persecution have to be established. And only when these conditions are not met, yet when it is clear that there is a risk of serious harm, subsidiary protection may be granted. This hierarchy of forms of international protection and the secondary nature of subsidiary protection determine the situation when some important benefits connected to subsidiary protection are significantly lesser than those afforded to refugees. The second paragraph of Article 20 of the Qualification Directive states that the content of international protection will apply to both refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection. However, this article also allows exceptions. The main areas in which the benefits of refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are substantially different are residence permits and social welfare. The general rule of the Qualification Directive, regarding social welfare, is that Member States will ensure that beneficiaries of international protection receive, in the Member State that has granted such protection, the necessary social assistance as provided to nationals of that Member State. However, the Qualification Directive provides a discretion for Member States to limit social assistance granted to beneficiaries of subsidiary protection status to core benefits which will then be provided at the same level and under the same eligibility conditions as nationals. This possibility does not exist in the case of refugees. In addition, while refugees have a right to be issued residence permits of at least three years (and are renewable), residence permits for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are limited to a minimum of just one year (in the case of renewal – a minimum of two years) (Qualification Directive, Article 24). Therefore, even though the general goal is to unify the content of both international protection forms, there are still some substantial differences. This results in subsidiary protection being a clearly less favourable form of protection. Nevertheless, the statistics shows that in nearly half of the countries

that have this dual international protection system, it is much more common to grant subsidiary protection rather than refugee status (Postel, Barder, 2016).

TEMPORALITY OF SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION

Subsidiary protection is secondary as compared to refugee status. This means that subsidiary protection exists in order to provide some sort of protection in situations that are not as serious as for those that require refugee status. This also leads to the assumption that these situations may not be permanent and eventually change. One of the grounds to acknowledge that an asylum seeker could face a real risk of suffering serious harm in his home country, as defined by the Qualification Directive, is when there is serious and individual threat to a civilian's life or person by reason of indiscriminate violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict (Article 15(c)). The assumption is that any armed conflict in modern society is temporary and, as such, the need for subsidiary protection is not permanent. As a result, when the Qualification Directive was first adopted in 2004, there was a much more significant difference in the level of rights that were granted to beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and refugees. Nevertheless, the reality is that the need for subsidiary protection is often just as long lasting as that for the protection of refugees. This understanding led to a recasting of the Qualification Directive in 2011 that has resulted in a more unified set of benefits attached to both forms of international protection.

However, as stated above, there are still some differences between refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. One of the main differences is the duration of residence permit. The Qualification Directive only guarantees a one-year residence permit. It should be pointed out that the Qualification Directive provides only minimal guarantees. Twenty-one out of 28 EU Member States maintain more favourable standards than the threshold of the Qualification Directive, many of which specifically afford greater security of residence to persons qualifying for subsidiary protection. However, the residence permits for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are temporary in all Member states – the duration varies from one to

five years (AIDA, 2016). For example, specifically in Lithuania, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are issued temporary residence permits for a period of two years (Republic of Lithuania Law on the Legal Status of Aliens, Article 48).

In addition, there is always a risk of the revocation, cessation or a refusal to renew subsidiary protection status. According to the Articles 16 and 19(1) of the Qualification Directive, cessation in the context of subsidiary protection requires that: there is a change of circumstances, protection is no longer required (owing to a change of circumstances) and there are no other grounds which make the person concerned eligible for subsidiary protection (EASO, 2016).

This means that the beneficiaries of subsidiary protection can be sure of their position in the host country for only a limited period of time. There is always a risk that the protection will end once the residence permit expires or there is a change of situation in the home country. As the residence permit is directly connected to being granted international protection, after the end of subsidiary protection, the legality of residence in the host country may also end.

Current Practices and Future Challenges

This situation which puts beneficiaries of subsidiary protection into a much more difficult position as compared to that of refugees has been criticised. One of the main steps that has been taken in order to improve the situation of beneficiaries of subsidiary protection was the recasting of the Qualification Directive. This led to a guarantee of a higher level of protection in many ways and essentially the only limitation left was the short duration of residence permits. In practice, subsidiary protection is not as temporary as it was in the past as the duration of residence permits can be prolonged. Admittedly, this has only been gradually achieved in many countries. However, the fact that residence permits for the beneficiaries of subsidiary protection have a shorter duration and are not permanent is understandable considering that subsidiary protection is granted in less severe situations as refugee status.

Therefore, it is proposed that the main effort should be put into providing timely and extensive information about the position in which beneficiaries of subsidiary protection find themselves both now and in the future. Only then can these individuals feel secure about their situation in the host country despite the temporary nature of the residence permits that are issued to them.

Options for an Extension of Subsidiary Protection

Keeping in mind that subsidiary protection might be withdrawn after a certain period of time, this form of international protection should be understood not as a permanent position but only as the first step that can be used for integration into the host country. For this reason, it is proposed that individuals who want to settle, without fear of being forced to return to their home country, should find other legal grounds to live in the host country as soon as possible. This section presents some of the main ways for how integration in the host country can be used to minimise the chances that the individual will have to leave the country at the end of subsidiary protection. It should be noted that examples are based upon Lithuanian law. However, the underlying basis is very similar to any other EU Member State, considering that they are all part of the Common European Asylum System.

Residence Permits Based upon Work or Other Legal Activities in the Host Country

People who were granted asylum (including subsidiary protection) are encouraged to work or engage in other legal activities in the host country. Having the right to work is important to both people who were granted international protection and the society of the country which has granted it. Successful economic integration is achieved where foreigners contribute to the economic growth of the host state

and receive income ensuring the livelihood of foreigners and their families. For this reason, legislation establishes a number of measures that help foreigners to participate in the labour market of the host country.

Article 26(1) of the Qualification Directive establishes that Member States will authorise beneficiaries of international protection to engage in employed or self-employed activities subject to rules generally applicable to the profession and to the public service immediately after protection has been granted.

At the national level, according to Article 58.1.1 of the Republic of Lithuania Law on the Legal Status of Aliens, foreigners granted subsidiary protection are exempt from the obligation to obtain a work permit. These persons can, therefore, start to work under an employment contract as soon as they receive a residence permit in Lithuania. In accordance with Articles 2.2. and 2.7. of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Individual Income Tax, persons granted asylum in the Republic of Lithuania may engage in individual activity on the grounds of an individual activity certificate or a business certificate. Such persons may also engage in other legal activity and incorporate various undertakings.

What is more, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection may receive extra assistance to participate in the labour market. According to Articles 44 to 47 of the Integration Procedure approved by an order of the Minister for Social Security and Labour, integration funds may be used to support a person who has been granted asylum and who incorporates his or her own business in order to obtain a business certificate or a license and to purchase or lease work equipment (Pilinkaitė-Sotirovič, Biekša, Ivašauskaitė, Žibas, 2016).

This shows that people who were granted subsidiary protection are encouraged to work in the host country as soon as possible. They can participate in the integration programmes to get necessary new skills and use the help to enter the local labour market.

Moreover, individuals who are actively engaged in the labour market of the host country should not be afraid of the withdrawal of their subsidiary protection. If there were no longer the basis for subsidiary protection, these people could get a residence

permit based upon their legal activity in the country. According to Article 40 of the Republic of Lithuania Law on the Legal Status of Aliens, a temporary residence permit may be issued or renewed to an alien who: intends to take up employment in the Republic of Lithuania pursuant to provisions of Article 44 of this law, intends to take up highly qualified employment in the Republic of Lithuania pursuant to the provisions of Article 44(1) of this law, engages and intends to engage in lawful activities in the Republic of Lithuania pursuant to provisions of Article 45 of this law or intends to engage in lawful activities related to the introduction of new technologies or other innovations that are significant for economic and social development of the Republic of Lithuania, pursuant to provisions of Article 45(1) of this law.

It should be pointed out that not any job can be a basis for a residence permit. There may be specific requirements such as the amount of the salary, the duration of the employment, the size of the investment in the company and others. These requirements connected to specific grounds for a residence permit are laid down by the law.

Therefore, participation in the labour market of the host country can become a legitimate basis for a residence in this country after the withdrawal of subsidiary protection.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

The importance of family relationships is emphasised in many international documents: for example, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Articles 17, 23), the European Convention on Human Rights (Articles 8, 14), the Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003 on the right to family reunification and others. The first paragraph of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights establishes the right for everyone to have respect for both private and family life. Even though no right for an alien to enter or reside in a particular country is guaranteed by this Convention (B.A.C v. Greece), the removal of a person from a country where close members of his or her family are living may amount to an infringement of the right to respect for family life as guaranteed

by Article 8(1). Such an interference will infringe the European Convention on Human Rights if it does not meet the requirements of Paragraph 2 of this article; that is, unless it is "in accordance with the law," motivated by one or more of the legitimate aims under that paragraph and "necessary in a democratic society." That is to say that it is justified by a pressing social need and, in particular, proportionate to the legitimate aim pursued (case C-60/00).

It is possible to create new family relationships while having subsidiary protection. The respect of private and family life means that the circumstances regarding existing family relationships in the host country may be the ground to legalise an alien's residence status in a given country.

According to Republic of Lithuania Law on the Legal Status of Aliens, one of the grounds for being issued a temporary residence permit is the case of family reunification (Article 40.1.3). A temporary residence permit may be issued to an alien by virtue of family reunification if: the alien's parents, child, spouse, person with whom a registered partnership has been contracted or a first-degree relative in the direct ascending line are citizens of the Republic of Lithuania (or hold a residence permit – in specific situations), reside in the Republic of Lithuania or even in particularly difficult circumstances when related to divorce or dissolution of a registered partnership or death of a family member (Article 43.1).

Family relations also have a great impact upon preventing deportation or expulsion decisions from being made. Therefore, all information about family members who reside in a host country should be known to the authorities. These circumstances should be evaluated and may be the reason for not ordering the expulsion of a person who lives in the country illegally (for example, whose subsidiary protection has been withdrawn). Case law from the European Court of Human Rights states that countries have a right to expel foreign nationals if this is necessary for the maintenance of public order. However, such decisions, if they limit the rights protected by Paragraph 1 of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, must be necessary in a democratic society; that is to say, justified by a pressing social need and, in particular, proportionate to the legitimate aim pursued (Mehemi v. France).

Therefore, if a person has family in a Member State, these relationships should be analysed prior to making any decision concerning this person's legal status in the country. If a person created family relationships while he or she had subsidiary protection, these circumstances may very likely form the basis for a new residence permit or a decision not to expel an alien who technically is illegally in the country (when subsidiary protection has already been withdrawn).

Requirements for a Residence Permit

It should be pointed out that even if there is a basis for a residence permit (a job opportunity, family relationships, studies or other circumstances), it does not automatically mean that this residence permit will be issued. There is a list of conditions with which a person has to comply in order to get a residence permit. The law defines specific situations when the question of the issuance of a residence permit can even be considered. A person who seeks to be issued a residence permit in Lithuania should have health insurance, sufficient means of subsistence or receive regular income and suitable residential premises in the country (Republic of Lithuania Law on the Legal Status of Aliens, Article 26). This means that before applying for a residence permit, a person has to prepare to fulfil all specific conditions and collect all of the necessary documentation. In the case of a person having subsidiary protection, it is, therefore, suggested that the preparation to fulfil these conditions should be done before the end of subsidiary protection. As all of these conditions are obligatory and some of them take time to fulfil, only the fact that the person has integrated is not enough. It is the responsibility of a person to collect all of the necessary documentation to prove the compliance with the grounds for a new residence permit.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

There are two separate decisions that are issued if the grounds for subsidiary protection cease to exist: the first decision is simply to withdraw subsidiary protection and the second one determines a person's further prospects as a resident in the Republic of Lithuania. This second decision is based upon the fact that there are no legal grounds for residence in Lithuania anymore. Accordingly, this second decision may impose an obligation to leave the Republic of Lithuania, a decision to return an alien to a foreign state or to expel the alien from the Republic of Lithuania.

Case law from the Supreme Administrative Court of Lithuania shows that people usually make arguments about integration in Lithuania only when they appeal the decision to withdraw subsidiary protection. The Court has said in previous cases that when deciding upon the withdrawal of subsidiary protection and the residence permit, the responsible authority (Migration Department) does not have to assess circumstances such as social and (or) economic links with the Republic of Lithuania (case eA-3010-662/2017).

However, these arguments are mostly relevant later; that is, when appealing the second decision that is issued. When imposing an obligation to leave the Republic of Lithuania, a decision to return an alien to a foreign state or expel the alien from the Republic of Lithuania, the relevant factors that are taken into account are: the length of stay in the Republic of Lithuania, the family relationship with persons residing in the Republic of Lithuania; existing social, economic and other ties with the Republic of Lithuania, whether or not he has minor children studying under a formal education programme/programmes in the Republic of Lithuania and the nature and extent of the dangerousness of the committed offence (Republic of Lithuania Law on the Legal Status of Aliens, Article 128.1).

The relevant factors that are listed in the law are quite abstract. This means that generally any circumstances that show a connection with the country can have relevance when deciding to allow the person stay in Lithuania. Every situation is evaluated individually. Therefore, it is not possible to specify concrete arguments

that would be relevant in a particular case. Accordingly, any available arguments (for example, relationships, studies, work or volunteering, participation in cultural activities, knowledge of the language, etc.) as well as supporting documents should be provided to the responsible authorities and courts.

Case law from the Supreme Administrative Court of Lithuania demonstrates that even though the arguments regarding integration are frequently made, they usually are dismissed as unfounded. This happens because applicants usually provide only general claims about the fact of integration but do not give any specific explanation or documentation that could prove these claims. Therefore, it is important to collect documentation that can prove ties with Lithuania. Only then can the specific information that is provided to the authorities have a real impact upon the decision of a person's legal status.

Permanent Residence Permit

There are situations when the circumstances that lead to the issuance of subsidiary protection last for a longer period of time. In this case, residence permits are renewed every two years. But it is important to note that the Republic of Lithuania Law on the Legal Status of Aliens also provides the possibility for an individual to receive a permanent residence permit in these situations. An alien may be issued permanent residency if he has resided in the Republic of Lithuania uninterruptedly for the last five years while holding a temporary residence permit. There are specific rules in the Republic of Lithuania Law on the Legal Status of Aliens for how to count the period of residency in situations of aliens who were granted subsidiary protection (Articles 53.1.8, 53.9.1). However, the general rule is that a person can make use of this situation when the grounds for subsidiary protection do not cease to exist for a longer period of time and transform them into permanent residency in Lithuania.

An alien who seeks permanent residency in these situations usually has to be present in the country legally, have health insurance and sufficient means of subsistence and

(or) regular income. There is also a requirement to pass an examination in the state language and an examination in the basic principles of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (Republic of Lithuania Law on the Legal Status of Aliens, Articles 53.3, 53.6).

This regulation shows that actual integration can provide opportunities to have the legal basis for a long-term life in Lithuania. Knowledge of the local language as well as of fundamental law can help to transform a temporary residence permit into a permanent one.

IMPORTANCE OF TIMING AND THE EXTENT OF INFORMATION

The previous section has presented an extensive yet not exhaustive list of possibilities for how integration that has been achieved while having subsidiary protection can subsequently be transformed into other legal grounds for residence. Accordingly, it would seem that the temporary nature of subsidiary protection should not necessarily clash with the goal of integration for all foreigners. However, recent case law shows that people are very often surprised when their subsidiary protection is being withdrawn, when they do not use the argument of integration in order to stay in the host country or when they fail to use this argument correctly, be it at the wrong time or without any substantial proof to support their generalised claims. As such, this suggests that people who were granted subsidiary protection are not always completely aware of the details of their status, its temporary nature and the steps that have to be taken in order to stay in the host country for a longer period of time; that is, after the withdrawal of subsidiary protection. For this reason, it can be suggested that extensive information about the details of their status as well as an explanation about the importance of integration should be presented to the individual simultaneous to granting subsidiary protection.

Having extensive information means both knowing the details of subsidiary protection and the importance of real integration into the host country. First of all, it should be very clearly explained, in a language understood by the individual,

that there is a real possibility of the withdrawal of subsidiary protection. The list of decisions that may be issued in this instance should be presented and the effect of each of these decisions should be explained. In this way, the beneficiary of subsidiary protection can be (emotionally and practically) prepared for the change in status. However, it is also very important to detail all the rights and benefits that beneficiaries of subsidiary protection have and how these can be used as an instrument for the possibility of achieving long-term residency.

This information would make beneficiaries of subsidiary protection prepared for any decision concerning their status. That means both knowing the effect that these decisions may have and the possibility (or the need) to appeal them. If subsidiary protection is withdrawn from an alien, he is entitled to make use of state-guaranteed legal aid (Republic of Lithuania Law on the Legal Status of Aliens, Article 90.5). However, state-guaranteed legal aid does not necessarily imply that a lawyer will give enough time or attention to the case. Therefore, this sometimes results in situations where it becomes the responsibility of a beneficiary of subsidiary protection to specify to his or her lawyer what exact legal actions to take. In this case, the information about other legal ways to stay in the host country (some of which are presented in this paper) could help to identify what kind of action is to be taken in the specific situation.

Knowing about the possibilities for how to transform integration into other legal grounds of residency would also provide a feeling of security despite shortcomings in comparison to refugee status. It also gives the individual the motivation to make an active effort to integrate into the host country because of the evident benefit for the future. Additionally, this also has an effect upon the society as it is much easier to accept foreigners who actively participate in the social life of the host country.

Nevertheless, the timing of this information is also very important. Having all information about subsidiary protection status when it is granted, and its differences from refugee status, helps to create a concrete action plan. First of all, it gives the opportunity to appeal the decision to grant subsidiary protection if a person believes that there are grounds for granting refugee status (case eA-2084-756/2015). But it also helps him or her to be prepared in the future – if a decision about a change of status is issued later. It also provided motivation to proactively use the rights

that beneficiaries of subsidiary protection have in order to become a member of society in the host country. That is, learning the language, studying, finding a job and participating in the social life right from the start, rather than only after there being a risk of losing it. Additionally, if individuals were aware that there might be a need to prove their integration in order to be granted a new residence permit, they could collect the evidence of their integration right from the start. In this situation, it would be much easier to apply for a new residence permit or participate in the court cases meaningfully. Most importantly, immediately having all of the information about their status would help beneficiaries of subsidiary protection feel more active in their future plans and prospects which is very significant to a person whose position is uncertain by its nature. It would also encourage them to integrate actively into the host country, given the clear benefits.

Admittedly, there is already a great deal of information that is provided to beneficiaries of international protection, including standard booklets of essential facts. However, it is obvious that there is the lack of a specific meeting with the individual who has been granted subsidiary protection where all of the questions are answered and the connection between integration and residency in the future is detailed. Therefore, I would argue that that there is a great need for more systematically presented information.

CONCLUSION

Practice shows that beneficiaries of subsidiary protection very often lose their status after several years when the situation in their home country and the grounds for protection are revised. The temporary nature of subsidiary protection has been criticised with some changes having resulted (for example, residence permits for the beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are becoming more long-term in many countries). However, this form of international protection is different from refugee status and it is granted in situations that are deemed to be less severe. Therefore, it will probably always be less beneficial to have subsidiary protection.

Nevertheless, it does not necessarily mean that having subsidiary protection will automatically result in a temporary life in the host country. The legal regulations provide opportunities to use integration in order to legitimise further residency in the host country. If an individual is actively involved in the social life of the host country (job, studies, relationships), there are ways to transform it into the basis for a new residence permit. The fact that these transformations are not very frequently granted and that individuals often do not know what to do when their subsidiary protection is withdrawn shows an obvious lack of information. It should be explained more clearly to beneficiaries of subsidiary protection that their status may only be for a limited period of time and what they can do to stay in the host country for longer. Understanding what it actually means to have a subsidiary protection status and how it can be used in order to become part of the society in the host country is a necessary condition for asylum seekers to feel more secure and confident about their future.

This paper suggests that integration in the host country that is achieved while having subsidiary protection can be used later (even after the withdrawal of this status) in order to legitimise further residency. There are multiple specific examples of the legal regulations presented in this paper that show how exactly it can be done. Hopefully, these examples can prove to be useful when familiarising beneficiaries of subsidiary protection with their status and the possibilities that may exist after the end of this status. As such, it can be used as a basis for developing an information package for subsidiary protection. It can also be helpful when choosing a specific action plan in order to remain in the host country indefinitely. Taking this into account, the options presented in this paper can be used both by the organisations that work with asylum seekers and provide them with legal consultation as well as the asylum seekers themselves.

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7 ‖ ESTONIA AND THE 2015 REFUGEE CRISIS: BUILDING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE ADMISSION AND INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES

Keit Spiegel

The last couple of years have globally witnessed the biggest refugee crisis since the world wars in the 20th century. By 2017 more than five million people had fled to Europe, mostly from war-torn Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq (USA for UNHCR). The European Union (EU) or individual member states were not ready for a refugee crisis of this scale nor were they able to see the forthcoming consequences. It has been argued that the crisis is not only about migration but about the inability of the European asylum system which is mainly caused by internal contradictions and different national interests of the member states (Bagdonas 2015:7-8). The 28-nation EU shares blame for this situation because it has failed to develop a fair migrant admission and distribution plan for member states (Traar 2018).

In 2015 the European Commission presented a comprehensive European Agenda on Migration to tackle the main challenges of the ongoing refugee crisis. An "emergency relocation system" was established using both internal and external policies for common policy goals for the member states, including setting up a compulsory refugee reception quota system (European Commission, homepage). This controversial approach created a lot of tension and fear within and between different European states, Estonia not being an exception. This turmoil has set up anti-immigrant movements and also boosted the popularity of far-right political parties which are using the refugee crisis to seize power through intimidation and manipulation.

In this paper, integration will be defined as "the increasing of cultural, political and socio-economic coherence of society" (Integrating Estonia 2020:3) bearing in mind that integration is complex and "polarised" by nature because it is trying to join antagonistic processes – increase social coherence and at the same time maintain individual differences. Integration in this context must be seen as a two-way street where not just the newcomers must adapt but the population of the countries of destination must also contribute to the processes. Otherwise, the newcomers may segregate and this can lead to dangerous radicalisation which has already been witnessed in some parts of Europe in recent years.

The main aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the Estonian experience with the refugee crises on a practical level – it will map out the main challenges and also possible good practices. The first section of this paper provides a brief description of the ongoing refugee crisis. The following section gives an overview of the Estonian integration and migration system, specifically focusing on the integration of refugees who came under the EU migration plan. The final section contains an analysis and discussion, bringing together research results and interview data. The analysis and discussion section is followed by a conclusion and suggestions.

ESTONIA AND THE 2015 REFUGEE CRISIS

Integration and Migration Policy of Estonia

In 2015 there were approximately 192,900 people living in Estonia who were born outside the country, making it 14.7% of the total population (approximately 1.3 million people in total). Around 13,000 of them were from another EU country and 179,600 from outside the EU (Human Rights Centre, homepage). The biggest minority group in Estonia are the Estonian Russians who make up approximately 24% of the total population. Other bigger national minorities are Ukrainians, Byelorussians and Finns. Around 80,000 people living in Estonia have undetermined citizenship (a special legal status in Estonia that is not citizenship but is not statelessness either).

Official integration policy in Estonia supports the idea of a multicultural society. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia, everyone must guarantee the preservation of the Estonian people, the Estonian language and the Estonian culture but at the same time, everyone has the right to preserve his or her ethnic identity (Constitution of the Republic of Estonia). In order to achieve a functioning multicultural society, one of the preconditions additionally to identity is mutual recognition and tolerance which is lacking in the case of Estonia (Institute of Baltic Studies 2012:44).

According to the development plan Integrating Estonia 2020, Estonia is currently facing three crucial challenges in the field of integration in order to achieve a socially cohesive Estonian society (Integrating Estonia 2020:4):

- *increasing the openness of society, including Estonian-speaking permanent residents and making their attitudes towards integration more supportive;*

- *the continuing support for permanent residents with cultures and native languages different from Estonian in the society;*

- *supporting the adaptation and integration of new arrivals as a growing target group.*

Estonian migration policy has been stable but rather conservative since the country´s restoration of independence in 1991. This does not come as surprising that Estonians also support a conservative asylum policy; for example, 47% of people are opposed to the idea that Estonia should be lenient when examining applications for international protection (Eesti elanikkonna hoiakud kolmandatest riikidest sisserändajate suhtes Euroopa Sotsiaaluuringu andmetes 2016:28). Due to the conservative nature of the migration policy, obtaining citizenship for a foreigner is a complex task. Naturalisation is an option but it is considered to be one of the most restrictive in Europe (Trimbach 2017).

Estonia is one of the 146 states which has ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol (Integration of refugees in Estonia Participation and Empowerment 2016:10). According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in

recent decades Estonia has been among the European countries which receives the least asylum seekers. From 1997 to the first half of 2015, a total of 709 asylum applications were submitted of which only 114 received international protection, mainly from the Russian Federation, Georgia, Ukraine, Syria and Afghanistan (International Organization for Migration, homepage). In 2015, with the European Agenda on Migration, Estonia agreed to provide asylum to 550 people within the following two years which is five times more than in the past 18 years altogether.

Estonia and the Refugee Quota System

The EU migration plan saw 160,000 refugees resettled or relocated within the EU in 2016-2017. The figure or the "quota" comes mainly from the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens which established the obligations of states to people who have requested or have already been granted international protection (Report of the National Audit Office to the Riigikogu 2016:3). The Estonian official position declared not to dispute the relocation quota and highlighted the need to help refugees integrate into Estonian society (Republic of Estonia Government, homepage).

In 2015 Estonia agreed to resettle and relocate up to 550 quota refugees under the EU migration plan. Within the first phase, Estonia agreed to relocate 329 refugees from Greece and Italy. Furthermore, Estonia agreed to resettle 20 refugees from Turkey and additionally resettle 168 people under the EU-Turkey Refugee Agreement. In total, Estonia was set to accept 517 refugees (Ülevaade riigi ja kohaliku omavalitsuse 2016. aasta tegevustest Euroopa rändekava alusel ümberpaigutatud ja -asustatud rahvusvahelise kaitse saajate vastuvõtmiseks 2016:1).

Before the global crisis, the challenge to integrate refugees was not considered problematic in Estonia as there were not too many asylum cases. The system was seen as quite adaptable in the sense that each case could be handled individually on a case-by-case method (Integration of refugees in Estonia Participation and Empowerment, 2016:9). Taking the obligation to relocate and resettle more than 500 refugees within two years meant that a more comprehensive mechanism was needed.

The Ministry of the Interior together with other stakeholders put together a profile of preference; for example, families with children, single parents, unaccompanied minors or orphans and persons who have given their consent to relocation to Estonia. Preferred were people who are more likely to adapt and integrate more easily and who are not considered a security threat/risk. Education and former work experience were also considered (occupation, skills, etc.). The candidates received an introductory-session on the Republic of Estonia. After the UNHCR had made an initial selection, Estonia would make the final decision to grant a person or family international protection (Täpsustatud tegevuskava Euroopa Liidu ümberasustamise ja ümberpaigutamise tegevuste elluviimiseks, 2015:6).

Refugees arriving in Estonia already had international protection granted and they also received a residence permit. They underwent a primary medical examination to detect any possible infectious or chronic diseases (Täpsustatud tegevuskava Euroopa Liidu ümberasustamise ja ümberpaigutamise tegevuste elluviimiseks, 2015:7-8). However, the initial medical evaluation does not cover mental health issues (Janson 2017). They were provided with accommodation (up to two years) and different support services such as, for example, free compulsory language training, translation service, support person service, etc. The aim of all these activities was to get the newcomers to access the labour market as promptly as possible to avoid exhausting the social system (Republic of Estonia Government).

By the beginning of 2018, under the EU migration plan, Estonia had relocated and resettled 206 refugees originally from Syria, Iraq and Yemen. The majority of them, 141 arrived from camps in Greece, 59 from Turkey and six from Italy.

MIPEX & Push-Pull Factors

According to Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015 (MIPEX), Estonia was classified as a halfway favourable country for migrants, being ranked 22 out of 38 countries, which is several ranks ahead of other Baltic states. There are clear strengths and weaknesses in the system for the immigrants in Estonia to fully participate in different areas of public life (MIPEX 2015, homepage). On

the positive side, employment and education policies can be seen as an example because they try to respond to the needs of different groups of immigrants (both newcomers and long-settled non-EU-born groups). On the negative side, political participation, discrimination and more restrictive opportunities than in nearly all developed democracies to become a citizen of Estonia can be observed. There is a challenge of how to create inclusive conditions for all residents to participate, contribute and interact with each other in democratic life (MIPEX 2015).
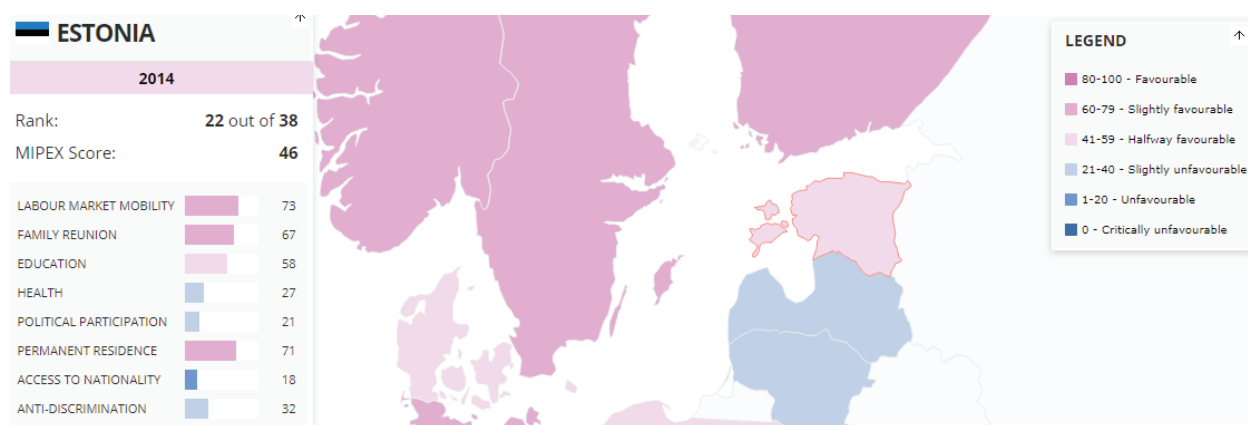

Figure 1. Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015 (MIPEX 2015).

With the current refugee crisis, it is easy to define the push factors, the factors that have forced people to flee their countries of origin – namely the Syrian war and other conflicts in the region, together with persecution and socio-economic difficulties. It is somewhat more difficult to define the pull factors, the factors which attract refugees to come to Estonia as their new country. Possible pull factors which attract refugees to come (and stay) in Estonia:

- Refugees arriving in Estonia under the relocation and resettlement plan already have international protection and they are granted living permits.

- Free housing for up to two years. At first, the accommodation was already waiting for the refugees in local municipalities but this created different problems and since 2018 people with international protection can choose the municipality and the accommodation themselves with the help of their support person.

- Persons with international protection have the same rights to receive support from the government as any other Estonian resident: pension, family benefits, labour market services and unemployment benefits, social benefits and health services. Income support can be applied on the same basis as the rest of the permanent or temporary residents of Estonia. In 2018 the income support was EUR 130 per month for the first member of the family and underage children. The subsistence level for each next adult family member is EUR 104 per month (Republic of Estonia Government, homepage).

- Free of charge language training for refugees. Since 2016 learning the Estonian language is compulsory for persons with international protection. The main aim of compulsory language training is to support the quick adaptation of the new arrivals. This will also help the refugees to enter the labour market more efficiently. After the initial arrival, the refugees also receive translation service when needed.

- Refugees receive individual support and counselling. Relationships are established between the refugees and their support person, local authorities, medical and educational institutions. There is a special three-day welcoming course for the beneficiaries of international protection. The main aim of this course is to help the newcomers to adapt more easily by providing information about the society, contacts with the organisation of their everyday life, culture and working environment. The courses are in English, Russian and Arabic (there are special one-day courses in the Dari and Farsi languages) (Welcoming programme).

- Refugees have the right to work in Estonia and they are provided assistance in finding employment through the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (EUIF). All legal residents can access employment services and programmes, vocational education and training.

- Recognising refugee qualifications in Estonia. The procedure differs for the recognition of academic degrees and for foreign professional qualifications. The former is done by the Estonian ENIC/NARIC Centre in accordance with government regulation (RT I 2006, 16, 130). It is free of charge and will be issued to the applicant within 60 days. It is both

advisory and informative for an educational institution or an employer (The Estonian ENIC/NARIC). There are also some professions which require a special professional qualification in order to work in Estonia (education, law, health care, etc.). The recognition of foreign professional qualifications for refugees is regulated by the Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications Act (RT I 2008, 30, 191) but in order to receive the recognition a person must contact a specific institution/authority in their area of activity (Estonian ENIC/NARIC).

- Children are enrolled in kindergartens and schools in local municipalities. The education sector is increasingly capable with refugee children. In most of the cases, refugee children have adapted well in the education system.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section is important for the integrity of the work, bringing together the research results and linking them to analysis and discussion. This section is made up of different categories of topics discussed in interviews with representatives of the leading Estonian NGOs in the field (R – respondent).

Challenges

Although according to the UNHCR global report, the Baltic states have improved their asylum frameworks, procedures, practice and reception arrangements mostly due to implementation of laws and persistent advocacy, there remain several obstacles to overcome (UNHCR Global Report 2017: Regional summaries Europe, 2017:116). R1 *"The system is altogether too technical and is mainly based on the provision of services. There is a lack of a 'humane dimension.' The public services (for refugees) in this context alone do not work… There should be a community-based approach… I mean yes, we need to have national strategies in place but*

with the lack of actual support from the community, it does not work. On paper, their rights and services are guaranteed, but in reality, are hard to apply in real life situations." The criticism from the stakeholders is that they are just providing services instead of working towards actual integration (Integration of refugees in Estonia. Participation and Empowerment 2016:89).

There are currently many challenges in the Estonian asylum system. R1 "The Estonian asylum policy is located in a hub – *it is related to the work of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Research… There are a lot of stakeholders involved and this complicates things."* R2*"We have very good cooperation with the ministries involved but cooperation with several other stakeholders is complicated. Yes, the institutions send their representatives to the meetings, but in many cases, the person doesn't really work with refugee cases or doesn't seem to be very motivated to."* There is not enough coordination between different stakeholders and the system is quite technical – the government sets policies and then the third sector will provide most of the services in cooperation with other institutions (e.g., EUIF, local authorities).

The stakeholders also agree that in many cases, the "quota refugees" are quite reluctant to any integration processes. R2 *"In my experience, the "quota refugees" are the most complicated target group of the refugees that come to Estonia. In many cases, they are quite demanding, disappointed and even reluctant to do anything... I think it has to do with the years they have spent in the camps, waiting, where they were just handed out everything… They are somehow so very excluded from real life... On the contrary, the refugees that arrive here voluntary and on their own, are enthusiastic and eager to adapt."*

Direct Placement to Municipalities

R1 *"Estonia was the first in the Baltics to start accommodating people with international protection straight to municipalities, to rented apartments. It was thought to increase integration more rapidly. The actual outcome was that there were several problems and it did not give any advantages in integration…"* At

first, the refugees were often accommodated in rural areas because of cheaper accommodation costs. This, on the other hand, made entering the labour market more difficult because labour market opportunities were limited (no jobs or only low-income jobs available).

In many cases, the local governments were not ready to receive refugee families and provide services to them. R1 *"Community in my experience is the keyword for a successful transition and adaptation. Most of the success stories are related to strong community support. Yes, other conditions play important roles, but communal support is definitely very important… but support from the communities comes when the communities are ready to provide the support. For example, when the refugee planes first arrived in Estonia, there were a few cases where the local governments learned about receiving a refugee family on the day or one day prior to their arrival. There was no preparation in many cases and it created a lot of tensions from the perspective of local municipalities. No experience or proper resources…This does not make any sense…they are supposed to provide services to them and support them…"* The system of direct placement to municipalities has since changed (2018), allowing the refugees to choose the municipality or city where they are going to live after initially living in refugee centres.

There is now a tendency where most of the refugees choose to live in bigger cities (Tallinn, Tartu, etc.) where it is easier to find employment and also simpler to "blend in." R1 *"Many of the success stories come from bigger cities. It is also easier to provide specific services when the refugees are sort of concentrated together."* This means that providing services to refugees additionally to the third sector is now mostly concentrated to a few local governments. R2 *"In Tallinn City Council there is not a specialised official to deal with refugee-related issues. We sometimes turn to them with some ideas or problems, but there is no one specific to turn to..."* R1 *"Tartu city council hired a special contact person, a coordinator to help the newcomers, but sadly, as the number of arrivals was so low, the position was later abolished."*

Secondary Migration

According to the Ministry of Social Affairs´ statistics, at least 88 of the 206 "quota refugees" are currently not in Estonia any longer (ERR 2018). R1 *"In the (refugee) camps they live in inhumane conditions and getting them out of there is actually more like a humanitarian mission. But in the end after arriving here, with guaranteed sufficient living conditions, they feel so isolated and excluded particularly in rural areas."*

There are already numerous examples where people with international protection decide to leave Estonia. In most cases, they have travelled to Germany where benefits are higher and in most of the cases there are also acquaintances. People with international protection are allowed to travel with their permits but they are not allowed to stay away from Estonia over 90 days, otherwise they will be sent back to Estonia. R1 *"It is important to understand how they (the refugees) end up here in Estonia. In most of these cases it is so to speak forced migration... UNHCR makes the first selection in the refugee camps and then Estonia in accordance with their set measures makes the final decision. So, in a lot of the cases they (the refugees) formally choose Estonia, but at the same time have no other option. This may be one of the reasons why so many people leave. So that they actually do not intend to stay here in the first place... there have been cases where we know that people who have been granted international protection in Estonia, deliberately decide to lose their new documents so that they could start the process again in Germany – secondary migration."* There should be measures to support refugees´ self-sustainability in order to reduce secondary migration from Estonia.

Refugees and the Labour Market

Refugees have the right to work in Estonia and they are provided assistance in finding employment through the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (EUIF). The EUIF has various measures, it mediates job offers, provides job placement opportunities and advanced courses. "The measures are not diversified according to specific labour market groups but are offered according to the special circumstances, individual

needs and obstacles to entering the labour market of each person in every individual case" (Integration of Refugees in Estonia. Participation and Empowerment 2016:47). The EUIF also has support mechanisms for employers who hire refugees. R1 "*There are different programmes which encourage hiring refugees (e.g., "My first job" programme), but for some reason, this has not created an impact…*" According to MIPEX 2015 index, approximately 30% of working-age non-EU citizens in Estonia are not in employment, education or training (MIPEX 2015).

It is, however, crucial to understand that the situation of the demographics in Europe and more specifically in the Baltic states is alarming – the population is ageing and declining. According to the Estonian Institute of Economic Research, the current situation of the Estonian economy is strong but the main economic problem is labour shortage; more specifically, a lack of skilled labour. By 2025 it is estimated that there will be a shortage of 100,000 workers (Tamkivi 2016). That is why refugee integration should be seen as an interest of Estonia and other Baltic states. Instead of seeing refugees as a "threat" or "burden," the focus should be on finding efficient and sustainable solutions to integrate the new arrivals into Estonian society and the labour market. There are, however, several bottlenecks to consider – educational background, professional background, ability to learn languages, etc. R1 *"Education is a big problem. More so the level of education… Educational level affects communication, dependence and also the level of demands from the refugees. It is also connected to the ability to learn languages and possible future participation in the labour market… It is important to understand that yes, learning Estonian is now compulsory for refugees, so when signing the documents to obtain the status of international protection they also agree to learn the Estonian language. In reality, there are no sanctions when they don't. It could, however, become an obstacle when extending one's residents permit..."*

There is a lack of individual "labour inclusion plans" which build on the refugee's qualifications and aspirations (Integration of Refugees in Estonia. Participation and Empowerment 2016:11). These restrictions may create a situation where the refugees start working below their qualifications or quit looking for a job. According to MIPEX, this can create "long-term negative consequences for labour market integration" (MIPEX 2015).

Cultural & Religious Differences

According to the UN, a third of all refugees around the world come from three nations: Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia (UNCHR 2014). This means that most of the refugees looking for international protection in Estonia are from remote countries with a different cultural and religious background. There is ethnic diversity in Estonia but only to some extent. Most of the diverse ethnic groups have lived here for a long time (Russian, Ukrainian, etc., minorities) and they are culturally much more similar to Estonians than the refugees from the Arab world. R1 *"The Arabs are very different from us; they are used to a different social system – there is a lot of hierarchy and customs. For example, they would only visit shops that are owned by their relatives, job opportunities through personal contacts, etc."* R2 *"They are mostly from societies, where it is all male-driven – it is very surprising for them to see so many women everywhere in the society…nurses, shopkeepers, teachers, etc."*

Estonians are known to be one of the least religious nations in the world, with Christianity being the most commonly practiced religion. The two largest Christian traditions in Estonia are Lutheran and Orthodox. There is only a small practicing Muslim community in Estonia, consisting of different ethnicities, mainly members of Tatar, Azerbaijani, Kazakh and Uzbek communities living in Estonia (Estonian Islamic Congregation, homepage).

Anti-migrant Attitudes, Discrimination and Stigmatisation

According to MIPEX and several other statistics, anti-immigrant attitudes are higher than in most developed countries and around half of the population does not believe that Estonia is a welcoming country for immigrants (MIPEX 2015). Estonians are not a very welcoming nation; there is a problem with the openness of society. This has a lot to do with the cultural-historic background of Estonia and also the role of the media in recent years.

There has not been a "Willkommenskultur" in accepting refugees. According to the statistics, approximately 30% of Estonians would not let foreigners from poor

countries or outside European countries live in Estonia (Eesti elanikkonna hoiakud kolmandatest riikidest sisserändajate suhtes Euroopa Sotsiaaluuringu andmetes 2016:16). When speaking specifically about refugees, the statistics show an even bigger gap in tolerance. Accordingly, 42% of people are opposed to the idea of accepting refugees, 26% are neutral or do not have an opinion on this matter and 32% would accept refugees to Estonia (Pagulastega seotud hoiakud 2015).

Age is the main characteristic which determines the attitude towards newcomers. Young people (up to 30) are the most tolerant group and over 60-year-olds are the least tolerant group (Eesti elanikkonna hoiakud kolmandatest riikidest sisserändajate suhtes Euroopa Sotsiaaluuringu andmetes 2016:18). A positive or supportive attitude towards refugees and culturally different people is also characteristic to young people. The most conservative group towards refugees and asylum policy are people of an active working age (30-60-year-olds) (Eesti elanikkonna hoiakud kolmandatest riikidest sisserändajate suhtes Euroopa Sotsiaaluuringu andmetes 2016:35). People with a higher education also tend to be more supportive when it comes to immigration issues (Eesti elanikkonna hoiakud kolmandatest riikidest sisserändajate suhtes Euroopa Sotsiaaluuringu andmetes 2016:18). There is a slight positive change in the statistics when comparing older data with more recent.

According to the interviewees, refugees in Estonia experience slander and even physical abuse but often they do not tell this to anyone. R2 *"A lot of them don't speak up about the mistreatment and abuse they experience in our society. The ones that are more outspoken have told me stories about how they experience verbal-abuse, people spit at them… you get these sorts of people everywhere, but what saddens me the most is the fact that no one hardly ever steps up to protect them, if they witness any sort of cruelty…"*

Society´s overall attitude, additionally to the historic-cultural tendencies, is shaped largely by the media. Since the outbreak of the refugee crisis, the media in Estonia has not been impartial. They have created a complex situation where terms such as asylum seekers and potential terrorist threats have been mixed up, thus creating a situation where distorted truths were spread. According to Bagdonas, the link between terrorism and irregular migration is the fact that one causes the other

(Bagdonas 2015:20). There is always coverage in the Estonian media when there are immigrants involved in a crime committed either in Sweden or Germany.

All of this has boosted the far-right movement because the refugee crisis is very much securitised and made into a topic of intimidation mostly for political gain. Since 2018 the public support for a national-conservative party, the Estonian Conservative People's Party (EKRE), has been at its highest ever (ERR 2018). In the 2019 parliament elections, EKRE received strong support from the nation (finishing third) and were chosen as a coalition partner in forming a government. The party leader will now be the Minister of the Interior with four more seats in the cabinet. It is currently unknown how much influence the national-conservative party will have on integration-migration policies or the overall attitudes towards it.

Why is the population´s attitude important when it comes to migration? It has a big impact on newcomers' adaptability to adapt and integrate into the new society. Hostile attitudes support the situation where newcomers segregate and do not integrate with the rest of the society. Furthermore, this can lead to hostile attitudes towards the new country and create dangerous radicalisation. On the other hand, successfully integrated refugees can be seen as a resource in several ways, they are valuable in integrating other people from the same or similar ethnic groups and they could also help in shaping the overall attitudes towards immigration; more specifically, towards persons with international protection.

Good Practices

The service of support persons has been widely used in Estonia. The support persons can be seen as a "bridge" between the technical system and the everyday lives of refugees. R1 *"The support person service is both a technical – providing services and moral – connection and communication between the refugee and society."* A more fixed time-frame for the support person service should be established as otherwise, it could create dependence and also learned helplessness. R1 *"The system of support person´s service in Estonia is moving towards a specific timeframe at the beginning of the adaption process… I think this is more efficient, because we*

have already seen in our work that sometimes the families have started to treat their support person as their spokespersons – so for example instead of sorting out some problems at their child's kindergarten, they let the support person do it…this is not in the interest of their integration." A fixed time frame for the service means that there has to develop an existing support network instead. The stakeholders also see peer support/counselling as a good alternative to support persons.

Supportive work from the non-governmental sector and positive examples of supportive local communities can also be seen as good practices. For example, the Harju-Risti local community volunteered to offer to accept and accommodate a refugee family in 2016 (LP 2016). In 2018 the family was still living in the community and had adapted well, the father had successfully entered the labour market, whilst children were doing well at school. There are also a couple of good examples where refugees have started their businesses in the food sector (e.g., restaurant Ali Baba by Syrian and Palestine refugees).

Where else to look for "good practices?" On several issues, Finland could be seen as a "good example" for Estonia. Finland has decades of experience with refugee integration. R1 *"We only have two categories for literacy – a person is either literate or illiterate. In Finland, they have several sub-groups for each category, which helps a lot with further education and language studies."* This could be supported by more functional language training which is adapted to the needs of the refugees in order to enter the labour market. R2 *"We have a lot to learn from the Scandinavian countries, but for example a big influence on our support service mechanisms comes from the Dutch model."*

The Future

Estonia should be accepting additional quota refugees within the framework of the European Commission proposal (ERR 2018). This means that in addition to the 206 people who had arrived by the beginning of 2018, a maximum of 80 people more should arrive. The stakeholders are very sceptical that any other quota refugees will come to Estonia. R2 *"Not many people want to come to Estonia. Even the ones who*

have undergone the interviews at the camps and have given their consent to come; for some reason change their minds at the very last moment and never actually make it here... We have heard that many have now decided to stay in Turkey."

Additionally, at least 88 of these people who have arrived are not currently in Estonia anymore (the data is incomplete). The number of asylum seekers has decreased significantly after 2017 and this has created a standstill in the system. R2 *"The problem is that all the services for the refugees are in place, but there are currently not many people coming to Estonia. It is very hard to plan work when there are not enough people to provide the designed services."* R1 *"Is it even reasonable to develop service provision if we get around ten people per year, or where should most of the funding go? The system is currently at a crossroads."* One option would be to concentrate the funds and programmes towards these groups which actually stay in Estonia. Successfully integrated refugees can be seen as a resource in several means – participants in the labour market, valuable in integrating other people from same or similar ethnic groups and they could also help in shaping the overall attitudes towards immigration.

CONCLISION & SUGGESTIONS

By 2019, the number of new arrivals illegally crossing into Europe has decreased significantly. It is estimated that it has dropped by 92% since the peak of the crisis back in 2015 (Smith-Spark 2019). Nonetheless, the refugee crisis is still ongoing and will probably be for years. Meanwhile, the consequences have changed Europe for good as it is not just the question of how to "divide" the newcomers between the member states but how to make them part of the new societies.

The goal of granting international protection is finding durable solutions for the refugees and ultimately achieving legal, economic, civil and political integration in their new countries of arrival (Integration of Refugees in Estonia. Participation and Empowerment 2016:10). A smooth integration process is also important in order

for the newcomers to access the labour market as promptly as possible, that way avoiding straining the social system. Integration is a two-way process – the refugees have to adapt and start contributing but in order to achieve a socially cohesive society, the receiving society must also be willing to adapt and accept change, "integrate with the refugees." Due to the multilateral nature of the integration processes, it is very hard to predict the course of the integration trajectory in different societies.

The main aim of this paper was to provide an overview of the Estonian experience with the refugee crisis on a practical level. It focused on the Estonian refugee integration practice, mapping out challenges, obstacles and also good practices. This paper argues that refugee integration should be seen as an interest of Estonia and other Baltic states. Instead of seeing refugees as a "threat" or "burden," the focus should be on finding efficient and sustainable solutions to integrate the new arrivals into Estonian society and the labour market. Successfully integrated refugees can be seen as a resource in several ways – participants in the labour market, valuable in integrating other people from the same or similar ethnic groups and they could also help in shaping the overall attitudes towards immigration. The following suggestions can be made from the results of this paper:

- Develop better coordination between different stakeholders

- Support community-based approach

- Capacity building for local governments

- Refugees' self-sustainability in the new society

- Access to the labour market as promptly as possible

- Create individual "labour inclusion plans"

- More functional language studies

- Concentrate more funds and additional programmes towards groups which actually stay in Estonia

- Increase the openness in the Estonian society

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8 || BUILDING TIES BETWEEN THE STATE AND THE GEORGIAN DIASPORA – THE ROLE OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Ketevan Gorgoshidze

INTRODUCTION

Georgia has experienced several waves of emigration throughout its recent history linked with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Georgia's regaining of its national independence and severe economic crises during the 1990s and later. The data of the national population census shows a 20% decrease in the general population of Georgia from 1990 to 2002. The declining trend continued according to the census of 2014 with 3.7 million people as compared to the 2002 census data with 4.3 million (GEOSTAT). The determinants of declining numbers in population size are related to demographic factors such as significantly low birth rates and remarkably increasing out-migration. The motivations and reasons for emigration are complex and are based on economic, social and political factors. The most recent migratory flows are also connected to the personal networks abroad that play an important role in one's decision to move. This conclusion even more increases the role of the diaspora in migratory flows.

Important economic reforms have taken place in Georgia throughout past couple of decades along with the increasing political stability and security that gradually transforms Georgia into an attractive destination for immigrants. However, emigration remains high with the majority of migrants looking for employment opportunities in the European Union Member States where the highest numbers of Georgian migrants are found alongside other countries of destination.

Furthermore, since March 2017, Georgian citizens have been enjoying the right of visa free travel to the Schengen area for short stays (maximum of 90 days in a 180-day period). Based on the positive assessment of the implementation of the benchmarks of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan (VLAP) in December 2015, the European Commission proposed to Council of the European Union to transfer Georgia to the list of countries whose nationals are exempt from the visa requirement. In addition to this amendment, the suspension mechanism – a special set of measures intended to temporarily suspend the exemption from the visa requirement for nationals of a third country – originally established by the Council Regulation (EC) 539/2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and whose nationals are exempt from this requirement was revised. Therefore, the suspension mechanism may be initiated by any EU MS if it is confronted, over a two-month period, with one or more of the following circumstances: increasing asylum applications from Georgia, a substantial increase in the refusal rate of readmission applications, the increased risk or imminent threat to the public policy or internal security of Member States and a substantial increase in the number of Georgian nationals refused entry or found to be staying in EU Member States irregularly. As a result, the need for proper communication of the rules and the procedures of visa-free travel emerged with Georgian nationals residing in Georgia and abroad.

According to the results of the latest general population census of Georgia (GEOSTAT, 2015), the top destination countries of Georgian migrants in 2015 were:

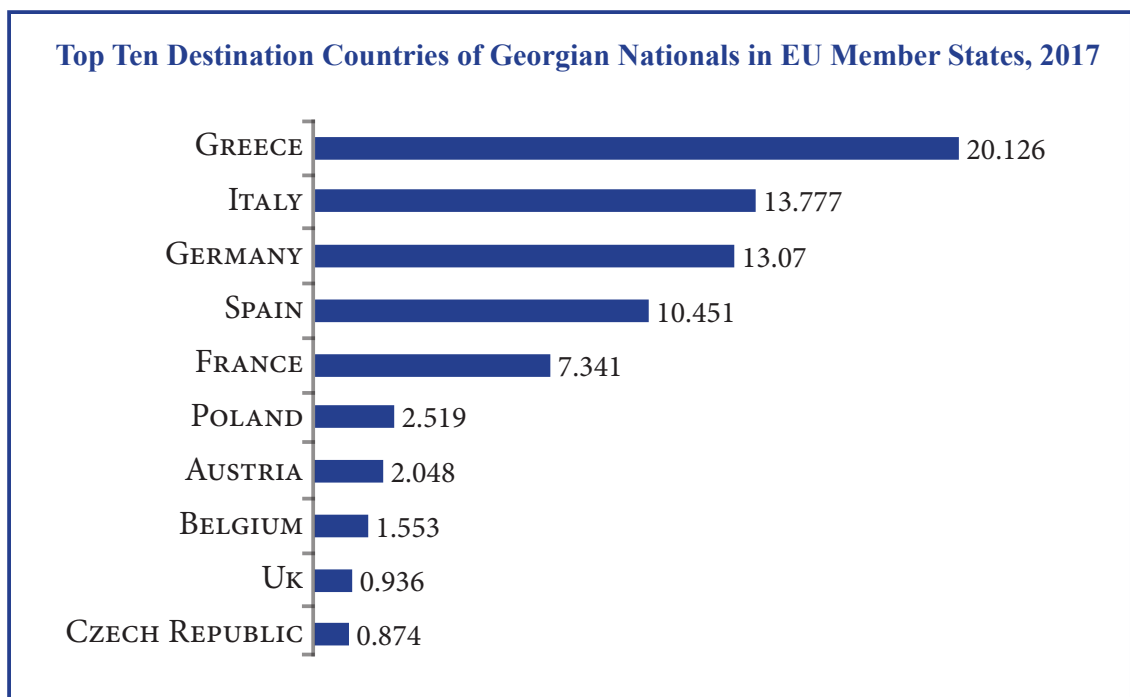Table 1. Number of Georgian Migrants in Destination Countries by Gender, 2015

Countries of destination	Both genders	Male	Female
Russia	19,195	13, 640	5,555
Greece	14,048	2,386	11,662
Turkey	9,922	3,262	6,660
Italy	9,612	1,373	8,239
Germany	6,259	2,808	3,451

USA	5,021	2,457	2,564
Spain	3,597	1,724	1,873
France	3,293	1,896	1,397
Ukraine	3,283	2,619	664
Azerbaijan	1,802	1,091	711
Other	**11,590**	**6,483**	**5107**

According to the data of Eurostat, the top ten destination countries of Georgian migrants in the European Union are:

Figure 1. All valid residents permits in Top Ten Countries of Destination (EU MS), 2017

Top Ten Destination Countries of Georgian Nationals in EU Member States, 2017

Greece	20.126
Italy	13.777
Germany	13.07
Spain	10.451
France	7.341
Poland	2.519
Austria	2.048
Belgium	1.553
Uk	0.936
Czech Republic	0.874

The profiles of Georgian nationals residing abroad vary according to the context of destination countries, labour market demands, historic ties with Georgia and geographic proximity. For instance, in the cases of Greece and Italy, the labour market demand is high in the domestic sector and attracts more women migrants from Georgia who are supporting their families left behind. In general, the majority

of people moving abroad from Georgia are women, 55% of emigrants (Migration Profile of Georgia, 2017). Germany, however, attracts more highly skilled labour migrants from Georgia and their structured educational or professional programmes act as major incentives for young Georgians to choose Germany as a destination country.

The data from EUROSTAT given in the table below indicates that more than 77,000 Georgian nationals were legally residing on the territory of the EU in 2017.

Table 3. All valid residents permits in the Top Ten Countries of Destination (EU MS), 2015-2017

All residents permits valid on December 31	2015	2016	2017	Family 2017	Labour 2017	Study 2017	Protection 2017
Total, EU	**71.268**	**74.845**	**77.879**	**27.128**	**18.075**	**4.831**	**2.994**
Greece	18.774	19.643	20.126	7.594	2.495	67	N/A
Italy	13.335	14.025	13.777	3.625	9.554	153	78
Germany	11.715	12.136	13.070	6.074	1.588	2.491	182
Spain	9.665	10.063	10.451	2.867	1.534	103	29
France	6.079	6.835	7.341	3.238	252	256	2.386
Poland	1.467	1.829	2.519	226	1.516	242	141
Austria	1.841	2.026	2.048	329	96	267	N/A
Belgium	1.697	1.637	1.553	530	56	33	71
United Kingdom	966	933	936	346	141	361	1
Czech Republic	858	951	874	260	147	190	21

The majority of Georgians legally residing in EU in 2017 were issued residence permits on the basis of family reasons. Germany has issued most of the residence permits on the grounds of education purposes, whereas most of the permits issued by Italy were on the grounds of employment while the majority of the permits issued

by Greece and Spain were based on family reasons. The geographical proximity and visa-free movement with Turkey supports seasonal migration schemes, especially from Adjara which is a border region with Turkey (Georgian Diaspora and Migrant Communities in Germany, Greece and Turkey, ICMPD 2015).

This paper intends to review the successful examples of Georgian diaspora engagement and provision of information to the diaspora abroad mainly based on the practices of the Government of Georgia (GoG) and the experience of EU-funded projects implemented in Georgia by ICMPD since 2013. It also argues that institutionalised and targeted information and service provision measures carried out by the state strengthen ties with the diaspora and support in building trust which in turn leads to diaspora engagement for the benefit of the home country.

MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND DIASPORA POLICY IN GEORGIA

Over the last several years, Georgia has put significant efforts in forming its migration policy framework aiming at building a coherent migration policy at the national level. This was largely stipulated by the actions carried out to fulfil the commitments and achieve the benchmarks set out by the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan (VLAP).

The first strategic document defining migration policy in Georgia was developed in 1997 and approved by the President. It was an innovative document of its time with a mainly declaratory character. In 2010, the State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI) and its Secretariat within the Ministry of Justice were established by the Government of Georgia. The Commission is a coordinative body of all state institutions working on migration issues and aims to develop and implement a coherent migration policy for the country while ensuring its proper management. The permanent members of the SCMI are the following state institutions: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs, State Security Service, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour,

Health and Social Affairs; Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport; Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Finance, National Statistics Office of Georgia and the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure. International organisations as ICMPD, IOM, UNHCR and NGOs working on migration issues are called to the quarterly sittings of the Commission as consultative members. The main functions of the Secretariat of the State Commission include monitoring the Action Plan for the Migration Strategy and providing the Commission with relevant information, defining activities to be implemented within each thematic area of migration and submitting relevant analytical reports and informing the Commission of current projects in the field of migration, etc.. Furthermore, the Secretariat generates ideas for 'Calls for Projects' in the migration field and submits them to the Commission.

Following its establishment, the Commission took up the responsibility to develop State Migration Strategy documents and Action Plans on a regular basis. The second Migration Strategy was implemented through 2013-2015. In 2015, the government adopted the third strategic document – Migration Strategy 2016-2020 – defining the country's migration policy that considered global and regional challenges and was based on the requirements of the EU VLAP. The 2016-2020 strategy touches upon the implementation of specific dimensions of the following migration areas: supporting legal migration, the prevention of illegal migration, international protection, foreigners' integration and reintegration of Georgian nationals, migration and development, improving migration management, public awareness raising and deepening international cooperation.

Currently, there is no specific diaspora strategy approved in Georgia despite several attempts to do so. However, the definition of the term 'diaspora' is outlined by the Law of Georgia on Compatriots Residing Abroad and Diaspora Organisations (2011). According to the Law – 'diaspora' covers the members of all Georgian migrant communities abroad, including historical diaspora members, temporary short-term emigrants, long-term emigrants, expatriates and Georgians who are already naturalised in their countries of destination. Further, the institutional framework of diaspora issues is also in place. Considering the increasing number of Georgians residing abroad, the Government of Georgia faced the need of

strengthening ties with diaspora and migrant communities. Therefore, the Office of the State Minister on Diaspora Issues (Diaspora Office) was established already in 2008 underlining that diaspora issues were placed on top of Georgia's political agenda. This institution also coordinated the collection and analysis of information on Georgians abroad in close cooperation with the Consular Department of the MFA. Until today, the Consular Department of the MFA identifies and develops aspects of consular policy, carries out coordination, monitoring and strategic planning for consular officials abroad and provides legal technical support these officials require to fulfil their consular duties. In 2016, due to the reshuffling of the Georgian government, the Diaspora Office was abolished and its portfolio was transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where the Department of Diaspora Relations was established. Until today, this department remains the main institution responsible for maintaining and strengthening contacts with Georgians abroad and the development and implementation of the state strategy on diaspora. The profile of Georgian migrants varies around the world in its composition, characteristics and needs. These differences also influence the directions of the work of the Department of Diaspora Relations as it aims to implement individually designed initiatives and programmes for Georgian communities abroad and, in particular, the need of diaspora engagement.

In its efforts to strengthen ties with Georgian diaspora and migrant communities abroad, the Georgian government has faced the following challenges: a lack of a systematised and holistic approach with scattered programmes and initiatives, gathering and structuring data on the diaspora and the need of enhanced awareness raising. The database of the Diaspora Relations Department of the MFA counts over 300 Georgian diaspora organisations registered around the world. This estimate does not reflect the actual number of Georgian diaspora organisations and associations functioning in destination countries; however it gives the possibility to identify the most active organisations that maintain regular contact with the Ministry. As a result, an approximate picture can still be drawn on what are the major destination countries hosting the most self-organised diaspora and migrant communities. Nevertheless, a high number of diaspora groups might also indicate the fragmentation of Georgian communities in the respective countries and a lack of cooperation and consolidation.

Figure 2. Number of Georgian Diaspora Organisations, Sunday Schools and Creative Groups Abroad,
    (Main Destination Countries) MFA, 2016
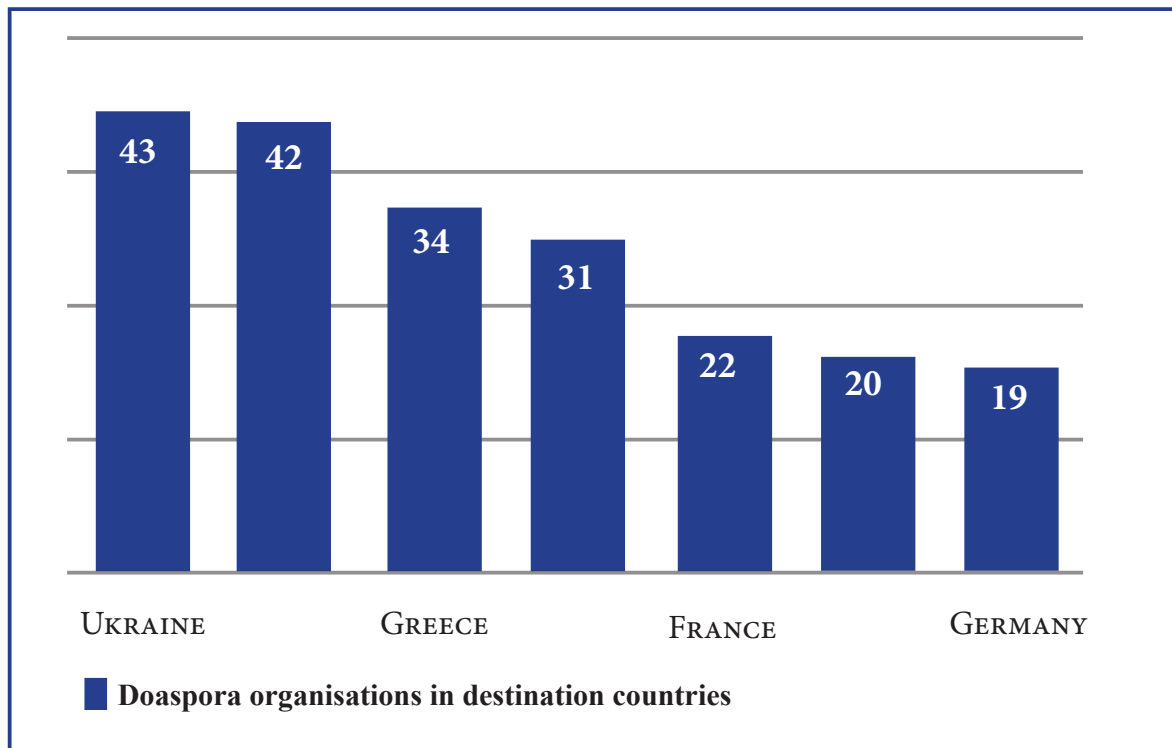
As seen in the figure above, the greatest number of Georgian diaspora groups are registered in Ukraine (43) and Russia (42) with Greece (34) being the third country with the largest number of registered diaspora groups. Next are Turkey, France, the USA and Germany followed up by Israel, Belgium, Estonia, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland, each counting from five to ten Georgian diaspora groups. As a rule, these are community or religion-based organisations run on a voluntary basis aiming at preserving Georgian culture, language, religion and identity among members of Georgian migrant communities abroad and in some cases – promoting these values among hosting communities. This directly corresponds with the main activities of the Department of Diaspora Relations under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; in particular, promoting Georgian culture and preserving the identity of compatriots living abroad, strengthening their contacts with the homeland and developing cooperation including in the area of the popularisation of Georgian culture, history and traditions.

Nexus between Diaspora Engagement and Communication

Although some states and policymakers see the emigration of their nationals as a loss and are alarmed about the phenomenon of brain-drain, they are starting to realise that an engaged diaspora is actually an asset and can even counterweight the out-flow of highly skilled migrants. In 2017, remittances comprised 8% of Georgia's GDP and are in general exceeding foreign direct investments (National Bank of Georgia, 2017). However, it is crucial to activate not only the economic aspect of diaspora engagement but social as well, focusing on professional aspects and the transfer of knowledge and skills. Moreover, the economic engagement of the diaspora broadly depends on its trust in the government and the achievement of trustful relations is often possible through exchange and communication.

The mandate of the Department of Diaspora Relations of the MFA entitles promoting Georgian culture and language abroad and strengthening Georgian identity and the feeling of belonging among diaspora and migrant communities. As a result, the daily work of the Department is based on liaison with representatives of Georgian diaspora organisations and active diaspora members, hearing out their concerns and addressing the organisational needs of diaspora organisations talking into account their limited capacities (financial and human) as the majority of organisations are working on a voluntary basis. The support of the Georgian state to the diaspora organisation is often limited to delivering books to Sunday Schools, purchasing Georgian national costumes and instruments for dance ensembles and choirs, organising annual diaspora networking events in Georgia and so on. The main channels of communication which the Department of Diaspora Relations uses to reach Georgians abroad are social networks, emails and direct contact with Georgian diaspora organisations such as during official visits, NGOs in Georgia and abroad, as well as private channels. Other forms of assistance include consultations provided by telephone, email or in person. In general, the Department of Diaspora Relations is in daily contact with diaspora organisations and supports them in organising various cultural and networking events such as the Diaspora Professional Forum (2015) and the Diaspora Economic Forum (2016). However, it should be noted that these contacts and the provision of assistance have mainly been done on an ad hoc basis. In addition, the needs of

diaspora organisations, which differ from country to country and from organisation to organisation, have not been fully analysed. As already mentioned, one major goal of the Department of Diaspora Relations is to consolidate Georgians abroad including through a Global Diaspora Network to provide more comprehensive and regularly updated data on Georgian communities, weekend schools and diaspora organisations, and events and activities planned by Georgians abroad. In order to complement these activities, the ICMPD inter alia has focused on support to further structure the activities of the Department of Diaspora Relations since 2013 (or other responsible institutions before the reform). In this way, a regular gathering of data and developing a structured approach has seen positive results.

Some of the successful examples and best practices of diaspora engagement are outlined in this paper and have been taken up and implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs independently and in cooperation with the ICMPD in Georgia within the following EU-funded projects: Enhancing the Role of Georgian Emigrants at Home (ERGEM, 2013-2014), Enhancing Georgia's Migration Management (ENIGMMA, 2014-2017) and Sustaining Migration Management in Georgia (ENIGMMA 2, 2017-2020). This paper also follows the approach that was taken by the ICMPD in cooperation with responsible Georgian state institutions by following these methods while working with the diaspora:

- Data gathering and structuring

- Direct communication and mobile counselling

- Diaspora as an awareness raising agent

- Engagement of high profile diaspora members

- Improvement of inter-institutional cooperation within Georgia

Data Gathering and Structuring

As previously indicated, the data on the number of Georgian diaspora organisations and members abroad and activities of diaspora organisations was rather scattered.

This, subsequently, led to the situation that communication with the diaspora used to be rather sporadic and mainly implemented on ad hoc basis. In general, the reliable data on emigration is scarce in many countries and Georgia is not an exception. Often, national censuses do not provide exact data on out-migration. In 2014, the National Office of Statistics of Georgia carried out a census that included a set of comprehensive questions related to emigration and immigration. This was the first precedent when migration issues were included in the national census. Consular registration is organised on a voluntary basis and, therefore, does not cover all citizens residing abroad. In such cases, information on diaspora and migrant communities should be gathered from supplementary sources and analysed by the central diaspora authority. Such sources could be the data from destination countries (national census, data from registers on residence permits and long-term visas, statistical and operational data on irregular migration, etc.) or various studies and research carried out by international organisations, civil society organisations or research institutes. An analysis of diaspora activities may provide valuable information on the diaspora's social profile, skills, interests, needs, challenges and potential to engage in home-country development. While the migration topic is frequently addressed by many researchers and policy-makers, the potential impacts of migration on the development of Georgia have not yet been fully explored or supported by the state authorities at the political or at the technical level.

The study carried out in the framework of the EU-funded ERGEM (Enhancing the Role of Georgian Emigrants at Home) project implemented by the ICMPD and the Danish Refugee Council in 2013-2014 intended to at least partially fill this knowledge gap by examining the (potential) contributions of the Georgian diaspora in several countries selected for project implementation. The study assesses the situation and needs of Georgian migrants in their countries of residence and analyses the willingness and possibilities for migrants to contribute to Georgia's development. The study concludes with recommendations on how the ties between Georgian institutions and the Georgian diaspora can be strengthened.

As a result, the Georgian institutions realised the need of enhanced knowledge of Georgian diaspora communities in order to better engage them and to develop evidence-based policies. Following the development of the case study on the

Georgian diaspora in Germany, Greece and Turkey (Georgian Diaspora and Migrant Communities in Germany, Greece and Turkey, ICMPD 2014), the Georgian institutions responsible for diaspora relations could draw a clear profile of Georgians in three destination countries. Thus, systematic data collection on Georgian diaspora abroad, analysing their needs and mapping their locations, professions and interests was proven to be an efficient instrument supporting communication with the diaspora. In the following year, the Office of the State Minister for the Diaspora and, later, the Department of Diaspora Relations under the MFA, followed the same pattern of studying the Georgian diaspora in other countries.

Furthermore, with the support of the above mentioned EU-funded ERGEM project, the Department of Diaspora Relations built a database that unites Georgian diaspora organisations registered abroad, active diaspora members and networks of diaspora professionals according to the fields of expertise, weekend schools with the number of teachers and students and religious entities in destination countries. This way, the collected data is being catalogued properly and the institutional memory is preserved for the next generations of state officials to come.

Direct Communication and Mobile Counselling

When working with the diaspora, one of the commonly identified challenges is usually related to the lack of information about the country of origin, the change of legal and institutional frameworks, business development opportunities and the investment climate, etc., in addition, to feeling far from home and having a lack of trust in the governmental institutions in the country of origin. Evidence of successful measures to strengthen relations between the government and diaspora communities and to build trust is scarce. It has also been widely acknowledged that there is no uniform approach as the needs and the qualitative and quantitative structure of diasporas vary from country to country. Indeed, different governments have applied a number of practices. The unanimity exists regarding the notion that protecting and supporting migrants and diaspora members is an important precondition for building and maintaining relations and promoting their contributions to development processes at home.

For states that have limited consular coverage due to a lack of financial and/ or human resources, it is mostly difficult to meet the needs of migrants and diaspora members through the provision of consular protection and services only. Hence, the establishment of so-called 'mobile counselling units' composed of state officials and the organisation of a mobile counselling programme in main countries of destination may be seen as a valuable means to overcome the above mentioned challenges (Guide on Organising Mobile Counselling for Migrants and Diaspora Members, ICMPD 2014). This practice in Georgia was first identified by the EU-funded ERGEM project implemented by the ICMPD. The project's counterparts developed the Guide describing this practice which includes step-by-step instructions on how to build and implement counselling events in destination countries and can be replicated worldwide.

Mobile counselling can be the right tool to address the challenges related to the scarce state resources and limited consular coverage and to better serve migrants and diaspora members abroad. Consequently, a mobile counselling unit composed of government officials from relevant institutions can be created, trained and deployed for a limited duration in a main destination country of migrants and diaspora members. The mobile counselling unit should thus be able to provide migrants and diaspora members with advice regarding a wide range of issues covering, inter alia, legal status, visa-free travel and identity document issues, the portability of social security benefits, property rights and return possibilities as well as business and investment opportunities in the country of origin. The main objective is to provide migrants and diaspora representatives with relevant, timely and high-quality information that is specifically tailored to their needs. The mobile counselling programme complements already existing consular services offered by the government representations abroad and should bring state institutions abroad and at home working on diaspora issues closer together. The organisation of counselling events is also related to minimal expenditures when organised in partnership with consular offices abroad that can provide with a meeting venue for free of charge. According to the feedback received directly from migrants and diaspora representatives following the three information events (mobile counselling) carried out on the ground in the three destination countries of Georgian migrants in 2014 (Germany, Greece, Turkey) within the above mentioned ERGEM project, the

implementation of similar events is a successful practice. On the one hand, the state institution representatives get the opportunity of an in-depth outlook on the existing needs of the diaspora representatives and, on the other hand, diaspora members and migrant communities receive reliable information first-hand and have the guarantee that their concerns and needs will be further discussed by government officials and hopefully addressed in practice. This is the main benefit of organising mobile counselling that carries more added value as opposed to the information provided online on the web-pages of involved state institutions.

Diaspora as an Awareness Raising Agent

Once the trust with diaspora organisations is built and their information services are improved, diaspora organisations maybe engaged in the important task of contributing to awareness raising among diaspora members and new-comers to the country. For example, in the case of Georgia, a significant milestone was achieved in Georgia-EU relations in March 2017 when citizens of Georgia were granted visa-free travel to the Schengen zone. Georgian nationals holding biometric passports are exempt from tourist visas while travelling to the Schengen area for 90 days within a 180-day period. The fact was met positively in Georgian society; however, it has raised many questions among Georgians abroad related to their status, citizenship, work permits and more.

The Georgian Government has efficiently implemented all benchmarks of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan (VLAP). A significant part of the VLAP was related to the organisation and implementation of public awareness measures aimed at informing the Georgian population and Georgian nationals living abroad about the rules and requirements of the visa-free regime. Moreover, in December 2017, the European Commission published its first report under the Visa Suspension document in addition to the Commission Staff Working document. Among other issues, the report concludes that 'overall the visa liberalisation benchmarks continue to be fulfilled' with several recommendations for further enhancement of the related areas. One of the recommendations of the report is to "continue campaigns on the rules of the visa free travel." The main responsibility for VLAP implementation

was successfully overtaken by the Georgian Government; however, EU support was also provided through specifically designed and carried out projects. Thus, the Georgian Government launched a massive information campaign targeted at the awareness raising of Georgian nationals at home and abroad on the rules and procedures of the visa-free movement. The necessity of the information campaigns was even more urgent and important due to the fact of the rising numbers of asylum applications from Georgia to EU Member States after the establishment of the visa-free regime. As an increase of asylum applications may trigger the visa suspension mechanism, the government needed to intensify information provision services and look for new, innovative communication methods and strategies. A remarkable rise in asylum applications of Georgian citizens to the Schengen area was recorded in the first several months following the adoption of the visa-free movement as well as at the end of 2018. According to the statistics published by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), the total number of applications filed by Georgian citizens in 2017 increased by 35% as compared to 2016.

As a result of consultations with international organisations and with the support of the EU-funded ENIGMMA 2 (Sustaining Migration Management in Georgia) project that runs from 2017 to 2020 and is implemented in Georgia by the ICMPD, the Government of Georgia launched an extensive information campaign covering the regions of Georgia. Following the attested successful practice of mobile counselling, the ENIGMMA 2 project supported the deployment of expert groups to the regions of Georgia for face-to-face meetings with the general population, academia and civil society representatives. The expert groups consisted of representatives of relevant state institutions, mainly the MFA and independent experts working on migration issues and visa policy.

Overall, the following awareness raising measures were taken:

- **Information meetings** – 58 meetings were organised in nine regions of Georgia;
- Tailored **trainings** – were conducted for the representatives of major travel agencies and airline companies;

- Country-wide **media campaign** was launched including the development of video-clips and various visualisations on the rules of visa-free travel. Information on the rules and procedures of visa-free were broadcast on major national TV and radio channels;

- Printed **information material** – leaflets and brochures were developed and distributed throughout the information meetings in the regions of Georgia. The material was handed over to the Public Services Development Agency that has also distributed a leaflet on the rules of visa-free travel through its community centres. The leaflet was handed out to every citizen who received a new biometric passport and it was further disseminated at every airport in Georgia;

- **Schengen/EU Application** – the mobile application helps citizens of Georgia to monitor the days spent in the Schengen/EU zone and calculate the remaining days. It is important that citizens calculate 90 days within a 180-day period accurately in order not to accidentally violate the visa-free regime. The application is simple and enables citizens to save the history of travelling in the EU/Schengen zone, calculate the remaining days and share visual information about a specific travel or travel history via social networks, etc. The application can be downloaded free of charge.

However, one innovative method applied during the information campaigns implementation was the engagement of Georgian diaspora organisations – which became possible due to the previous work on building communication and trust between the state and the diaspora. The EU-funded ENIGMMA 2 project has established a scheme of communication where diaspora members are seen and act as information agents. The first activity was piloted in Greece where diaspora organisations and individual diaspora members are generally very active. The heads of diaspora organisations and active diaspora members were trained on the rules and procedures of the EU-Georgia visa-free regime. Representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia gave a full-day workshop where specific examples of the abuse of the visa-free regime were discussed with cases on rejections of Georgian nationals from border-crossing points, the issue of no point of requesting asylum in countries where Georgia is in a safe country list, specific requirements and the needed documentation for visa-free travel, repercussions of the misuse of the visa-free regime and other details. As a follow-up,

the trained diaspora representatives organised information meetings with all interested diaspora and migrant communities with the purpose to transfer knowledge on the visa-free movement. The information on the rules and procedures were widely disseminated through social networks (e.g., Facebook) which is one of the most popular methods of communication of Georgians abroad.

As a lesson learned, diaspora members as information agents can be used in cases when important changes have taken place in the national migration legislation of the home country or local migration legislation of the hosting country. In the case of the latter, disseminating correct information is of utmost importance since in most cases the problem of fluency in the host country language persists. Further, ordinary diaspora and migrant communities members as well as new-comers often tend to trust diaspora organisations more than state institutions themselves and information provision in this way maybe more efficient.

Engagement of High-profile Diaspora

Generally, the high-profile diaspora can be defined as "*renowned women or men in a specific field who work transnationally and who have the potential to improve the reputation of the country, to drive economic growth, to act as a role model in that field and who can generally act as advocates for the country* (EUROMED-Migration).

The programme on Georgia's High-Profile Diaspora Engagement was developed by the EU-funded ENIGMMA (Enhancing Georgia's Migration Management) project team in 2015 and is a document outlining the framework of diaspora engagement and suggests specific actions to be implemented by the Department of Diaspora Relations of the MFA. The overall objective of the programme is to facilitate the engagement of high-profile diaspora members and migrants in Georgia's development.

The specific programme objectives are to:

- Map, build and maintain a network of diaspora professionals in various fields of expertise;

- Develop and pilot framework activities which offer recognition of the professional achievements of high-profile diaspora members and migrants in fields such as science, sports, arts, culture, politics, business, education, etc., as well as their contributions to development in Georgia – suggested activity: Diaspora Awards;

- Strengthen ties between Georgia and Georgian youth residing abroad as a way of investing in future Georgian diaspora professionals in order to sustain their interest in Georgian life and developments taking place in Georgia.

The cornerstone of the programme is the 'Diaspora Awards' – an event that aims to recognise diaspora achievements and professional success abroad. The programme was built upon the experiences and successful practices of other countries such as Ireland ("Connect Ireland"), Lithuania ("Global Lithuanian Leaders"), Scotland ("Global Scot"), Portugal ("Portuguese Diaspora Council"), Israel and Australia. The programme takes into account the diversity of skills and backgrounds present in the Georgian diaspora and examines their potential contributions to Georgia's development and positive image worldwide. Moreover, it seeks to recognise the achievements of Georgian champions abroad and in Georgia as well as their contributions to development in Georgia.

The aim of the High-Profile Diaspora Engagement Programme was twofold: to establish an annual event (Diaspora Awards) giving grounds for networking and facilitating communication among diaspora members and state officials and connecting diaspora professionals with similar interests, building a foundation for future networking and joint activities. The first Georgian Diaspora Awards took place in Tbilisi in 2017 which was a highly publicised event with involvement of high-level state officials and diaspora members from different countries. As a result, a network of diaspora professionals was created and the MFA was able to suggest further activities of network functioning in the form of policy advice, mentorship schemes for young Georgians abroad and in Georgia and joint publications and so on.

Inter-institutional Coordination

With the abolishment of the State Minister's Office for Diaspora Issues, the activities and responsibilities of the Consular Department of the MFA and the Department of Diaspora Relations became more harmonised. This has largely contributed to a prompt and structured exchange of information.

However, the gap remains in the regular coordination and structured information exchange among different state institutions. The Public Services Development Agency (PSDA) assists migrants with passport-related issues and other documentation issues and on inquiring about citizenship. In this regard, it needs to cooperate closely with the MFA on residence permits and citizenship issues since the consulates provide the same services abroad as the PSDA does in its regional units. The Department of Diaspora Relations of the MFA is also cooperating with the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, mainly on matters of developing textbooks for weekend schools, the recognition of diplomas and more. The establishment of State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI) and its Secretariat was a leap forward; however, the need for a systemic and structured approach is still persistent.

Despite the good working relations and professional contacts between all involved institutions as well as regular meetings within the framework of the State Commission on Migration Issues (SCMI), cooperation and exchange is mainly implemented on an ad hoc basis; that is, institutions approach one another when they need information in order to carry out a certain task.

Conclusion

In the modern world, in order to be able to fully adapt to the transnational reality, it is essential that the states develop and implement comprehensive diaspora strategies for engaging with their global citizens and networks. This paper argues that by establishing a systematised approach, gathering and analysing data, instituting

migration profiles and developing valid communication techniques, maximum progress can be achieved in attracting diaspora members for engagement in the development processes of the home country.

This paper outlines key measures and methods necessary for building trust, facilitating diaspora involvement and initiating engagement activities, projects and creation of diaspora networks leading to specific actions in the benefit of state, diaspora and home and host country societies. Therefore, effective communication with the diaspora needs to be implemented as a circle where both state and diaspora have responsibilities and both gain from this communication. For instance, if the diaspora is fully informed and the state takes care of trustful relations, the diaspora also provides correct information further to other migrants and, therefore, contributes to the achievement of the state's interests; respecting high-profile diaspora members and recognising their achievements leads to further engagement and so on.
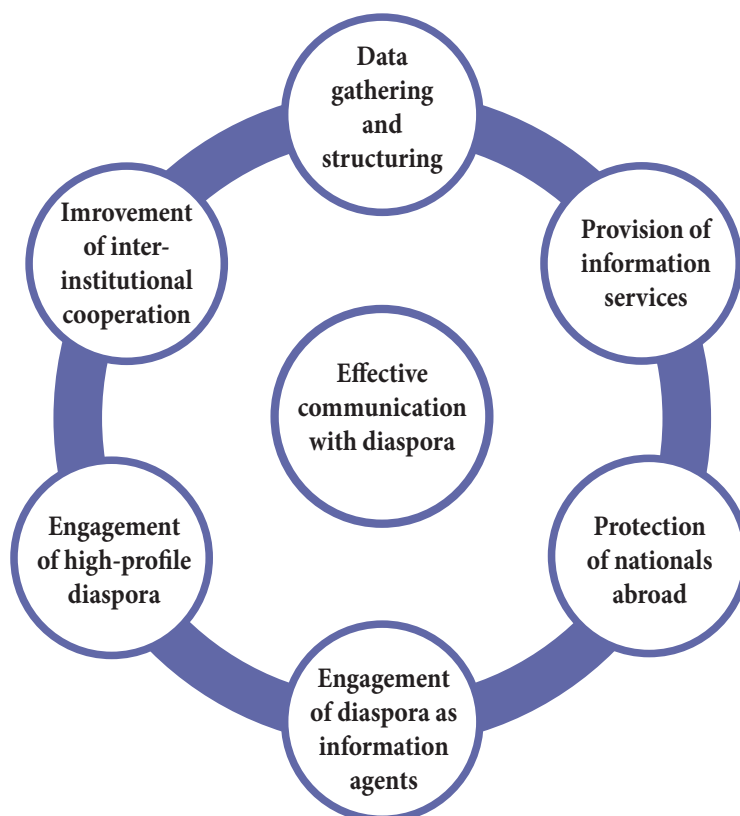
The role of the government is to act as a facilitator rather than an implementer of activities. It has a pivotal role in giving its support, making clear to diaspora members that they are regarded as important and involving them as participants in meetings, networking events, mentorship schemes and policy making. The

administrative structure in Georgia, as well as the political situation and other factors that influence the formation of social movements including diaspora associations and migrant communities, strongly influences the ties between Georgian migrants, diaspora communities and the Georgian state. Authorities, such as the Department of Diaspora Relations of the MFA, recognise the positive role of Georgian migrants and diaspora communities abroad and aim to actively involve them. Although consular registrations continue being low, representatives of diaspora organisations are in regular contact with the consulates.

In addition to the potential of Georgian migrant and diaspora communities for the development of Georgia, their needs and challenges in terms of their human development and vulnerable situation in the destination countries are also important for consideration. Often their status, the non-existence of work permits and problems related to health insurance, put migrants and diaspora representatives in a vulnerable situation. These differences (also the differences within the diaspora communities) need to be taken into account when addressing the needs of Georgian migrant and diaspora communities and formulating effective policy measures.

It is equally important to look at the integration of migrants and diaspora communities and identify the specific situation they face in their destination country. Integration enables individuals to obtain the necessary resources to be actively engaged in the origin country and support other migrants in the residence country as was proven by activating diaspora members as information agents. Consequently, in order to support migrant and diaspora engagement in Georgia as well as promote Georgia, its language and cultural heritage, coherent and holistic policies need to be taken into account, including integration and engagement in the destination countries.

These conclusions show that there are several ways in which Georgian migrant and diaspora communities could be attracted to and engaged in the development in Georgia with the support of specific communication methods and tools as well as which aspects limit these developmental contributions. This paper also shows that a holistic approach is needed that facilitates the integration of migrants and diaspora members in the destination country and supports their engagement in the origin country as well as their promotion of Georgia, its language and culture.

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9 ‖ DIASPORA POLITICS IN EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES: WHAT IS ON THE AGENDA?

Dziyana Katselkina

INTRODUCTION

In the context of migration politics and respective research branches, the focus usually lies within immigration rather than emigration policies such as, for example, diaspora policies. This is understandable since countries are usually concerned about coordinating immigration within their borders. However, in recent years, more and more countries realize the necessity of adopting consistent emigration strategies such as diaspora policies.

This trend is driven by the understanding that nationals abroad can be actively involved in the promotion of their countries as well as bringing new investments/donations to the country of origin. In order to facilitate relations with the diaspora, several countries have created specialized diaspora institutions, responsible for establishing and maintaining affairs with their emigrants. In a way, such institutions try to execute their authorities in order to strengthen the sense of belonging of emigrants and help them create political, economic and cultural ties with their state of origin.

The diaspora, however, is a challenging concept to define. It is hard to agree on one definition of a diaspora since any transnational group that possesses a sense of national/ethnic identity and maintains ties with each other as well as with their

homeland can belong to a diaspora (Adamson 2016). By engaging with a diaspora, states may also try to establish closer relations with other countries. In a globalized world, the diaspora gives states an additional source of outreach that extends beyond the physical borders of the nation. Depending on the scope, nature and country of residence, the diaspora can be considered by governments as potential sources of revenue and investment as well as a lobby group. However, in some countries, the success of state efforts to establish ties with their diaspora may depend on how loyal certain diaspora representatives are to the current government (Adamson 2016). Accordingly, governments can build ties with their nationals through special electoral rules, laws on repatriation, citizenship laws, provide investment opportunities and organize cultural events in order to promote the participation of co-ethnical population in the affairs of the state (King & Melvin 1999).

The level and direction of state efforts to promote these type of relations vary significantly across Eastern Partnership countries (EP). This is because state efforts depart from a specific definition of the concept of a "diaspora" (King & Melvin 1999) to a large extent and the role of states in defining a particular group as a diaspora is crucial. What is understood by the diaspora in EP countries, however, varies across these countries and will be discussed later in this paper.

In this paper, I would like to examine the existing diaspora policies of Eastern Partnership (EP) countries and try to identify the challenges and the good practices of working with the diaspora. I will do so by mapping the existing strategies and particularly focus on the actors involved. All Eastern Partnership countries have experienced the same major political disturbance at the beginning of the 1990s – the breakdown of the Soviet Union and newly gained independence. One of the many resulting changes was an increased mobility of people who could move much easier to a new country seeking employment, pursuing studies, working toward family reunification, etc. Consequently, all Eastern Partnership countries have experienced an upsurge of emigration. This trend has made these countries place the issue of emigration high on the policy agenda.

After the breakdown of the USSR, the emigration policies of these post-Soviet states were mainly focused on the prevention of labour emigration. However, later

in the 1990s, post-Soviet states realized the economic opportunities and cultural potential in migrants living abroad and gradually issues related to cooperation with the diaspora became part of new migration policies (Makaryan 2013). Therefore, the relevance of investigating good practices is motivated by the gradual turn from the policies of trying to halt emigration in the 1990s to policies based on the realisation of the benefits of establishing networks with permanent emigrants.

Based on the conducted analysis, I will try to propose my own policy recommendations which could facilitate diaspora cooperation.

Policy Framework and Challenges

Belarus

After becoming independent, Belarus adopted several laws and programmes in the field of emigration. For instance, the State Migration Programme 1998-2000 focused on reducing the emigration of researchers, engineers and other highly-qualified specialists as well as young professionals and at the same time on facilitating temporary labour emigration to developed countries which was done with the aim to improve the qualifications of potential returnees and increase investments into the economy (Bobrova 2013). The aim to reduce the emigration of highly-qualified professionals and young people was re-established in the State Migration Programme 2006-2010 ("State Migration Programme 2006-2010," 2016).

The responsibilities of diaspora policies are shared between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Office of the Commissioner for Religions and Nationalities. In 2010, the Consultative Council on Belarusians abroad was established within the Ministry of Culture. It consists of representatives of state organisations and is in charge of the coordination of cooperation with the diaspora (Yeliseyeu 2014).

Already in 1993, the government tried to establish ties with its nationals abroad through adopting the 'Belarusians in the World' programme. There are also non-governmental efforts to support the Belarusian cultural identity abroad. The main non-state organisation which deals with diaspora matters is the World Association of Belarusians "Baćkaŭščyna" ('Fatherland') which also connects various smaller diaspora organisations (Yeliseyeu 2014). Under its auspices and with the coordination of the government, seven World Congresses of Belarusians have taken place.

One of the efforts to boost diaspora cooperation was the Law on Belarusians Living Abroad which was adopted in 2014. According to the law, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs became the main coordinator of developing relations with the Belarusian diaspora. Belarusians abroad are defined as people permanently residing outside the Republic of Belarus and identifying themselves as Belarusians or are descendants from the territory of the modern Republic of Belarus (Law on Belarusians Living Abroad 2014, 2014). The law, which was expected to introduce some benefits to Belarusians residing abroad, nonetheless had a rather declarative nature focusing mostly on the necessity to promote national identity and language, ensure intercultural exchange with diaspora organisations, holding events, etc. The law was centred around the cultural dimension of cooperation and did not produce any concrete strategy to facilitate developing links with the diaspora.

In 2016, the government also adopted the State Programme 'Belarusians in the World 2016-2020.' One of the subsections specifically set targets for monitoring diaspora relations. For instance, there should be at least 17 cultural events and one business forum per year with the participation of Belarusians abroad ("State programme 'Culture of Belarus' for 2016–2020," 2016). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Office of the Commissioner for Religions and Nationalities were assigned to be responsible for the implementation of the programme.

Another dimension of cooperation is economic. One of the organisations involved in promoting relations with co-nationals abroad, 'Radzima,' suggested to hold a business forum targeting specifically Belarusians living abroad ("Business Forum of Belarusians Living Abroad," 2015). This idea was re-stated in 2015 at the first

meeting of the Consultative Council on Belarusians abroad (Gubarevich 2016) and became a part of the State Programme 'Belarusians in the World 2016-2020.' The first forum (round-table meeting) took place in 2018 and gathered only 17 representatives of the diaspora ("Round-table with the Participation of Members of the Advisory Council," 2018).

One problem of diaspora cooperation in the Belarusian context is the fact that it mainly exists on paper rather than in practice. Another challenge is preserving the cultural and his-torical roots of Belarusians abroad. This was also highlighted as a problem at the 2016 round-table dedicated to the discussion of the experience of the diaspora with representatives of local CSOs, businesses and educational and international organisations. The barriers for preserving cultural links include the weakness of cultural and language identities in Belarus itself and the lack of coordinated efforts to strengthen them ("What Contribution Can the Belarusian Diaspora Make to the Development of the Country?" 2016). One more possible area for the development of relations with the diaspora is visa-free travel. It could also be done through the introduction of a so-called 'Compatriot Certificate' for Belarusians living abroad and their children (much like the 'Pole Card') which would allow visa-free entry to Belarus ("What Contribution Can the Belarusian Diaspora Make to the Development of the Country?" 2016).

Ukraine

In Ukraine, it is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine that is the principal coordinator of cooperation with Ukrainians abroad. Several committees of the Parliament of Ukraine, the National Commission on matters related to Ukrainian foreigners, the Ministry of Education and other institutions are engaged in diaspora cooperation ("Ukrainians Worldwide"). The Ukrainian government also created 30 councils of associations of Ukrainians abroad within its foreign diplomatic missions (Jaroszewicz & Kazmierkiewicz 2014). Additionally, there are several non-governmental organisations involved in diaspora matters. For instance, the Ukrainian World Congress is an international association which brings together around 300 non-governmental organisations of Ukrainians living abroad from

more than 30 countries ("Ukrainians Worldwide"). The Ukrainian World Congress was recognized by the United Nations Economic and Social Council as a non-governmental organisation with a special consultative status and in 2018 received a participatory status as an international non-governmental organisation in the Council of Europe ("Information on the UWC"). Besides the Ukrainian World Congress, there are other diaspora organisations such as the European Congress of Ukraine which represents Ukrainian communities in 23 countries, the World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organisations, the Ukrainian American Coordinating Council and others ("Ukrainians Worldwide").

After the adoption of the Law on Ukrainian Foreigners in 2004, the National Commission on matters related to Ukrainian foreigners was established. One of its responsibilities included making decisions on the granting, refusal or termination of the status of a 'Ukrainian Foreigner' ("Receiving the status of a Ukrainian Foreigner"). The Law on Ukrainian Foreigners defines a Ukrainian foreigner as a person who is a citizen of another state or a stateless person but has a Ukrainian ethnic origin or originates from Ukraine. The status of 'Ukrainian Foreigner' has several benefits. A person who acquires it has the right to apply free-of-charge for a multiple-entry visa for visiting Ukraine as well as the right to a permanent residence in Ukraine. These benefits also apply to members of her/his family in the event of their joint entry into the territory of Ukraine. Additionally, 'Ukrainian Foreigners' have the right to work in the country on the same grounds as the citizens of Ukraine. Moreover, they are assigned annual admission quotas to higher educational institutions where they are exempt from paying tuition fees (Law on Ukrainian Foreigners, 2004). This status, however, is not equal to citizenship since it does not provide its holders with political rights in Ukraine.

It is important to mention that a person applying for this status cannot have Ukrainian citizenship. Applications for obtaining the status of 'Ukrainians Foreigner' are submitted to the diplomatic consulate/embassy of Ukraine abroad or to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. In the case of a positive decision, a person is granted a special certificate confirming the status of 'Ukrainian Foreigner' (Law on Ukrainian Foreigners, 2004). The introduction of the status of a 'Ukrainian Foreigner' was a major step for encouraging the return of ethnic Ukrainians. It can

be considered as a positive step aimed at attracting diaspora representatives to visit, study or work in Ukraine. According to the statistics, as of 2018, 10,000 people have received the status of 'Ukrainian Foreigner' ("Over 10 Thousand People," 2019).

The desire to increase the flow of returning nationals was reconfirmed in 2017 when the government adopted a new strategy for the state migration policy of Ukraine in effect until 2025. Among the priorities in relation to emigration and diaspora issues, this strategy pointed out the necessity for creating the conditions for the return and reintegration of Ukrainian migrants into Ukrainian society such as the possibility of introducing a state system of providing loans to returnees who wish to open their own business or tax benefits for those who wish to invest money earned abroad in starting a new business ("Strategy of the State Migration Policy of Ukraine to 2025," 2017).

Other initiatives aimed at strengthening relations with Ukrainian emigrants include the National Programme for the Ukrainian Diaspora (1996). Additionally, in 2004, the government adopted the Programme Safeguarding the Rights and Interests of Citizens Leaving for Employment Abroad (Makaryan 2013). These programmes were aimed at supporting the development of relations with the diaspora and facilitating the preservation of national identity and cultural heritage (Tolstokorova 2012).

One of the issues raised by diaspora organisations is the necessity to introduce dual citizenship. It would allow diaspora representatives to influence the situation in Ukraine since they would have political rights ("Dual Citizenship in Ukraine: Necessity, Risks and Advantages, 2019"). While Ukraine has not yet developed an extensive policy towards diaspora communities, the government managed to introduce and successfully implement some instruments (e.g., the status of a 'Ukrainian Foreigner') aimed at the promotion of the integration of Ukrainians abroad into Ukrainian society. Furthermore, the active engagement of non-governmental diaspora organisations into bringing together Ukrainian communities abroad partially fills the gap in the state policy.

Moldova

In Moldova, according to the government's Decree 1322 (2000) on measures for providing assistance to people from the Republic of Moldova living abroad, the government considers the diaspora as people originating from Moldova and residing abroad who are united by their ethnicity, roots and common ancestors from the Republic of Moldova and who understand their origin but because of different circumstances happen to be residing outside of their historical homeland (Decree 1322, 2000). Moldova allows dual citizenship which means that Moldovan citizens who live abroad enjoy the same voting rights as people residing in the Republic of Moldova. The exception is local elections when only citizens residing in the Republic of Moldova can vote (Mosneaga 2014).

According to the Decree, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration together with the Ministry of Commerce and Economy and the Ministry of Healthcare and Social Services were made responsible for establishing contacts with Moldovans residing abroad (Decree 1322, 2000). The government of Moldova also established a special Coordination Council which is in charge of monitoring the work of government agencies in the field of promoting diaspora relations, organizing events with Moldovans abroad and suggesting new legislative documents and strategies aimed at supporting the diaspora (Decree 1322, 2000). Since 2011, its members include not only government officers but also representatives of the Moldovan diaspora. Another agency involved in diaspora relations is the National Bureau of Interethnic Relations which promotes cultural cooperation with the Moldovan diaspora communities abroad (Mosneaga 2014).

The basic principles of migration policy, in general, and diaspora policies, in particular, were stated in the National Strategy on Migration and Asylum (2011-2020). It gave more power to the diplomatic representations of Moldova abroad in maintaining relations with the Moldovan diaspora; for example, in supporting the return of labour migrants to the country, the coordination of relations with the diaspora, etc. In order to facilitate return, the government undertakes efforts for recognizing the skills and qualifications in Moldova as well as providing training skills and financial assistance for start-up companies (Mosneaga 2014).

 The government also adopted several specialized programmes specifically targeting the diaspora such as the Programme for Diaspora Support (2006)and the Action Plan for Diaspora Support (2008) as well as the Action Plan to promote the Return of Moldovan Labour Migrants (2008) (Mosneaga 2014). The last one included creating a website about jobs and employment options in the country, carrying out advocacy campaigns among Moldovan migrants abroad about the development of small and medium companies, providing information on opening businesses in Moldova after return and also about investment opportunities in Moldova. The government also launched a project, entitled PARE 1+1, for matching investments from remittances made for business development (Makaryan 2013). During 2010-2016, the project has managed to support the return of 785 migrants to Moldova who have become business owners ("Moldova: PARE 1+1 – Encouraging Migrants to Return Home," 2016).

In 2011, the government called for the creation of an agency for diaspora affairs and in 2012, the Bureau for Diaspora Relations was launched. It deals with coordinating public policies in order to ensure sufficient diaspora engagement. Essentially, the Bureau provides the coordination of diaspora policies between the government and diaspora organisations to make sure that those policies meet the interests of the Moldovan diaspora ("Diaspora Relations Bureau"). With the vision to ensure the continuous and sustainable development of diaspora cooperation, the Moldovan government has been conducting congresses of the Moldovan Diaspora since 2004. They are used as a platform to establish contacts between Moldova and diaspora representatives as well as between Moldovans residing abroad (Makaryan 2013).

An interesting feature of the diaspora policies in Moldova is the engagement of international organisations into facilitating progress. Government agencies actively use financial and advisory assistance from international organisations for developing and implementing Moldova's migration policy. For instance, there is the Diaspora Small Grants Mechanism competition implemented by the IOM Mission to Moldova as part of the project entitled supporting the Implementation of the Migration and Development Component of the EU-Moldova Mobility Partnership (Porcescu 2013).

In general, Moldova's policies on diaspora can be considered quite successful. The government adopted several cooperation programmes and worked closely with international instruments as well as with its diaspora representatives in order to enhance cooperation. The policies towards the diaspora are focused mainly on engaging the diaspora in the economic development of the country and promoting the return of Moldovan emigrants.

Armenia

In Armenia, the government defines the Armenian diaspora as the Armenian communities outside the borders of the Republic of Armenia and the Nagorno Karabakh Republic (Concept of Armenia-Diaspora Development Partnership, 2009). Armenia's diaspora policy presents itself a special case of diaspora politics since it is historically one of the world's classic diasporas. Armenian communities are spread around the world as a result of several migration waves over the centuries and the diaspora numbers exceed country's population (Gevorkyan 2016). Further, I will look at diaspora relations starting only from 1990s onwards in order to trace the most recent trends as well as to see the government's policies in the independence period.

A distinguishing feature of the Armenian diaspora is the fact that, because of the long history of migration waves, Armenian communities abroad are already quite well organized even without the support of the government. For instance, the Armenian Assembly of America and the Armenian National Committee of America are among the most influential diaspora organisations were both founded in the middle of the 20th century (Gevorkyan 2016).

Therefore, understanding the potential of diaspora contributions to the country's economy already in 1992, the Hayastan All-Armenia Fund was started in order to "match up" diaspora financial contributions with development projects in Armenia. This helped to engage Armenians abroad in investing in the country's business projects. In the 1990s, the government started a privatisation process of state-owned enterprises. By 1999, privatisation comprised of more than half of foreign direct investments and a big part of this belonged to the diaspora. As mentioned

above, the government of Armenia has tried to embrace the opportunities provided by its active diaspora participation since the country's independence. In 1998, the Armenian Development Agency was launched to promote foreign investments. To encourage diaspora engagement, the Ministry of Economy launched an "Open Doors" investment policy, one aspect of which has been linked to creating free economic zones offering tax relief for companies operating within (Development through Diversity) the country. The government also started to incorporate the diaspora through the creation of All-Armenian Bank (which was later transformed into an investment fund) in order to use investments coming from the diaspora for Armenia's economic development (Makaryan 2013).

One more major step was the adoption of dual citizenship in 2007. This made it possible for people of Armenian ethnic descent as well as long-term migrants who live in other countries to obtain Armenian citizenship. However, one significant requirement of citizenship concerns military service. Dual citizens who are under 28 years old and have not undertaken military service in their native countries for at least 12 months must complete a two-year service in Armenia (Danielyan 2007). This requirement may potentially hamper the willingness of the diaspora to seek dual citizenship.

In 2008, the government also established the Ministry of the Diaspora and adopted an official legislative framework on the Armenia-Diaspora Collaboration Development. It was aimed at protecting the language, culture and religion of Armenians residing both in Armenia and abroad as well as at developing economic relations (Makaryan 2013, "About Us").

Another promising area of cooperation with the diaspora is youth volunteering. There are several organisations (the Armenian Assembly of America and Birthright Armenia) that provide a volunteering opportunity for young Armenians living abroad ("Internship in Armenia"). This way they can visit the country and make a meaningful contribution.

Recently, the Syrian conflict has somewhat affected the Armenian diaspora politics. Armenia accepted 22,000 refugees, most of them of Armenian origin (Lieberman 2017). The government offered these refugees a fast track to

citizenship and healthcare services (Teicher 2017). The Syrian Armenian Relief Fund was established to provide financial assistance to Syrian Armenians refugees. Donations were mostly obtained through the Armenian community in the United States as well as the churches, political parties and charity organisations which operate in the region ("About SARF").

In sum, Armenia's cooperation with its diaspora is quite comprehensive as it involves different economic, cultural and political spheres. However, despite the efforts undertaken by the government, there have been several disagreements over the future of diaspora cooperation. It is motivated by the common perception of the diaspora that while the Armenian government maintained a welcoming policy in relation to diaspora economic contributions, it was sceptical of the diaspora's engagement in internal domestic affairs. Essentially, over the years there has been the divide between a post-Soviet government and a more Western-oriented liberal diaspora (Giragosian 2017). It remains to be seen how the situation might change following the April democratic revolution in 2018 which resulted in the removal of the old ruling party and its leader from power (Demytrie 2018).

Georgia

The Office of the State Minister for Diaspora Issues which was established in 2008 is one of the key government institutions involved in the maintenance and development of cultural, economic and political ties with Georgians abroad. It was also responsible for the development of strategies on diaspora relations as well as for the implementation. This institution coordinated the collection and analysis of information on Georgians abroad as well as on the activities of Georgian diaspora organisations. The Diaspora Office was meant to support these bodies in organising cultural and business events as well as in establishing contacts among diaspora representatives. Being the main coordinator of diaspora cooperation. It collaborated with the Ministry of Culture and Sports, the Ministry of Education and Science and Georgian diplomatic missions abroad (Georgian Diaspora and Migrant Communities in Germany, Greece and Turkey, 2014). In 2016, the Diaspora Office was merged with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

One of the major steps on the way to ensure efficient coordination of government efforts was the adoption of the Law of Georgia on Compatriots and Diaspora Organisations Residing Abroad in 2011. The Law introduced a status of a 'compatriot residing abroad' who is a citizen of Georgia and has been living in another country for a long time or a citizen of another country but is of Georgian origin or/and whose native language belongs to the Georgian-Caucasian language group. Accordingly, the diaspora is understood as a community of compatriots living abroad (Law of Georgia on Compatriots, 2011).

Similarly to the Law on Foreign Ukrainians, the law in Georgia introduces a procedure of granting the status of a 'compatriot residing abroad.' The Georgian origin of a prospective applicant to receive the status of a compatriot residing abroad must be verified by an appropriate decision issued by the relevant state authority (Law of Georgia on Compatriots, 2011). The law, however, does not specify which agency will be responsible for issuing a certificate of a compatriot residing abroad. It just says that a suitable commission made up of qualified experts needs to be established at a relevant state authority in order to examine the application. A person residing abroad can submit an application either to a Georgian diplomatic office or to a consulate abroad. Close relatives of the applicant for the status of 'compatriot residing abroad' will also be entitled to obtain the same status (Law of Georgia on Compatriots, 2011).

The status of 'compatriot residing abroad' gives special benefits such as entering Georgia without a visa and staying within Georgia for a maximum 30-day time period, reduced fees when making an application for Georgian nationality and studying in the programmes of secondary and higher education in Georgia free of charge (Law of Georgia on Compatriots, 2011). Such benefits can be seen as an effort to encourage more Georgians to visit or study in the country. Unlike Ukraine, Georgian law does not allow holders of the compatriot certificate to work on the same terms (without special permission) as Georgian citizens. Despite that, it can still be considered as a positive step towards attracting the diaspora to the home country.

Dual citizenship was introduced in 2018. Essentially, it will be possible to retain Georgian citizenship (along with a foreign one) if a person receives permission from Georgian authorities before receiving citizenship in another country. Those

Georgian citizens who lost their Georgian citizenship as a result of accepting foreign citizenship in the past can appeal to the Ministry of Justice to restore their Georgian citizenship (Georgia Approves Dual Citizenship, 2018).

Promoting cooperation with the Georgian diaspora abroad has become one of the major goals stated in the Foreign Policy Strategy of Georgia (2009-2012), official documents on migration and the "EU Partnership for Mobility" (Chelidze 2012). The "EU Partnership for Mobility" aims to support programmes attracting investments from the diaspora, including remittances, and to collaborate in the field of double taxation while also engaging the diaspora in return policy formulation ("Joint Declaration," 2009).

Besides public authorities, the international community is also involved in diaspora matters in Georgia. For example, the European Union's project – Enhancing the Role of Georgian Migrants at Home which is led by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development and the Danish Refugee Council with the collaboration of Georgian state institutions, focuses on contributing to the strengthening of interactions among Georgians residing abroad and the government of Georgia through collecting up-to-date data on the diaspora (Chelidze, 2012).

In general, the Georgian government tries to encourage the diaspora to make a contribution to the country's development by introducing the status of a "compatriot residing abroad" and dual citizenship and developing programmes to direct investments and remittances.

Azerbaijan

In Azerbaijan, the Law of Azerbaijan on State Policy related to Azerbaijanis Residing Abroad (2002) defines Azerbaijanis residing abroad as citizens of Azerbaijan, their children, former citizens of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic, their children and former citizens of Azerbaijan and their children. The law also defines Azerbaijanis residing abroad as those who consider themselves Azerbaijani from an ethnic, language, cultural and historical point of view (Law of Azerbaijan on State Policy related to Azerbaijanis Residing Abroad, 2002).

The same law also highlights the importance of maintaining relations with the diaspora by stating that policies related to Azerbaijanis living abroad are an integral part of the domestic and foreign policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Moreover, Azerbaijanis living abroad who are citizens of another state or who do not have any citizenship, while being on the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, can enjoy all rights as citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan ("On State Policy," 2003). It is, however, not clear which rights (political, economic, etc.) are meant specifically and how exactly Azerbaijanis living abroad will exercise them, given the fact that the law does not say anything about granting a special status (like in the case of Ukraine and Georgia) to Azerbaijanis living abroad.

The law also lists the general aims of diaspora cooperation. It says that state agencies will encourage cooperation between commercial enterprises operating in Azerbaijan and companies of Azerbaijanis living abroad, promote the creation of joint ventures and create favourable conditions for investments by Azerbaijanis living abroad and ensure cultural exchange and promote the use of the native language and the dissemination of the national culture ("On State Policy," 2003).

The government established the Congress of World Azeris whose first meeting took place in 2001. The Congress gathers together all Azerbaijani associations from abroad (Makaryan 2013). The Congress of World Azerbaijanis meets every five years. In 2008, the State Committee for Diaspora Affairs was created. The Committee is a principal body in charge of the implementation of state policies related to Azerbaijanis residing abroad as well as the coordination of the work of state agencies and non-governmental organisations ("Regulation on the State Committee on Affairs with Diaspora", 2009).

A distinctive feature of Azerbaijan-diaspora relations is the "political" function of the diaspora, meaning that the government sees its compatriots as an important element of foreign policy and as a lobby in the Western and post-Soviet space, especially when it comes to the position on the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh region (Rumyantsev, 2017). That means that the government only supports representatives of the diaspora who are loyal to the government. One more point of criticism from Azeri diaspora researchers is the fact that the government tries

to increase the amount of organisations dealing with diaspora issues and show it as an indicator of successful development (Rumyansev 2010). Another issue is the desired monopoly of the government on diaspora relations. It tries to control the activities of the diaspora, creating a sort of hierarchical structure abroad (Riaux, 2013).

Remarks

After examining the cases of all six countries, it is possible to conclude that these countries mostly focus on the economic dimension of diaspora cooperation and structure their policies accordingly. For instance, almost all of the countries have adopted some kind of policy mechanisms which are aimed at helping diaspora representatives to invest in the economies of their home countries. Another advancement is the introduction of a special status for diaspora with respective benefits (visa-free travel, free education, ability to work without a special permit). Some countries went even further and allowed dual citizenship, thus, granting political rights to members of the diaspora. Several governments have also turned to international organisations for technical and financial assistance.

In order to achieve successful diaspora relations, the mapping also demonstrates some gaps and issues that need to be addressed by policymakers. Firstly, the lack of information can be a serious hindrance to effective communication with the diaspora. For instance, not all of the countries have proper websites about the opportunities available for the diaspora. Thus, even though a country may have mechanisms to allow the diaspora to contribute to the economy, people abroad might not have a possibility to access this information. Secondly, some countries seem to somehow neglect the cultural dimension of relations, focusing mostly on economic benefits that they can obtain from co-ethnics while it is cultural ties that help to maintain the sense of belonging of the diaspora. Thirdly, most countries do not set specific targets in their programmes which makes it difficult to track the implementation of such programmes.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the previous discussion on different policy measures and arising challenges, I will try to propose my recommendations addressing current diaspora policy issues in the countries of the Eastern Partnership. However, the following recommendations can be generalized to other countries seeking to work actively with their diasporas.

1. **Granting special status to diaspora members.** One of the strongest incentives to reintegrate into the life of the country of origin is the granting of a special status to the diaspora community by the government.

   • Visa facilitation. Such an initiative may allow the former nationals residing abroad to visit the country without a visa and stay in the country for a longer time period.

   • Dual/multiple citizenship. Introducing dual/multiple citizenship can also be a strong facilitating factor for the diaspora for building closer ties with their homeland.

   • Providing special economic opportunities. States should provide study and work opportunities to their diaspora equal with the citizens of the country. Economic opportunities can extend to making an easier process in setting up companies, opening special bank accounts without paying additional fees as a foreigner, the introduction of tax exemptions on investments; e.g., on imported materials and equipment (Agunias & Newland 2012) establishing special remittances schemes, etc.

2. **Strengthening cultural identity and national language.** Most countries that have more active diaspora communities are generally diasporas that manage to preserve the cultural ties and the language of their country of origin. Moreover, as noticed, these are usually countries that have stronger cultural and educational policies inside the country. Therefore, it is essential to ensure proper cultural and language education both at the domestic level and in the countries

of residence of the diaspora. An emphasis should be put on qualitative rather than quantitative indicators. For instance, most EP countries have continuously provided educational materials to their diplomatic missions abroad. While necessary, this should be complemented with promoting the active participation of the representatives of the diaspora (e.g., conducting intercultural exchange between countries, introducing volunteer programmes for youth, etc.).

3. **Better government coordination.** One feature of most governmental policies in the EP region is the overlapping of the responsibilities of several agencies. Two governmental offices can be responsible for the same field of cooperation with the diaspora. This creates unnecessary 'red tape' which leads to the ineffective share of duties and resources. This practice should be eliminated either by either introducing one agency responsible for diaspora cooperation or by making sure that legislative acts and action plans do not include too many responsible authorities.

4. **Guaranteeing access to information about diaspora policies.** One of the major barriers for diaspora engagement is the lack of public information about the possible ways to participate in the home country's life. It is especially important when it concerns business opportunities. A good example of this is the website of the Ministry of Diaspora of Armenia which provides extensive information about different spheres of engagement.

5. **Engaging in dissemination and outreach.** In line with the previous recommendation, it is crucial to promote diaspora activities through mass media as well as social networks. It allows for more visibility and, thus, better public outreach. It can be done both through the public pages of diplomatic missions abroad and/or creating a special public page for diaspora acti0vities.

6. **Establishing partnerships.** As seen in the example of Georgia and Armenia, it is important to engage non-governmental partners in coordinating and assisting the diaspora. Such partnerships may include providing volunteering opportunities in the country of origin, doing research on diaspora cooperation, organizing cultural events, etc. It is important not to neglect the potential of associations of nationals abroad as they can often can provide a better insight into the needs of the diaspora. International organisations can also be a source of assistance in developing projects.

7. **Maintaining an active dialogue with the diaspora**. The first step towards engaging with the diaspora is to collect information about its size, composition and location in the country of residence. Embassies and consular offices can play an important role in gathering information about diaspora characteristics and interests. One of the challenges of collaboration with the diaspora is the lack of input from the diaspora itself. Most government agencies and action plans are somehow unilateral and fail to incorporate the insights of representatives of diaspora organisations into their framework, often due to the post-Soviet legacy of hierarchical government structures and their traditional division of responsibilities.

8. **Building trust.** Successful partnerships between states and their diasporas is more likely to last if they are based on good communication and trust. Diasporas may feel that governments in their countries of origin view them only as a means of income. This perception may discourage them from further cooperation. Thus, building trustworthy relationships is an essential component of a diaspora collaboration strategy. Governments can promote such relationships through visa facilitation/dual citizenship, providing funds for diaspora projects, ensuring the transparency of the diaspora's investment flows and arranging cultural events. Making sure that the input from the diaspora about their interests and needs is taken into account in the country of origin is also an integral element of building trust.

9. **Monitoring progress.** Governments should monitor the implementation of regulations and action plans put in place. This helps to avoid ineffective strategies and allows for short-term and long-term planning of activities.

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10 || WELCOME INFORMATION FOR HIGHLY SKILLED LABOUR IMMIGRANTS IN SWEDEN: LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

Olena Bychkovska

INTRODUCTION

The reception by the host country is important for immigrants. It is, therefore, suggested here that in a situation of increasing labour migration, additional resources should be allocated to improved reception. On the other hand, as economies develop dependence upon labour migration and the competition for talent grows, a welcoming reception becomes not only a matter of the hospitality of the receiving state but an economic and social necessity for its prosperity. As we are going to see below when discussing good practices, certain countries and, especially, cities have already started welcome initiatives, trying to make the transition process more optimal for the newcomers. There is a movement of making cities more welcoming around the world (Belkhodja, 2009; Welcoming America, 2012; Ahn, 2017; Huang and Liu, 2018; Cities of Migration, 2019). Nevertheless, there is a gap in each country's intention to attract and welcome highly skilled immigrants (Osanami Törngren and Holbrow, 2017). Only a few countries, such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand, have been pursuing a long-term strategy to attract and welcome migrants and most of the research is focused upon these countries (Emilsson and Magnusson, 2008). Overall, there is little literature on the topic of welcome policies and welcome information in other countries.

In the midst of the discussion of how to attract, integrate and retain highly skilled immigrants, we would like to focus upon how to provide those who already decided to move/have recently moved with necessary information. More specifically, this paper focuses upon the case of highly skilled immigrants to Sweden, a phenomenon that has not been receiving enough attention either in practise or in research. Only comparatively recently has this issue come up on the national policy and the administrative and organisational agenda in Sweden and many previous integration/welcome initiatives are not evaluated (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2018). Initiatives and information for immigrants may differ according to the migration stage: pre-departure, arrival, settling, leaving (Tendensor, 2014a; Tendensor, 2014b) and understanding that certain information/initiative can have multiple aims, we would like to focus upon the pre-departure and arrival stages.

Moreover, highly skilled labour immigrants themselves have not received a lot of attention in the discourse of integration since they are not seen as individuals who, due to their employment, would need extended assistance and integration efforts (Emilsson et al., 2014). Thus, we will correspondingly provide information on highly skilled immigrants to better understand the challenge and match good practices to address it.

Therefore, taking all of the above into account, this paper has numerous implications for practitioners in various areas: governmental and state authorities, public and private sector institutions, academia as well as private individuals. Other countries face a similar situation with a rising number of immigrants, including those highly skilled, and the proposed practices can be applicable in the context of those countries as well. This paper also lays the ground for discussions among practitioners in their respective countries on how they may draw inspiration from the proposed good practices.

Background

The number of **international migrants** worldwide is increasing. In addition, there is a change in characteristics of those deciding to go abroad, making immigrants a more diversified group (Thomas et. al, 2005). The nature of global business is also being transformed. Global companies appear while the increasing number of small and medium sized companies aim for global opportunities and strive to reduce the costs of international assignments (McKenna and Richardson, 2007). Hence, the global economy and the transnational companies start to significantly blur the boundaries of national states (Tyler, 2003). As the competition was becoming fierce, in the combat for profitability, employees were recognised to be one of the crucial strategic resources (Banai and Harry, 2004; Näsholm and Jacobsson, 2010). Likewise, international careers seem to have increasing boundaryless characteristics with a transcending organisational membership (Arthur, 1996; Eby, Butts and Lockwood, 2003; Arthur, 2008; Kuen and Nesbit, 2013). Along with altering migration and expatriation trends, the nature of the interdependence between an individual and an organisation is changing and becoming increasingly complex, influenced by context of the larger environment (Holt Larsen, 2004).

For this paper, we adapt the following understanding of highly skilled individuals based upon several definitions:

- A highly skilled individual is someone with at least four years of academic or university education following primary and secondary education with possibly supplemental qualifications (Lowell and Findlay, 2001).

- In Sweden, highly skilled immigrants are individuals with a higher education, individuals with highly skilled occupations and former students (Emilsson, 2014a; Emilsson, 2014b).

We will now briefly describe the highly skilled migration context of Sweden relevant to the good practices proposed. Sweden is one of the most attractive countries for labour immigrants primarily because of career opportunities, living

conditions, travel prospects and the country's work-life balance. It ranks number-seven in the Global Talent Competitiveness Index (Global Talent Competitiveness Index, 2019). Sweden is also one of the top destinations for highly skilled women immigrants (Osanami Törngren and Holbrow, 2017; Bailey and Mulder, 2017). Moreover, most highly skilled immigrants are labour migrants rather than humanitarian migrants (Osanami Törngren and Holbrow, 2017).

Another factor that contributes to a country's attractiveness is the agglomeration affect (Lindqvist, Malmberg, and Sölvell, 2008; Kerr, Kerr, Özden, and Parsons, 2017). When certain industries in the country advance, the number of highly skilled professionals in these and connected industries grows, forming agglomerations of professionals. The most prominent examples of such agglomerations would be Silicon Valley and Bangalor as well as IT, engineering and oil and gas industries in certain countries. Such agglomerations make a positive impact upon the economy and surrounding areas, hence, many policy-makers are interested in fostering them (Swedish Agency for Growth Policy Analysis/Tillväxtanalys, 2017). This agglomeration affect is probably why one would meet a lot of highly skilled individuals in certain areas of Sweden. However, it would be a slightly delusive impression to think that there are too many of them. In fact, according to the Swedish Public Employment Service, the country annually needs approximately 60,000 new foreign employees in order to keep up the development phase and welfare system (Swedish Public Employment Service/Arbetsförmedlingen, 2015).

Generally, all labour immigrants to Sweden can approximately be classified into three major categories: those moving for skilled jobs as computer specialists and engineers, for low-skilled jobs in the private service sector and for seasonal work in the berry picking industry (Emilsson and Magnusson, 2013; Emilsson, 2014a; Emilsson, 2014b). In order to facilitate labour immigration from non-EU countries, major changes were made to the labour immigration regulations in 2008 (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2013). Legally, these regulations created the most open system for labour migration among all OECD countries where the state tries to exercise minimal control over the labour market (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2013; Emilsson et al., 2014a; Swedish National Audit Office/Riksrevisionen, 2016; Swedish Agency for Growth Policy Analysis/

Tillväxtanalys, 2017). The Swedish labour immigration scheme is demand-driven, hence, there is an actual demand for incoming highly skilled migrants in Sweden. Moreover, Sweden's system is exceptional as compared to other systems since the labour migration law is equal for all individuals and does not depend upon their education and professional background (Emilsson, 2014a; Emilsson et al., 2014). This defers from the scheme prior to 2008 where mostly highly skilled individuals were employed (Emilsson, 2014a). However, there has not been any major change in the rules for granting work permits and few employers address the labour shortage by recruiting abroad (Swedish Public Employment Service/Arbetsförmedlingens, 2012; Triadafilopoulos, 2013; Emilsson et al., 2014; Stockholm Chamber of Commerce/Stockholms Handelskammares, 2019). Work permits for highly skilled individuals are concentrated around certain professions and there are few instruments that facilitate matching and recruitment (Swedish Public Employment Service/Arbetsförmedlingens, 2018). The introduction of tuition fees for citizens of non-EU countries limits the number of incoming students who could become future highly skilled employees in the Swedish market (Emilsson and Magnusson, 2013). While there is a need to eliminate other conditions that lower the attraction/employment and a significant part of the discussion is concentrated upon them, these factors also serve as one of the arguments supporting the improvement of welcome information and the reception of immigrants.

Moreover, highly skilled migrants are very mobile (Osanami Törngren and Holbrow, 2017). The quality of life and other factors matter greatly for them when choosing a country to which to migrate. At the same time, research shows that this group has substantial hardships to overcome; for example, their employment rates and salaries are lower as compared to natives and they face a higher education-to-occupation mismatch (Irastorza and Bevelander, 2017). Besides, similar hardships faced by other groups of immigrants also apply such as the lack of social integration, discrimination and so on (Cohen et al., 2016). According to a recent study, migrants do not always get sufficient on-arrival support from their employer, including in document processing, getting housing or insurance and others (Emilsson et al., 2014). They are disappointed with the long waiting times for governmental services and say that the rules for permanent residency and citizenship can be unclear (Emilsson et al., 2014). Consequently, these hardships affect their decision

of staying in or leaving the host country. Moreover, highly educated migrants are a group that is less likely to receive permanent residence in Sweden. Many highly skilled labour immigrants only stay in Sweden for a short period as compared to migrants who come for other purposes such as low-skilled labour migration, humanitarian migrants or migrants who come for family reunification. Thus, the above described facts show that highly skilled migrants are a group that also requires attention and assistance. As also mentioned above, highly skilled labour immigrants have not received a lot of attention in the Swedish migration discourse since they are not seen as individuals who, due to their employment, would need integration (Emilsson et al., 2014). However, highly skilled migrants, who also include recent university graduates, are often not so well-established. Moreover, as mentioned above, only some get assistance upon arrival. All newly arrived immigrants have a lot to learn about the host country's system no matter to which migrant group they belong.

Thus, one might still wonder why it would be beneficial for the host country, in the person of practitioners and researchers, to pay additional attention to this group. We would, first of all, argue that the increased migration, including for work, has to be managed in any case. Moreover, as also described above, there is a large number of migrants, including highly skilled immigrants, who are becoming more employer independent. This number will only be increasing in the upcoming years. In addition, a rather fierce competition for talent exists between countries (Wallen and Sanandaji, 2012; Osanami Törngren and Holbrow, 2017). Such competition particularly exists in certain areas such as IT, engineering, medicine and others. These factors form a matter that has to be addressed and optimally resolved and they create a situation which has to be managed. Moreover, highly skilled migrants are highly mobile and have a choice of immigration countries (Osanami Törngren and Holbrow, 2017). There is a question of not only how to attract them or manage their flow but also how to welcome and integrate them and make it attractive for them to stay.

Besides being a situation that has to be managed, it is likewise a great opportunity for numerous reasons. First of all, we would argue that any well-managed migration and, hence, diversity, contributes to positive improvements. Similarly,

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the international mobility of skilled individuals has become a crucial component in the process of innovation, scientific discovery and technology transfer (Swedish Agency for Growth Policy Analysis/ Tillväxtanalys, 2017). Furthermore, according to various state and business sources, the European labour market, including the Swedish one, is in need of more highly skilled professionals. Complex challenges as "an aging population, stalled economic growth, cash-strapped social-security systems and the dearth of innovation potential and of skilled workforces (Kahanec and Zimmermann, 2010)" emphasise their importance (Nathan, 2014; Swedish Agency for Growth Policy Analysis/Tillväxtanalys, 2017; Bailey and Mulde, 2017). Studies have also correlated immigration with increased earnings of locals due to the significant purchasing power of immigrants (Huang and Liu, 2018). Some countries are working on and creating new policies and programmes tailored for highly skilled immigrants in order to facilitate their positive local and national impact (US Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2019). We would say that just the sole fact that businesses are willing to take such high expenses for highly skilled employees shows that they are a valuable resource and should give food for thought to the general public and governments to think how to attract and welcome them and make their transition and adaptation quicker. According to the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise (2018), Sweden is a knowledge and service nation with technological development becoming increasingly complex, driving up the specialisation. The knowledge-intensive business services have grown rapidly and Swedish companies are becoming increasingly internationally exposed. Thus, labour immigration is an important contribution to the companies' development and supply of skills. Labour immigration generates about SEK 10 billion (EUR 950 million) annually in production value in the business sector and contributes through increased tax revenue (The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise/Svenskt Näringsliv, 2018). Likewise, recruitment of one foreign highly skilled IT specialist creates two to four jobs for less experienced engineer or computer specialists (Tendensor, 2014b). Such development is hampered by issues such as finding the right skills to recruit. The shortage is most severe in the IT and other highly skilled segments which creates a risk for production relocation (Swedish Public Employment Service/ Arbetsförmedlingens, 2018; Almega, 2019). An estimated cost of labour shortage in Stockholm alone is SEK 18 billion (EUR 1.7 billion) in lost annual production (Stockholm Chamber of Commerce/Stockholms Handelskammares, 2019).

Welcome information is essential for the smooth transition and adaptation of labour migrants in destination countries. For the purposes of this paper, we will define welcome information as information targeting the newly arrived immigrant and essential for his stay which he receives during the pre-departure and arrival stages before moving or when settling in another country. It refers to the information needed to settle in such as about housing, banking, insurance and other practical things to consider. It is not only a matter of individual importance since, depending upon the country, it is also obligatory to show proof of these matters when applying for permit/banking/other due to security reasons and other considerations. As they live in the country, immigrants get to know more information through formal and informal channels; however, they have to take many important decisions that greatly influence their life over an extended period of time if not forever immediately upon arrival: which housing to get, which bank, which medical insurance and so on. The welcome information is vital as it can influence the way the immigrants settle down in the new country and establish their living situation. These initial arrangements might be hard to change at a later stage. The lack of quality welcome information received in a timely manner influences the immigration and integration processes as well as the decision to stay in the country. Moreover, it is the first encounter with society and government, different from the one a tourist might get, which has a lasting first impression that affects their attitude towards society and government. In terms of Sweden, immigrants have high expectations and the welcome strategy influences if such expectations are fulfilled.

CHALLENGE

The challenge discussed in this paper is to provide highly skilled labour immigrants in Sweden with sufficient, timely and up-to-date welcome information in order to ease their transition, faster adaptation to the new country and offer a welcoming reception to Sweden. Welcome information can be poor due to the lack of informational resources, its unsystematised nature, its varied quality, issues with access to necessary information, untimely manner of provision, a lack of good practices and so on.

This paper is principally based upon a literature review. In addition, we visited a Gothenburg regional initiative, "Move to Gothenburg," and conducted informal interviews with its representatives on the subject of the activities of this initiative as well as the general situation of attracting and welcoming highly skilled labour immigrants in Sweden.

WHY THIS BECOMES A CHALLENGE?

A complex interplay of factors can contribute to the emersion of such a challenge. We will name a few of them and provide a general context.

Both humanitarian and labour migration to Sweden have increased. Therefore, quality information has to be provided to more people and this process has to be efficient.

From a migration policy and labour migration point of view, Sweden has gone from rather restrictive labour migration policies to more liberal ones, starting around 2000 (Osanami Törngren and Holbrow, 2017). There might be an issue that welcome strategies did not catch up with this liberalisation of migration (Osanami Törngren and Holbrow, 2017). At the same time, Swedish labour migration law is equal for all individuals and does not depend on their education and professional background (Emilsson et al., 2014). Highly skilled immigrants can be viewed as well-established individuals who do not require much assistance and so more focus has been given to other immigrant groups (Emilsson et al., 2014). Generally, integration policies in Sweden are horizontal and integrated in different policy areas such as the labour market, education and healthcare; however, these measures are often generic and targeted measures are only introduced if necessary (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2018). In 2007, the Swedish Integration Agency (Integrationsverket) was closed and some of its responsibilities were transferred to local municipalities. This agency had been working on helping local municipalities in receiving newly arrived immigrants and promoting integration

(Immigrant-institutet, 2007). It is hard to assess how this influenced the welcome information and integration of highly skilled individuals.

Currently, there is increasing focus upon evaluating the existing migration legislation and work permits regulation. Some attention is given to the availability of information for immigrants and employers. For example, it is stated that the legislation is rather complex, which requires a good understanding from the representatives of state authorities, which influences the services and information provision (The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise/Svenskt Näringsliv, 2018).

As seen from the experience of other countries and the emerging discussion in Sweden, this topic is only now entering the agenda and is underresearched. Discussions have started on national branding and an improved strategy to attract and retain immigrants, including those highly skilled, while previous strategies are being revisited (Swedish Public Employment Service/Arbetsförmedlingen, 2015). At the same time, many of the previous integration initiatives are not evaluated (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2018). Nevertheless, the focus now is upon providing information for attracting immigrants which is sometimes difficult to distinguish from welcome information and reception initiatives.

Previous Strategies

Upon the basis of desk research, it is rather problematic to distinguish if the found initiatives are aimed at providing information or marketing and attracting talent as well as estimate their scale and effectiveness. Definitely, each initiative may be simultaneously aimed at a few of these goals. Likewise, even information aimed at attracting talent can be used by those who have already decided to move/have moved. As stated before, we found increasing focus in the literature upon attracting talent and marketing and branding in addition to discussions about current labour market regulations. The provision of information and the reception of immigrants is discussed predominantly in this key. Thus, we decided to also include practices

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that predominantly have other aims but help provide information and contribute to the welcoming reception/settling down of immigrants. Similarly, it is hard to say if in the context of Sweden current initiatives are sufficient as well as estimate the information's availability and quality. Thus, the division of initiatives into those aimed at availability and quality of information is approximate.

There is a number of initiatives in Sweden aiming at providing welcome information and services as well as marketing and attracting immigrants. They include:

- Official information sources. For example, Sweden's official portals www.sweden.se, www.work.sweden.se, www.studyinsweden.se (Tendensor, 2014a). These portals have general guidance in different areas while detailed information has to be found in specialised sources such as an authority's website. However, for example, the target group of workingingsweden.se that was previously defined as "third-country nationals" without the specification of an occupation or education background, was later identified to be too extensive in order to successfully design the portal and provide targeted information (Swedish Public Employment Service/ Arbetsförmedlingens, 2012).

- Information on various state agencies' websites according to their specialisation. For example, the Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket has introduced a number of changes to improve the information for employers and immigrants during the application procedure (Swedish Public Employment Service/Arbetsförmedlingens, 2012). Its web system guides the applicant step by step through the application process (Swedish Public Employment Service/Arbetsförmedlingens, 2012).

- Information on websites of city and regional initiatives. For example, the Stockholm region portal: www.visitstockholm.com, Skåne/Southern Sweden portal: www.movingtosouthernsweden.com (Tendensor, 2014a).

- Outside of Sweden, Swedish diplomatic missions circulate information about Sweden and conduct various promotional activities (Swedish Public Employment Service/Arbetsförmedlingens, 2012).

- Social media pages organised by an expat network, official authorities and otehrs providing information and advice (Swedish Public Employment Service/Arbetsförmedlingens, 2012).

- Possibility to contact the actors providing information via post, e-mail, telephone, chat and so on.

- Welcome brochures, guidebooks. In Sweden it is very common to send information, including official documents, by post. For example, each officially registered person receives a brochure describing the necessary actions in case of large-scale emergencies such as war, natural disasters and others.

- Informational and networking events, seminars, webinars.

- Open Desk Service. During consultations at the Open Desk Service, immigrants can get a consultation on different questions, including from representatives of state agencies (Move to Gothenburg, 2019).

- Seminars/informational support for companies/recruiters/human resource managers on recruitment from abroad (Move to Gothenburg, 2019).

- Translation and proofreading services (Helsingborg International Connections, 2019).

- Ambassador/citizen networks. For example, Jönköping ambassadors (www. jonkopingsambassaden.se) with approximately 1,000 members (Tendensor, 2014b).

- Dual career/spouse services. Such services are aimed at providing career advice and training to the partners of immigrants such as the regional initiative, "Move to Dalarna" (Tendensor, 2014b) and events by the International Citizens Hub Lund (International Citizens Hub Lund, 2019).

- Kick-Start Programme/Career Programme. These programmes provide career advice and training that might be relevant for partners of immigrants, former students and others. ("Move to Gothenburg," 2019; International Citizens Hub Lund, 2019).

- Welcome weeks and buddy programmes for international students organised by educational institutions.

- Physical centres for immigrants. Centres provide different services and organise events/activities, usually free of charge, aimed at providing information and attracting individuals such as "Move to Gothenburg" (Gothenburg)International Citizens Hub Lund (Lund) and Helsingborg International Connections (Helsingborg) (Move to Gothenburg, 2019, International Citizens Hub Lund, 2019; Helsingborg International Connections, 2019).

- Relocation services offered by employers. One of such programmes offers: "pre-arrival (information on housing and schooling, a welcome information package, a consultant, an orientation tour of the city), settling in service (orientation tour, assistance with local registration, setting up a bank account/ telephone/Internet/driving license, introduction to community resources), cultural/language training, assisting in immigration processes and finally spousal support (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2018)." Such programmes might illustrate the need for a larger variety of services from different actors than the ones available (The Swedish Migration Board/ Migrationsverket, 2018).

- Pre-departure or pre-arrival measures. A number of companies in the private sector provide this type of support and it is recommended to extend such practice to other sectors/companies as well (The Swedish Migration Board/ Migrationsverket, 2018).

- Servicekontor, which is a joint office of the Tax Agency/Skatteverket, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency/Försäkringskassan and the Swedish Pensions Agency/Pensionsmyndigheten. In the Servicekontor, an applicant can get: "general guidance and advice, help with forms and applications, information on ongoing cases, printing of certificates and evidence, help with self-service services, help booking meetings with administrators in specific cases etc. (Tax Agency/ Skatteverket, 2019)."

There have been suggestions to establish a one-stop-shop solution for labour immigration which already exists in other countries. In a one-stop-shop, authorities at the national and local levels are gathered in the same place to offer advice and

support to employers/employees. This would also mean a change of mindset from control to promotion and welcoming (Tendensor, 2014b). Moreover, according to a representative of the "Move to Gothenburg" initiative, a Servicekontor is a sign of moving towards such one-stop shop services which will be further improved. In addition, they stated that the questions of attracting and welcoming international talent are being raised at the national and regional levels in Sweden as well.

Similarly, a representative of "Move to Gothenburg" indicated that certain research and pilot studies are made to access the situation with attractiveness and needs in information/services, activities and networks surrounding reception and integration. One such regional pilot study states that such initiatives can often be too disjointed and small-scale, hence, there is a need to scale them up and to launch new ones (Tendensor, 2014a). There are recommendations to simplify the structure and information on websites (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2013).

We found recommendations in the literature to strengthen the information and advice for labour immigrants and companies. The authorities should improve informational channels for potential migrants (The Swedish Migration Board/ Migrationsverket, 2013; Swedish National Audit Office/Riksrevisionen, 2016). A strategy to increase informational effort for third countries was developed by the Swedish Institute, the Public Employment Agency and the Migration Board (Swedish Public Employment Service/Arbetsförmedlingens, 2012). Some highly skilled labour immigrants lack specific information about Sweden and may rely upon information from contacts to immigrate rather than upon information from official sources (Emilsson and Magnusson, 2008; The Swedish Migration Board/ Migrationsverket, 2013). This might indicate that those who intend to move to Sweden need to be reached earlier. For this and other purposes, the increased presence of Swedish organisations and initiatives abroad may facilitate such a provision of information (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2013). Other sources also express a need for better marketing and branding for various groups of highly skilled immigrants (Swedish Government Official Reports/ Statens offentliga utredningar, 2018). Additionally, there is a suggestion to develop a national action plan for increased attractiveness to foreign students (Almega, 2019). The authorities consider it important to have a holistic view of the process

and improve marketing while matching and licensing are also important (Swedish Public Employment Service/Arbetsförmedlingen, 2012; The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise/Svenskt Näringsliv, 2018).

Observations found in the literature suggest that there are certain issues in the welcome information that may require further evaluation and improvement. In terms of availability, possible issues may include:

- The existing informational resources are not well-known. For example, informational portals appear to be known among students while relatively unknown amongst employers; therefore, few can recommend these sources to potential employees (Tendensor, 2014a).

- The provided information is too general (Tendensor, 2014a).

- Shortage of certain information such as on healthcare or specialised for particular groupssuch as IT specialists (Tendensor, 2014a).

- Lack of sub-segmentation of target groups (Swedish Public Employment Service/Arbetsförmedlingen, 2012; Tendensor, 2014a).

- Scattered and unsystematised information in the official resources. Different actors providing their own information and lack of collabouration (Tendensor, 2014a).

- Distribution of information not in a written form (Vertelyte, 2016).

- Presented information only in written form and not through videos, roadmaps or infographics, for example (The Swedish Migration Board/ Migrationsverket, 2013).

- Untimely information. Some of the information might be provided too late in the migration process (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2013).

- Information available in one language only (Swedish or English) (Tendensor, 2014a). This especially concerns written information given to the newly arrived immigrants. Other cases include when a website is not available

in several other languages or the Google Translate option is available to translate the information on the page. As one may already know, Google Translate does not always provide proper translation, especially, from certain languages. Maybe, it is assumed that such websites are primarily used by Swedish-speakers; however, many times, especially for research purposes, one is redirected to these websites.

- Substitution of formal information sources by informal ones such as social media pages/groups and websites developed by organisations not affiliated with authorities and so on. It is undoubtedly beneficial to have advice and support from sources other than the official authorities. Some information is general and does not require to be stated by the official authorities. However, it might create certain difficulties when informal sources come to substitute information from official sources. Furthermore, it gets confusing to distinguish official information from private initiatives. One would have to look for additional information to identify the source of the information and probably not all do it. In other words, it creates a certain 'alternative reality' and opens possibilities to provide untruthful information and scams. Especially, certain groups tend to seek information from their peers and social media as opposed to official informational sources (Emilsson and Magnusson, 2008; Tendensor, 2014a; Tendensor, 2014b). Similarly, there is a need to detect and prevent misinformation (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2012).

- Information on the rules for the temporary work permit, permanent re-sidence permit and citizenship is unclear for some of the highly skilled migrants, potentially affecting their choice to stay in Sweden (Emilsson et al., 2014). It should be further explored what it is that is making it unclear. The application procedure also needs to be well-understood by employers.

- Lack of coordination among different actors. For example, due to such discoordination, it is difficult to understand the process in order to handle all of the necessary paperwork (Tendensor, 2014a). Moreover, perhaps more actors might need to be involved in informational efforts (Swedish Government Official Reports/Statens offentliga utredningar,

2018; The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2018). To achieve better labour integration, national authorities and bodies are already tasked to promote coordination and cooperation at the national, regional and local levels (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2018).

There are also probable issues with regard to the quality of information such as:

- Partiality of information on available agency sources. This creates a need to contact an agency or provides an incomplete picture.

- Varying information provided by official sources or, especially, when contacting the official authority/low quality of consultation provided by the governmental agency representatives. This may be due to the fact that, first of all, the authority representatives that consult the immigrant are not properly informed about the procedures and rules as they are often not the ones making case decisions. Likewise, Swedish legislation complemented with EU legislation is complex and requires good assessment and knowledge (Swedish National Audit Office/Riksrevisionen, 2016; The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise/Svenskt Näringsliv, 2018). It should be ensured that all officials communicating with immigrants have a good knowledge/same interpretation of the legislation and provide standardised information (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2013).

- Long waiting times and bureaucracy in terms of service provision which include not only document processing but also information services (Emilsson et al., 2014).

- Little specialised information for groups of migrants or the occupational sector such as IT. This would be beneficial to have, especially, since there are many immigrants within the same profession.

- Lack of evaluation of multiple initiatives (The Swedish Migration Board/Migrationsverket, 2018).

IDENTIFYING GOOD PRACTICES

In this section we would like to describe the existing practices that aim to improve the availability of information as well as its quality. Such practices already exist rather successfully in other countries and may be applied in a Swedish context. These are the practices we have discovered in academic/practitioner literature and existing welcome information resources. We aimed to present as many relevant types of practices as possible. Even though some of the practices exist in Sweden, we decided to provide additional examples/variations of such initiatives. Moreover, there are suggestions for good practices and improvements which we have made based upon the found inconsistencies.

These practices can be combined with other already existing practices or substitute them. We would like to remind the reader that highly skilled migration is essentially demand-driven, hence, there is an actual demand for it in Sweden and a large interest to make this process quick and efficient. Political support for attraction and welcome initiatives is already increasing according to representative of "Move to Gothenburg." Moreover, additional political support can be gained by researching and raising this challenge among activist groups, employers or independent institutions.

Existing good practices that target welcome information availability:

- Welcome guidebooks/booklets/brochures (US, Canada, New Zealand, Netherlands) (Government of Alberta, 2019; Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, 2019; US Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2019). It might be possible to send brochures even to electronic addresses or temporary addresses of unregistered persons instead of a permanent physical registered address. The content of these mailed booklets can be personalised and chosen by the immigrant. Moreover, they can be available online as well (XPAT.NL, 2019).

- Information portals/websites such as the Brainport Talent Box (Holland Expat Center South, 2019) not only provides information online but also offers webinars.

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- Informational and networking events such as the Expats Fair (Denmark), the Hub Eindhoven (The Hub Eindhoven, 2019) and Helsinki Region Welcome Weeks (Tendensor, 2014b).

- Education workshops for immigrants (Wuang and Liu, 2018).

- Seminars and informational support for companies/recruiters/human resource managers (Huang & Liu, 2016).

- Dual Career Centers (Tendensor, 2014b; Dual Career Network Germany, 2019).

- Kick-start/Mentoring programmes (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 2018; Talent Tampere, 2019).

- Ambassador programmes (Tendensor, 2014b; Talent Tampere, 2019; ONLYLYON, 2019).

- Psychological spaces/hubs/other facilities where described above events can take place (Vertelyte, 2016).

- Expat centres/one-stop shops. We found one-stop shops in Denmark (Copenhagen), the Netherlands (Amsterdam, Rotterdam etcetera), Germany, Belgium, Malaysia, Estonia, Finland and the Czech Republic among others. They are initiatives of local municipalities with support from the state. For example, the Amsterdam municipality and official state authorities such as the Tax and Immigration Agencies, started INAmsterdam (formerly Expatcenter Amsterdam) (INAmsterdam, 2019; Expat Center Utrecht, 2019; Expat Center Leiden Region, 2019; Brussels Commissioner for Europe and International Organisations, 2019; Rotterdam Expat Center, 2019; eXpats Service Centre, 2019; Holland Expat Center South, 2019; International Citizen Service, 2019, International house of Estonia, 2019; Expats Center Prague, 2019; Brno Expat Center, 2019).

One-stop shop services provide services for highly skilled migrant employees, scientific researchers, international entrepreneurs, international graduates and companies. In addition, diverse services are available for different immigration stages such as: arrival, settling, living and leaving. The range of offered free and paid informational services includes:

- Informational services drop-in, call and chat.

- Personal counseling for the expat and family.

- Consultation services on:
  - authorisation for regulated professions;
  - tax system;
  - housing and rental contracts;
  - economy;
  - medical insurance;
  - social security issues;
  - family reunification;
  - education and child care;
  - import of vehicles;
  - registration of vehicles and driving license;
  - language courses;
  - leisure.
- Translation/interpretation services.

- Emergency hotline for issues encountered during out-of-office hours.

- Expats online system to obtain updates on the application status via system notifications, emails and SMS.

- Consultation services for companies/HR departments about rules and procedures, legal aspects and application forms.

These centres have other initiatives and activities. Additionally, they serve as a network facilitator between the immigrant community and other actors.

- Pre-departure orientation and training. Among other benefits, it can help minimise unrealistic expectations and reduce feelings of frustration after arrival. Such pre-departure orientation is especially important for countries with significant cultural and language differences (Emilsson and Magnusson, 2013).

- Provision of necessary information already during the recruitment process by the employer (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 2018).

- Integrated Adaptation/Host Programme (Emilsson and Magnusson, 2013).

- City tours.

Existing good practices that target welcome information availability quality:

- Training of front desk/call centre employees of official governmental institutions as well as expat centres (Vertelyte, 2016; Huang & Liu, 2016). This is to ensure the quality of information and that it does not vary from one institution representative or institution branch to another.

There are also initiatives aiming at further social and economic integration and the retention of immigrants, among others. We do not include such initiatives here as they are beyond the discussed topic; yet they might be interesting for practitioners to consider.

Suggested Good Practices

Before talking about suggested good practices we would like to draw attention to the need for an overall informational strategy and possible revision of the current one. Similarly, we discuss the integration of different elements to this strategy that would be beneficial. Such an overall strategy would encourage and enable the implementation of the suggested practices.

First of all, in order to overcome this challenge, the topic would require more attention from the state institution as well as employers. It would require more attention from the academy as well in order to document this challenge properly, identify and describe it in more details and suggest possible solutions. Thus, as can be seen, such a complex challenge would need combined multisectoral efforts.

Moreover, there is already certain welcome information and an initiatives base which have been built up. The good practices provided in this paper have to be evaluated according to the national context and combined with welcome policies and strategies. Constant monitoring and evaluating of welcome information strategy and the state of matters around it should be implemented. Furthermore, further specification as, for example, for certain professions can be beneficial. Overall, the experience of other countries should be studied more closely by Sweden with conclusions drawn. Increased attention should be paid also to welcome information as opposed to attraction initiatives, especially for highly skilled immigrants.

There are good practices that will help in making the information more available and accessible. It could be beneficial to consolidated different websites and systematise information. As a newly arrived person one does not always know all the sources of information/agencies to address and even if they are hyperlinked to one other, this can still be confusing and the information might not always be perfectly systematised.

In addition, in order to improve the quality of information, we would suggest a few good practices as well. More interactive and memorable information solutions can be introduced instead of texts. These may include, for example, mind maps, infographics, slide presentations, images or videos. Another tool is online support chat with an organisation's representatives. This tool has been functioning for a long time in many business areas. It may require a lot of resources, yet that can help with providing information and resolving minor issues.

LIMITATIONS AND CONCERNS

There are certain limitations and concerns to the discussed above ideas:

- It is difficult to distinguish welcome information practices from those aimed at attraction and marketing, for example. Thus, we aimed at providing various types of practices.

- There are also few evaluations available of the discussed practices and it is difficult to estimate their scale and effectiveness. Thus, we aimed at providing various types of practices.

- Implementing the proposed good practices, as any changes, might be quite a bureaucratic and time-consuming process. Hence, it might be advantageous to start an active discussion on this topic as soon as possible.

- Introduction of change management elements/activities may need to be considered both in involved institutions and the general society such as: an established change plan, clear communication to all stakeholders, change resistance management, monitoring and evaluation.

- The idea of focusing and prioritising highly skilled immigrants may stir a societal discussion with negative opinions. Therefore, solid arguments for the proposed strategy should be communicated.

A general concern is the impression that current literature talks predominantly about the benefits of highly skilled migration, forming the image that it is a solely positive phenomenon. While it is a phenomenon that brings a lot of benefits, however, an unbalanced/biased presentation of this topic is not beneficial either. This topic requires further attention. In addition, it is not clear in what way a rising anti-migration sentiment will affect highly skilled migration.

Conclusions

Highly skilled immigrants hold unique transferable and widely applicable knowledge and skills which makes them an exceptionally valuable resource. It becomes increasingly obvious that countries that would like to attract and retain international highly skilled talents would have to adapt to num*erous changes and implement new practices, including in the area of welcome information.

In this paper, we primarily aimed to raise the topic of welcome information for high lyskilled immigrants, identify possible challenges and propose good practices as possible solutions. This paper focuses exclusively upon the area of highly skilled migration and certain issues raised here should be further reviewed by other practitioners such as welcome information by communication strategy makers and practitioners in the area of migration and so on.

Additionally, welcome information is only the start for immigrant journeys in a new country. It does not give all the answers for further integration and adaptation, among others, but helps in this process and makes a lasting first impression which is, as we know, quite important and sometimes unchangeable. Even though the group in focus is highly mobile, can choose their preferred country of residence and the length of their stay, welcome information along with integration activities may contribute to the length of their stay in the country. Highly skilled employees are important but also a costly asset for those who employ them; therefore, it will be beneficial to make the process of their adaptation and integration into the new country faster and smoother. Numerous countries are improving the way they are welcoming the newly arrived highly skilled immigrants; however, as in anything, all of them, including Sweden, have some room for improvement.

Undoubtedly, the proposed good practices should be evaluated taking the national context into account and yet may already serve as an example and inspiration for starting discussion and introducing change. Even if not all of these good practices are implemented, implementing some of them would still bring improvement. As extensively discussed above, such improvements would be beneficial not only for the immigrants themselves but also for the receiving country.

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