

СЕКЦІЯ 1. ЕКОНОМІКА
SECTION 1. ECONOMICS

УДК 314.74:341.43

JEL Classification: F22, K37

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.64076/eecsr250915.03>

Haman, H.,
PhD (Economics),
Associate Professor of the Department of
Economic Theory, Accounting and Taxation,
Kyiv National University of Construction
and Architecture, Kyiv

COUNTERACTING ILLEGAL MIGRATION

The movement of people, known as migration, has been a fundamental aspect of human existence since ancient times. Over the years, individuals have relocated to improve their quality of life, escape from conflicts, or explore new prospects. Contrary to popular belief, the majority of migration is well-regulated, secure, and primarily linked to work opportunities within specific regions. While dramatic migration stories often make headlines, they represent only a fraction of the larger picture. Unfortunately, misinformation and political agendas have skewed the public perception of migration, leading to distorted narratives that fail to accurately represent its basic facts and the intricate realities that vary in different contexts [1].

Resistance to illegal migration becomes particularly relevant in times of war due to the escalation of conflict, decreased levels of security, and stability in the country. People in conflict zones or temporarily occupied territories may try to flee abroad in search of safety. Illegal migration can also pose issues for the countries that people are attempting to enter, including security concerns and social tensions.

Illegal migration of people, resources, and capital is the process of crossing borders of countries without the necessary permits or agreements with the immigration service. Illegal migration can have negative social, economic, and political consequences for both the migrant themselves and the host country. It can also lead to tension in international relations and violate the laws of the country where illegal migration occurs.

Roughly one-third of all international migration flows in the world are currently happening without proper control. This is due to increasing tensions between attracting more people to migration processes, natural population mobility growth, globalization, and the strictness of immigration rules in countries that are most attractive to migrants, as well as the onset of military actions in our country, the Middle East, and others. Since February 24, 2022, the migration of Ukrainian citizens abroad has acquired a new status - forced and secure. However, let's not forget that in addition to this, the number of illegal migration continues to grow and increase, including illegal border crossings by conscript-age men, resource exportation, business, material assets, intellectual property items, and others.

Mass migration of Ukrainian refugees has led to a positive impact on the economies of EU countries. Ukrainian spending abroad in 2022 nearly tripled compared to the previous year, contributing to the growth of goods and services production in the host countries. It is forecasted that the increase in Ukrainian refugees will help increase the volume of goods and services production in EU countries by 1-2% by 2026. 4.34 million under temporary protection in July 2025 in the EU [2]. In most cases, the human potential of Ukrainians is highly skilled and can create additional value. This has formed the basis for European countries to choose a strategy of integrating Ukrainian refugees in the migration context. One key aspect of this integration is supporting Ukrainian refugees in finding employment and acquiring additional skills, including through various professional adaptation programs and language courses.

On the other hand, Ukraine faces negative consequences of migration, including loss of human potential and workforce, which can threaten the country's economic and societal development. With a large number of emigrating individuals, especially skilled professionals, we are losing an important resource for our progress. This situation also impacts demographic changes, particularly an increase in the percentage of the elderly population, which has a negative impact on society in Ukraine as a whole.

The fight against illegal migration at the present stage is taking place on all levels, from the central (state) level to the global level through international organizations. Important global organizations actively combating this phenomenon include: the UN, International Criminal Court, Council of Europe, EU. However, in today's realities of war, Ukraine sees the inefficiency and inadequacy of the functions of most international organizations. Therefore, we are confident that over time, they will all be transformed to meet the modern requirements of the world community and clearly respond to the challenges of today, including those related to combating illegal migration.

Interestingly, the concept of "illegal migrant" remains legally undefined, although the state constantly emphasizes the importance and necessity of combating this phenomenon.

Illegal migrants avoid paying taxes and contributions to social funds and usually do not use social services due to lack of necessary rights and fear of being detected and deported from the country. Local residents sometimes see migrants as competitors in the labor market, accusing them of being willing to work for minimum wage, which not only leads to job losses but also to a decrease in overall wage levels. However, scientific research does not confirm this, as migrants do not replace local workers but work in a separate segment of the labor market, performing difficult, dangerous, and less prestigious work.

The most vulnerable group in the labor market is young people. This segment is characterized by a high level of unemployment, low wages, and job instability. Various factors have significantly impacted the role of youth in modern society, including war, frequent anxieties, economic situation, employment policies, mismatch of supply and demand in the labor market, fierce competition for a limited number of well-paid positions, lack of effective mechanisms for state regulation of specialist demand and student flow into higher education institutions, and lack of work experience. It is important to note that young people are quite naive despite their life experience, making them flexible and susceptible to external influence regarding matters of falsely high-paying work.

We observe that our illegal or criminal business is developing rapidly, as well as the world's, due to the illegal crossing of borders by migration flows of domestic capital. People are willing to pay significant amounts for illegal border crossing, and businesses, responding to such demand, create a coalition with state authorities or their representatives and contribute to the spread of this phenomenon.

The EU migration policy should ensure the security of citizens and border management, combat illegal migration, constantly improve and cooperate. Increasing demands for supporting the EU population is another factor that influences migration policy. The constant movement of population, aging of certain EU nations requires strategic decisions to attract migrants to ensure economic growth and social stability.

Due to wars, military conflicts currently taking place in many countries around the world, the global community needs to review the issues of the movement and sheltering of refugees, the way and responsibility of other countries for these actions, the specifics of domestic capital movement. Ukraine also needs to make a number of changes to its legislation to improve the system of determining refugee status and providing shelter on its territory. Problems with the asylum system in Ukraine have led to a situation where Ukraine is unable to fulfill its international obligations and constantly faces criticism from human rights organizations. Furthermore, Ukraine's Constitution requires the adoption of a law establishing the foundations of migration policy regarding issues of illegal migration and possible consequences of such migration, their further regulation. Moreover, the adoption of such a law should be preceded by broad expert and public discussion so that this regulatory act can become a comprehensive strategy underlying the country's migration management policy [3].

Ukraine also needs to ensure security and change the level of security around the country's borders, especially from the north and east, where aggressor countries are located. The creation of an integrated border security system is impossible without equipping the Border Service with modern technologies for surveillance, transportation, and communication. In addition, Ukraine needs to organize a network of temporary detention centers for illegal migrants, as well as places where they can be temporarily held at border crossings and police departments.

Considering the lack of sufficient funding and significant debts, Ukraine has the right to appeal to the EU to share the financial burden for technical equipment of the border, which it shares with the EU, for training of professional personnel, and for strengthening the institutional capacity of Ukrainian services.

References

1. World Migration Report 2024 (2025). International Organization for Migration. <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/what-we-do/foreword/foreword>.
2. 4.34 million under temporary protection in July (2025). Eurostat. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-eurostat-news/w/ddn-20250910-1?etrans=uk>.
3. Ukraine's policy to control illegal migration (2006). International Centre for policy studies (Kyiv, Ukraine), Institute for public affairs (Warsaw, Poland). Kyiv. [https://icps.com.ua/assets/uploads/images/images/eu/migration_policy_eng\(1\).pdf](https://icps.com.ua/assets/uploads/images/images/eu/migration_policy_eng(1).pdf).