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Herbert Brücker

War in the Ukraine: Consequences for the Governance of Refugee Migration and Integration

Four months since the onset of the Russian invasion of the Ukraine, around 8 million people have fled or been displaced, while some 2.8 million have returned (UNHCR 2022). Approximately 5.3 million Ukrainian refugees have been recorded in one way or another in Europe, around 3.7 million of those in Member States of the European Union (EU). On top of that, there are another 8 million internally displaced persons according to UNHCR (2022) estimates. This is so far the largest refugee movement since the end of World War II – at least in such a brief period of time. Note that the EU recorded 2.4 million first-time asylum applications in 2015 and 2016, which at the time was the largest refugee influx in Europe since World War II. Thus, the influx of refugees and displaced persons from the Ukraine exceeds that of the 2015/16 refugee surge in the EU by a factor of 1.5 within a period of four months.

The refugee migration is heavily concentrated in the countries at the borders to Ukraine, first of all in Poland, but also in Russia, Romania, Moldova, and Slovakia. Nevertheless, around 850,000 refugees from Ukraine have already been recorded by the Central Register of Foreigners (*Ausländerzentralregister* – AZR) in Germany; actual numbers are likely to be higher since not all refugees are covered by official records.

This paper addresses some important aspects of the challenges of the war in the Ukraine for the governance of refugee migration and the integration of refugees from Ukraine with a special focus on Germany. Refugee migration from the Ukraine differs largely from past refugee migration episodes since the EU has activated the so-called “Mass Influx Directive.” This has important humanitarian, social, and economic consequences, which are discussed in the following section. This also affects the socio-demographic structure of the refugee population and hence their integration chances (see the second section). The third section addresses an underrated aspect relevant to the integration of refugees: regional dispersal policies, while the fourth section discusses the central role of education and child care policies for the integration of the Ukrainian population, particularly females. The fifth section briefly addresses some other important aspects of integration policies – language and integration programs, labor market policies, the acknowledgment of foreign degrees, and job placement policies. Finally, the sixth section concludes the paper.

THE IMPACT OF ACTIVATING THE “MASS INFLUX DIRECTIVE”

The key political and institutional difference in the governance of refugee migration in the context of the Ukrainian war relative to past refugee migration episodes is that the EU Member States have agreed to activate the so-called “Mass Influx Directive” (Council Directive 2001/55/EC).¹ The directive was adopted against the background of flight and displacement during the wars in the successor states of the former Yugoslavia, but it has not yet been applied in the EU. Among other things, it provides for the following:

- Nationals from Ukraine and their family members have free entry to the EU and receive a temporary right of residence there for an initial period of one year. They do not have to go through an asylum procedure for this, but access to the asylum procedure is guaranteed at all times. The Mass Influx Directive, and thus the right of residence, is automatically extended by six months if the EU does not declare the measure terminated. The Mass Influx Directive can be extended for up to three years if a new decision is undertaken by qualified majority.
- Other nationals who have also fled Ukraine are covered only if they cannot return to their home countries. Refugees who had an approved protection status in Ukraine are also granted a temporary right of residence. It remains to be seen what kind of rights refugees from Ukraine who have resided there for some time but are not Ukrainian citizens will have in EU Member States.
- The directive also regulates the registration of persons and the issuance of visas and other documents. The temporary right of residence does not guarantee that the refugees can stay in another EU Member State. However, since there is no visa requirement for Ukrainian citizens in the EU, they have



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¹ The Directive is correctly called “Council Directive 2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001 on Minimum Standards for Giving Temporary Protection in the Event of a Mass Influx of Displaced Persons and on Measures Promoting a Balance of Efforts between Member States in Receiving Such Persons and Bearing the Consequences Thereof.”

free entry and can stay in another EU Member State for up to 90 days such that secondary migration is de facto liberalized.

- The directive obliges EU Member States to provide adequate accommodation and subsistence for the refugees. They must also provide necessary medical assistance, especially in cases of torture, rape, and other forms of physical and psychological violence.
- The directive provides for a solidarity mechanism. Member States can refuse admission in the event of capacity shortages, and free capacities are to be reported by Member States. Furthermore, the solidarity mechanism provides for compensation payments, e.g., from a European Refugee Fund.
- Finally, access to employment and self-employment is to be made possible in principle, although labor market access can also be restricted.

In Germany, the Mass Influx Directive has been incorporated into German law via §24 of the Residence Act. This results in the following regulations:

- Under §24 of the Residence Act, Ukrainian citizens are entitled to work and self-employment immediately after registration and have access to welfare benefits and health care.
- Initially, the refugees from Ukraine were entitled to receive benefits under the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act and not according to the regular mean-tested benefit system under Social Code II ("*Hartz-IV*"). However, the German government changed the Asylum Seekers' Benefit Act such that the Ukrainian refugees receive Social Code II benefits as of June 1, 2022. This has three important consequences: (i) the level of benefits is more generous, (ii) there are no in-kind benefits, i.e., benefits are generally paid in cash, and (iii) the Ukrainian population is integrated right from the beginning in the job placement- and labor-market program infrastructure of the German Job Centers (see the fifth section).
- The free choice of place of residence can be restricted. The refugees can – similar to asylum seekers – be distributed among the federal states after their arrival. Unless the Länder agree otherwise, the so-called "*Königsteiner Schlüssel*," a key based on population and tax revenues, is applied. The federal states can regulate the distribution among the municipalities by legal ordinance. There is no entitlement to reside in a particular country or place; refugees covered by this regulation must take up residence in the place to which they have been assigned. The federal government initially refrained from applying this distribution mechanism but then decided on 3 November 2022 to apply the *Königsteiner Schlüssel* for distribution. (The implications will be discussed in the third section.)

- Finally, the temporary residence permit is granted for two years instead of the one-year minimum requested by the EU Directive.

The humanitarian, political, and economic consequences of the activation of the Mass Entry Directive and its application by German law can be underrated, particularly in comparison to the policy alternative of applying the rules of the Dublin III Directive and of other regulations of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS):

- First, a safe access to the EU, and thus to security and humanitarian protection, is secured. Refugees are not pushed into irregular migration and high-risk escape routes such as the Mediterranean routes, as was the case of the refugees, e.g., from Syria in 2015/16 and is still currently the case for most refugees. Applying the Mass Influx Directive reduces the number of victims of war, violence, and persecution as well as the risks of flight. From the perspective of welfare economics this is a substantial boon. Moreover, this also affects the self-selection of individuals according to education levels, demographic characteristics, and personal traits (see the next section).
- Second, granting a temporary residence permit without an asylum procedure quickly establishes legal certainty and thus reduces the burden on the people concerned and the authorities in an unbureaucratic manner. The available empirical studies provide strong evidence that shorter asylum procedures and the successful completion of asylum procedures substantially increase employment opportunities and other indicators for labor market integration (Kosyakova and Brenzel 2020; Hainmüller and Hangartner 2016). By circumventing the asylum procedures altogether, the activation of the Mass Influx Directive has therefore substantially increased integration chances and hence reduced fiscal and other integration costs in host countries.
- Third, secondary migration to countries with higher per capita incomes compared to the EU Member States at the border to Ukraine has ambiguous economic effects: on the one hand, it will increase expenditures for welfare benefits, housing, education, etc. in the short term. On the other hand, labor productivity, earnings, and GDP per capita are also higher in these countries. On balance, secondary migration to EU member states can also lead to economic gains if labor market integration is eventually successful given higher levels of labor productivity of individuals integrated into labor markets. Whether and how well people from Ukraine will integrate into the labor market, however, cannot be predicted today, especially since it is a completely open ques-

tion how many people from Ukraine will stay in the EU.

- Fourth, the possibility of secondary migration relieves the burden on countries at the EU's external borders and reduces their economic, social, and political costs of providing shelter. Needless to say, given that Ukrainian refugees are still concentrated on border countries, the costs of admission and protection are still far from being equally distributed across EU Member States today. But they will be much more equal than, for example, if the rules of the Dublin III Regulation were enforced, which in most cases shift the implementation of asylum procedures and the costs of granting protection to the countries of first entry into the EU. Thus, economic, social, and political pressures on the countries at the EU borders to the Ukraine are at least mitigated through secondary migration opportunities.
- Fifth, the Mass Influx Directive also provides in principle a solidarity mechanism for sharing the burden and costs of protection across the EU Member States, albeit no details are clarified there. As Timothy Hatton (2004) has demonstrated, providing protection has the character of a public good inviting free-riding behavior, which in turn results in sub-optimal levels of humanitarian protection. This calls for international or supra-national policy coordination. There are furthermore additional welfare gains if the fair distribution of costs is disentangled from an efficient allocation of the refugee population. Thus, a compensation mechanism where all EU Member States contribute to the costs of hosting refugees according to their economic strength and population size can generate substantial welfare gains, increase allocative efficiency, and raise humanitarian standards. Unfortunately, we do not yet see any redistribution of costs so far, albeit the most affected country, Poland, requests cost-sharing via EU funds. From the perspective of welfare economics, such a compensation would be justified and has the potential to improve both allocative efficiency and fairness in European protection policies.

Altogether, the activation of the Mass Influx Directive can be regarded as a game-changer, which facilitates easy access to the EU, provides legal security, and thus facilitates integration and increases economic efficiency. Note that in a counter-factual scenario, under the regular rules of the Common European Asylum System, large parts of the Ukrainian population would have not been eligible to receive protection in the EU. As a consequence, the Member States had to prove the asylum status in lengthy legal procedures individually and, perhaps, decline many applications. Moreover, the EU Member States would have had to prove which country is in charge to settle the asylum

applications according to the rules of the Dublin-III-Directive. It does not need much imagination to think that this might have led to turmoil and chaos in the EU with unpredictable humanitarian, political, and economic consequences for both refugees from Ukraine and the EU Member States.

THE IMPACT OF WAR AND THE INSTITUTIONAL SETTING ON THE SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE

The visa waiver for Ukrainian citizens in the EU – which was already in place before the beginning of the war – and the activation of the Mass Influx Directive of the EU substantially distinguishes the conditions for flight relative to most other refugee migration episodes, especially relative to the situation of the refugee migration surge from the Middle East in 2015 and 2016. In particular, open borders have reduced the risks of flight and the legal security provided by the Mass Influx Directive has increased integration chances. Both increased migration incentives and opportunities for the population of the Ukraine. However, the general mobilization and the emigration ban for males ages 18 to 60 in the Ukraine have substantially reduced the migration opportunities of the adult male population. Moreover, large parts of the male population in the Ukraine are willing to serve and to support the Ukrainian government in the war against Russia.

All this affects the scale and the (self-)selection of the Ukrainian refugee population in different dimensions. So far, reliable information on the socio-economic structure of the Ukrainian population is scant, but step by step we receive further information which allows drawing first conclusions: according to the Central Register of Foreigners, some 40 percent of the Ukrainian arrivals since the onset of the war are minors and some 80 percent of the adult population are females. Moreover, 16 percent are elderly. The average age of the adult population is slightly above 35 years and thus substantially higher than in the case of the 2015/16 influx of refugees. We can thus conclude that the refugee population consists largely of females and vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly and that a substantial share of the female population has to bear care tasks given the household context of the refugee population. This of course impairs integration chances.

We do not have information yet on education levels of the Ukrainian refugee population, but our evidence on skill levels of the population in the Ukraine as well as on the Ukrainian population in Germany clearly points to the fact that we can expect a well-educated refugee population. The overall level of education in Ukraine is high based on international comparison. The gross enrollment rate in tertiary education and training, i.e., the proportion of students in the respective age cohorts who attend universities,

colleges, and comparable further educational institutions, is 83 percent in Ukraine compared to 74 percent in Germany (World Bank 2022). However, it must be considered that due to the dual vocational training system in Germany, these figures are not directly comparable, among other things because many qualifications that are acquired in the Ukraine at universities and comparable institutions are imparted in Germany through vocational training. The school enrollment rates also say nothing about the quality of the educational institutions. Nevertheless, these indicators speak for a fairly high level of education based on an international comparison. There is also a clear gender gap in educational attainment in favor of women: the proportion of women entering tertiary education or training in Ukraine is 12 percentage points higher than the proportion among men. A similar or even more pronounced gender gap in education can also be observed in other Central and Eastern European countries such as Poland, Russia, and Romania, while in the field of tertiary education the gender ratio is more balanced than in Syria (Table 1).

The Ukrainian population living in Germany also has a high level of education compared to other migrant groups: 50 percent of the adult population from Ukraine have tertiary educational qualifications, i.e., university, college, or comparable qualifications, and a further 14 percent have post-graduate qualifications – secondary, usually vocational qualifications, 26 percent upper secondary school degrees (usually

12 school years), and 10 percent secondary or even just primary school degrees (usually 10 school years or less) (Brücker et al. 2022). Here, too, it must be considered that the education system in Ukraine differs from that in Germany in that practical professional qualifications are acquired in both secondary and tertiary educational institutions.

Moreover, we can expect that the refugees from Ukraine, like other refugees, have on average a higher level of education than the population of the countries of origin (Aksoy and Poutvaara 2021; Guichard 2021). Note that reducing the risks of flight disproportionately increases migration incentives for better-skilled individuals with a high earning potential relative to the less skilled (Aksoy and Poutvaara 2021). Against the background of the already high average level of education in Ukraine, we can therefore expect that the refugees from Ukraine are very well qualified, even if these qualifications are not identical to the professional qualifications in Germany due to the differences in the education system.

However, it would be premature to conclude from high education levels that integration into the German labor market will proceed smoothly and quickly. There are four reasons why it may last longer than it is often believed: first, the pre-war employment rates have been relatively low in the Ukraine at 50 percent of the 15+ population and particularly low for the female population (44 percent). Note that work experience in sending countries is an important determinant for employment opportunities in host countries. This is confirmed by a relatively low employment rate of Ukrainian citizens in Germany (50 percent), although the Microcensus and the IAB-SOEP-Migration Sample prove that the population with a Ukrainian migration background (including naturalized individuals) fares better (Brücker 2022; Brücker et al. 2022).

Second, in contrast to the 2015/2016 population, a large share of the Ukrainian refugee population consists of females who have to bear care tasks. Hence, their integration into the labor market critically depends on the integration of children into schools and child care. Particularly the latter aspect may hinder integration since the provision of child care facilities is poor in Germany.

Third, the situation of the Ukrainian refugee population is surrounded by large uncertainty since the potential outcomes of the war are still completely open and may remain so for longer periods of time. This translates into uncertainty on staying perspectives on return migration incentives, which in turn affects all aspects of integration which depend in way or another on investments, e.g., the acquisition of German language proficiency, the acknowledgment of foreign degrees, the acquisition of further professional degrees in Germany all require substantial investment in terms of effort, time and, partially, monetary resources. Analogously, hiring employees also requires investments from the employers' side,

Table 1

School Enrollment Rates by Types of Schooling in Selected Countries
(Gross school enrollment rate in percent of relevant age cohort)

	Ukraine 2014	Russia 2019	Poland 2019	Romania 2019	Syria 2010	Syria 2014	Germany 2019
All							
Pre-school	86	86	93	94	9	6	108
Primary schools	99	104	97	88	115	82	103
Secondary schools	96	104	112	88	71	53	98
Tertiary education and training	83	86	69	51	24	33	74
Females							
Pre-school	85	85	93	94	9	5	108
Primary schools	100	104	97	87	113	80	103
Secondary schools	95	102	110	88	72	52	95
Tertiary education and training	89	93	84	58	23	33	74
Males							
Pre-school	86	87	93	94	9	6	107
Primary schools	98	105	98	88	117	83	102
Secondary schools	97	105	113	88	71	53	100
Tertiary education and training	77	80	55	45	25	33	73

Notes: School enrollment rates are defined as the proportion of pupils or students in an age cohort who, based on their age, are qualified for the respective type of school or education. These are gross school enrollment rates, i.e. the rate can also exceed 100 percent due to school attendance from a different age cohort.

Source: World Bank (2022); own analysis and presentation.

which also might be hindered if staying perspectives remain uncertain.

Fourth, similarly to other refugees, the Ukrainian population is relatively ill-prepared for migration and very likely lacks German language proficiency, job offers and labor market information, professional networks, etc., which in turn might hinder integration in one way or another. Altogether, although rather high education levels may result in good prospects for labor market integration in the long term, there are a couple of factors which might impair integration chances in the short term.

REGIONAL DISPERSAL POLICIES

An important, but often underrated, aspect of integration is the regional dispersal of the refugee population. According to the asylum legislation in Germany, there is a residence obligation for asylum seekers during the asylum procedure. This residence obligation has been prolonged for a further three years after the completion of the asylum procedure by the German Integration Act in 2016. In principle, individuals from Ukraine who receive a temporary residence permit according to the Mass Influx Directive are also subject to a residence obligation. Since March 11, 2022, the German Home Office decided to enforce this residence application in principle given a high concentration of Ukrainians in major cities in Germany and certain Federal States such as Berlin and Bavaria. Nevertheless, there is an exception for those refugees who have found a private accommodation, e.g., in households of friends and relatives.

Past experiences with regional dispersal policies are not encouraging in Germany: the 2015/2016 refugee population has been disproportionally dispersed to regions with poor labor market conditions, i.e., labor market regions with unemployment rates above the country average, relatively low wages, and low levels of labor market diversity (e.g., Aksoy et al. 2021; Brücker et al. 2020c). According to the estimates by Aksoy et al. (2021), increasing the unemployment rate in a region by one standard deviation (which equals around one percentage point) reduces the employment rate of refugees by 4 to 5 percentage points. The prolongation of the residency permit by the 2016 amendment of the Residence Act has further deteriorated integration chances, particularly for those who have been dispersed to weak regions (Brücker et al. 2020b). Altogether, regional dispersal policies are likely to have substantially reduced integration chances in the context of the 2015/16 refugee immigration surge in Germany. For the Ukrainian refugee population this problem is mitigated, since those who have received private accommodation are not subject to administrative dispersal. Nevertheless, for substantial parts of the Ukrainian refugee population this remains an important issue affecting integration prospects.

Based on these insights, Brücker et al. (2022) have therefore proposed an alternative approach for the dispersal of the refugee population, which goes beyond housing costs, regional labor market indicators, and regional endowments with child care facilities on board. Applying this mix of dispersal criteria can increase employment rates of the Ukrainian population by 5 to 10 percent compared to a counterfactual scenario of applying the “Königsteiner Schlüssel” for the dispersal of refugees. However, the gains of better labor market integration come with a cost: the costs for housing tend to increase by some 4 percent relative to the counterfactual scenario of a distribution according to the “Königsteiner Schlüssel.” However, this can be regarded as a setup-cost or investment for a better integration in the future, which will not only have high social, but also substantial fiscal returns in the medium- and long-term.

CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION POLICIES

Given that 80 percent of the adult population from the Ukraine are females and many of those have to bear care tasks, the integration of children into the German school and care system is key for integration (see Brücker et al. 2022). Evidence from past (refugee) migration episodes clearly supports the view that early and sustained integration of women is particularly influenced by the integration of children and young people into the education and care system (Gambaro et al. 2021; Goßner and Kosyakova 2021; Kosyakova et al. 2021b). For example, lower language course participation and labor market participation among refugee women is particularly pronounced among women with (young) children in the household (Kosyakova et al. 2021b). Therefore, for refugee women to participate in courses, care alternatives for children, especially at younger ages, need to be created above all, both jointly with the provision of language programs or separately. Accordingly, recent evidence shows that mothers are significantly better integrated and have a stronger labor market orientation if their child attends a daycare center (Gambaro et al. 2019; Jessen et al. 2020).

Supporting women to access education and work should therefore also be a key priority in promoting integration among refugees from Ukraine. Possible instruments here could be the provision of child care and, where appropriate, financial support measures. Tailored integration support could include child care facilities that both enable women to enter the labor market and allow young children with a refugee background to socialize with children from other backgrounds. In order to simplify access to a language course or continuing education offerings for refugee women with children and offer them direct and uncomplicated child care, courses with integrated child care could be offered (Pallmann et al. 2019; Sharifian

et al. 2021). The main advantage here would be to be able to use care at the exact time needed and without the need for further travel. In addition, it is recommended that language courses also be offered online in order to flexibly organize learning times and better combine child care tasks with language acquisition (OECD 2017). Online courses could also be an alternative in view of the fact that waiting times are often longer in rural areas due to the minimum number of participants (Scheible and Schneider 2020). In the long term, however, regular child care supplies are essential both for the participation in integration programs as well as for labor market integration.

The increased demand for child care and education facilities is meeting the increasing shortages of those supplies in Germany, particularly shortages of teachers and educators. It is therefore also essential to use the potential labor supply in this area of Ukrainian migrants and other refugees and migrants. Although it is likely that the potential labor supply of teachers and educators is relatively high, the utilization of this potential is hindered in Germany since teachers and educators are regulated occupations there. As a consequence, these occupations can only be performed if degrees are completely accepted by German institutions. Therefore, there is a need to find pragmatic transitional solutions, e.g., programs for teachers and educators who have acquired their degrees abroad who can start performing assisting tasks in the German education and care system and stepwise acquire the full approval of their degrees through further training and education measures.

OTHER INTEGRATION AND LABOR MARKET POLICIES

Germany has a long record with integration and labor market programs which specifically target the refugee population. Many of these programs have been evaluated and ample evidence on the effects of those programs exists. It is beyond the scope of this paper to review this research, but a few insights are worth mentioning:

- In the past, less than 10 percent of the Ukrainian population possessed (good) German language proficiency upon arrival. It is very likely that the share among the refugee population is even lower. Improving language skills is therefore key for integration into the German labor market and society. Past evidence demonstrates that the basic language program provided by the German government, the integration courses, delivers high returns in terms of language skills and social integration (Brücker et al. 2019; Kosyakova et al. 2021a). Programs which provide job-specific language support are associated with improved labor market integration of refugees (Battisti

et al. 2019; Brücker et al. 2020c; Kosyakova et al. 2021a; Kosyakova and Brenzel 2020). Thus, in the case of the Ukrainian refugee population, for those who possess high education levels but not much German language proficiency, returns of language programs can be expected to be especially high.

- Refugees from Ukraine will usually bring vocational degrees or university degrees with them. The transferability of this human capital is therefore a key issue for future labor market integration. In this context, the recognition of vocational degrees can, through their signal value, contribute significantly to reducing information asymmetries in the labor market and thus promote labor market integration (Brücker et al. 2021; Kosyakova et al. 2021a). Available empirical studies show that recognition of vocational qualifications can increase migrants' employment opportunities by 25 percentage points in the long run and their earnings by 20 percent (Brücker et al. 2021). However, only a minority of migrants apply for recognition of their degrees. The reasons for this are complex and point, among other things, to obstacles in the recognition process. It is therefore advisable to inform refugees from Ukraine at an early stage about the possibilities of recognition of vocational qualifications and to support them in obtaining recognition.
- Good job placement can reduce search and information costs in the labor market, increase the fit between applicants' qualifications and skills and companies' requirements, and thus contribute to higher earnings and greater employment stability. Many migrants find their jobs through personal contacts and networks, and jobs found through these networks can improve initial wages and employment stability (Dustmann et al. 2016). Nevertheless, a positive statistical correlation between the use of public employment services and successful job search of refugees also exists, although causal evidence is still lacking here (Brücker et al. 2020a; Kosyakova et al. 2021a). Against this background, it makes sense to immediately counsel newly arriving refugees from Ukraine about their labor market prospects and include them in employment services. This is made easier through the integration of the Ukrainian refugees into the Social Code II benefit system, which provides immediate and mandatory access to the job placement and labor market program infrastructure of the Job Centers. In this context, it will be possible to draw on the experience gained through refugee migration since 2015, for example by specialized placement experts, as well as the previous experience of the job centers and employment agencies (Bonin et al. 2021).

CONCLUSION

Refugee migration in the context of the Ukrainian war has created several novel challenges. The overall scale of refugee migration in Europe is unprecedented since the end of World War II, a high level of uncertainty on the outcomes of the war and return migration options creates disincentives to invest in integration, and an exceptional high share of females with care tasks might also impair integration chances. However, we can expect extraordinarily high education levels of the refugee population from Ukraine, which improves integration chances at least in the medium and long term. Any refugee migration and integration policies have to deal with these challenges.

By activating the Mass Influx Directive, the EU has – relative to the counterfactual scenario of the applying the regular rules of the Dublin-III-Directive and the other rules of the CEAS – dramatically improved the humanitarian, social, and economic situation for the refugees and the EU Member States: easy access to the EU is granted and migration risks have been substantially reduced, secondary migration mitigates pressures on border countries and increases allocative efficiency, and lengthy asylum procedures with uncertain outcomes have been prevented. Altogether, this will foster integration chances, the economic returns in case of successful labor market integration, and prevent a potential collapse of the European asylum system. The efficiency and fairness of these policies could be further increased if those Member States who bear a disproportional burden of providing shelter for Ukrainian refugees are compensated by a European solidarity mechanism. There will be many things to learn from this institutional setting for a reform of asylum policies at the European and the national level in the future.

National integration policies in Germany can build on the experiences of the 2015/2016 refugee immigration surge and their integration into the labor market and other areas of society. Most of these integration policies are uncontroversial and straightforward: language programs provide high economic and social returns, the approval of professional degrees obtained abroad might deliver particularly high returns given the relatively high education levels of the Ukrainian refugee population, and job placement programs can increase the efficiency of job-matches and thus employment rates and wages in the labor market. Moreover, given the high share of females with care tasks among the Ukrainian refugee population, integrating minor-aged children into schools and providing child care is key for the participation of most females in the labor market, integration programs, and other spheres of society.

Less uncontroversial might be the case of regional dispersal policies, which have turned out to be inefficient in the past. All regional dispersal policies face a trade-off between regions with better chances for

integration into the labor market and other areas of society, and lower housing costs or better availability of housing capabilities. Dispersal policies, which take both the labor market prospects and the integration infrastructure on the one hand, and the housing market on the other hand on board, can considerably improve integration chances and reduce integration costs in the long term relative to the status quo.

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