CHAPTER 18

Challenges and Opportunities for Lifelong Learning in Universities Resulting from Ukrainian Migration

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Abstract:

The current political conflict in Ukraine has led to a surge in forcibly displaced migrants across Europe. This chapter sets out to look at the meaning of the term 'forced migrant' and the challenges faced in integrating migrants into the labour market. The movement of people has included many skilled professionals, including staff and students from Ukrainian universities. This chapter examines some issues in integrating such groups into the workforce. It also looks at some of the schemes set up to enable displaced researchers to continue with their research and the potential benefits which this offers for participants.

Keywords: Forced Migration; Integration; Researches; Ukraine

Introduction

It is estimated that there are currently over 100 million forcibly displaced migrants across the world, representing 1% of the global population. This number includes refugees and asylum seekers as well as the 53.2 million people displaced inside their borders by conflict (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR 2022).

The recent conflict in Ukraine has led to a surge in population movements across Europe and has become one of the most influential drivers worldwide. Currently, four million people from Ukraine are thought to benefit from a temporary protection mechanism in the European Union (European Council 2023) and 169,300 Ukrainian refugees have arrived in the UK as of 28 March 2023 (UK National Statistics 2023). It could be argued that the Ukrainian war has resulted from the inability of educated people in Europe to negotiate peace and stability based on sustainable development. Certainly, the conflict has also brought new challenges for the provision of adult and lifelong learning for those

who have fled the war and has shown a readiness in the receiving countries to respond to new circumstances.

Many highly skilled Ukrainian professionals, including staff and students from Ukrainian universities, have been forced to leave and continue with their research and study in new learning environments. Universities across Europe have accepted a great many academics and students from Ukrainian universities who have become forced migrants. Consequently, these individuals had to learn to operate in new ways within very different administrative and management systems as well as research and teaching environments. The path for migrants to make an effective contribution to the education system in the host country is therefore time-consuming, though it can in time make a significant contribution to the goals of the university.

In this chapter, we examine who these academic and student migrants are and what we understand of them. We look at the flow of migrants forced out of Ukraine to other European countries and the level of skills and experience they possess. We discuss various issues affecting the integration of Ukrainian migrants in universities showing how the European academic community is enabling Ukrainian migrants to engage with European universities, providing hope for future post-war revival in Ukrainian universities.

This chapter is offered in memory of Lalage Bown, who was an outstanding adult educator who devoted her life to the promotion of university lifelong learning and the development of research and practice in her field. Her life and work brought her to many countries where she inspired many.

Lalage Bown was first and foremost an adult educator committed to the idea of a need to train those to work in the field of lifelong learning. She was not afraid of conflict or war and much of her life was spent engaging with others in the development of opportunities and platforms for the promotion of lifelong learning.

As a young woman, she was one of the first adult educators to arrive in Germany after the Second World War to assist with redevelopment through the promotion of adult learning. She later spent many years assisting with the development of lifelong learning in African universities, encouraging many students to study in Europe and bring back much-needed knowledge and skills useful for the development of adult education. She was above all a good communicator with the ability to motivate people to make an effective contribution to their field of practice. She was committed to useful research that could widen participation both in the university and in the broad field of lifelong learning. Above all, she was committed to helping those in greatest need.

One of us (Rob Mark) had the privilege to know Lalage as a research supervisor, teacher, and mentor, and later as a colleague and friend over a 40-year period, including in Northern Ireland, where she visited many times, assisting and contributing to the development of highly successful programmes in the field of adult and community education delivered during turbulent periods. She would indeed have been a keen supporter of the European research programmes for Ukrainian researchers discussed in this chapter, which offers the possibility to bring back new knowledge and skills for the future reconstruction of Ukraine.

Perhaps worth noting is Lalage's own Christian commitment and values which quietly yet confidently underpinned her work. It is also important to recognise that she sought to promote learning which would promote mutual understanding and peace-building in an ever-changing world.

Lalage Bown's life and work could be said to combine a commitment to internationalism with a pursuit of social justice. Social Justice, adult education and lifelong learning are closely interconnected concepts which focus on issues of equity, access and empowerment within education aiming to ensure that individuals regardless of their background or circumstances have equal opportunities to learn, grow and participate fully in society.

Hamilton (2022, 75) notes that Lalage Bown dedicated her life's work to improving education for the disadvantaged, and in particular women, seeking to bring university opportunities to a wider section of society. He also argues that Lalage Bown was immersed in a tradition which regarded adult education as a catalyst for significant social change. Her ideas were informed by a post-Second World War world in which many believed that the kind of injustices suffered under colonial rule had to end. But, beyond this, in her radical way, she also saw the need to develop new inclusive, post-colonial approaches to education, including the reform of university curricula. This chapter reports on an international response to providing opportunities for the engagement of adults, particularly women, fleeing from war-torn Ukraine to engage in ongoing education and learning. It focuses on examining a movement of researchers coming to European universities to continue with their research and develop new skills and knowledge to bring back to Ukraine and in so doing empower them to create social change.

1. What Do We Mean by the Term Migrant and When Should the Term Forced Migrant Apply?

While there is no formal legal definition of an international migrant, most experts agree that this is someone who changes his or her country of usual residence, irrespective of the reason for migration or legal status. Generally, a distinction is made between short-term or temporary migration, covering movements with a duration between three and 12 months, and long-term or permanent migration, referring to a change of country of residence for a duration of one year or more.

'Forced migration' refers to individuals or groups of people who are compelled to leave their homes or countries due to various factors, such as conflict, persecution, natural disasters, or human rights violations. Forced migration can occur within a country (internally displaced persons) or across international borders (refugees). The term 'forced migrant' is often used to encompass both refugees and internally displaced persons.

Refugees are individuals who are forced to flee their countries due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on factors like their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group. They seek safety

and protection in another country, often applying for refugee status and receiving international legal protection.

Forced migrants face numerous difficulties and vulnerabilities, including the loss of their homes, separation from family members, trauma, limited access to essential services, and the need to rebuild their lives in unfamiliar environments. International organizations, governments, and humanitarian agencies play vital roles in providing assistance, protection, and support to forced migrants through initiatives such as humanitarian aid, refugee resettlement programmes, and efforts to address the root causes of forced displacement.

In studying forced or involuntary migration – sometimes referred to as forced or involuntary displacement – a distinction is often made between conflict-induced and disaster-induced displacement. Displacement induced by conflict is typically referred to as that caused by humans, whereas natural causes typically underlay displacement caused by disasters. The definitions of these concepts are useful, but the lines between them may be blurred in practice because conflicts may arise due to disputes over natural resources and human activity may trigger natural disasters such as landslides.

According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), forced migration is a migratory movement which, although the drivers can be diverse, involves force, compulsion, or coercion. The definition includes a note which clarifies that:

> While not an international legal concept, this term has been used to describe the movements of refugees, displaced persons (including those displaced by disasters or development projects), and, in some instances, victims of trafficking. At the international level, the use of this term is debated because of the widespread recognition that a continuum of agency exists rather than a voluntary/forced dichotomy and that it might undermine the existing legal international protection regime (2019, 77).

The European Commission suggests that a forced migrant is

> a person subject to a migratory movement in which an element of coercion exists, including threats to life and livelihood, whether arising from natural or man-made causes (e.g., movements of refugees and internally displaced persons as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects) (European Migration Network).

2. The Movement of Ukrainian Citizens across Europe

Following the world financial crisis of 2008, the Eurozone financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine could be said to be another shock for the European Union and the Western Alliance. The huge movement of Ukrainian migrants across Europe has given rise to new challenges as policy-makers have had to create new strategies and programmes for migrants. In ad-

dition, governments across Europe have had to provide leadership and develop national policies which respond to the challenges of migration.

Ukraine is one of the larger countries in Europe with around 40 million people. Following the outbreak of hostilities, Ukrainian migrants moved firstly to the border countries of Poland, Romania, Hungary, and Slovakia and then onto Germany which has now the largest intake of Ukrainian migrants, standing at more than 1 million people (Fig. 1).
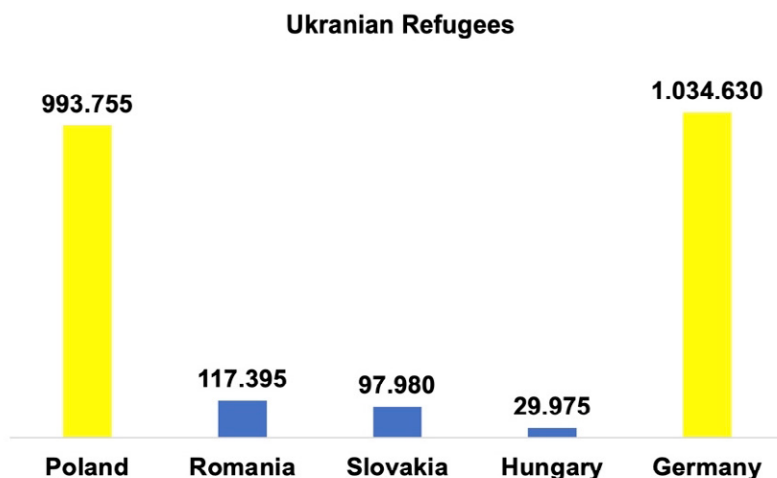
Ukranian Refugees

Figure 1 – Refugees from Ukraine who benefit from temporary protection in the countries bordering Ukraine and in Germany (from European Council 2023).

Ukrainians have also been able to leverage existing social networks in host countries as there has been a large existing Ukrainian diaspora in receiving countries. At the end of 2021, according to Eurostat, 1.57 million Ukrainian citizens held a valid residence permit in the EU, representing the third biggest group of non-EU citizens behind citizens of Morocco and Turkey. The most popular host countries were Poland, Italy, the Czech Republic and Spain (Stick and Hou 2022).

While Germany and Ukraine do not share a common border, there have been historical ties between the two countries since the ninth Century. These ties were affected by geopolitics, particularly because of the centuries-old domination of Ukraine by Poland and Russia (Zhukovsky 1995). The Second World War led to cooperation between Ukraine and Germany, at the same time defending Ukrainian national identity and protecting its territories.

The movement of Ukrainian migrants into the UK included 169,300 arrivals with 24,593 extensions granted under the Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Extension Scheme to the end of March 2023. Adult females aged 18 to 64 accounted for almost half (48%) of the people who have arrived from Ukraine since the schemes began, children (aged 17 and under) accounted for 29%, and

adult males aged 18 to 64 accounted for 18%. Only 6% of total number of arrivals were 65 years or older (UK National Statistics 2023). Many women had dependents (mostly children and parents) who needed care and support, and this affected the migrants' ability to engage in education and training.

3. Integrating Migrants into the Labour Market

From one author's (Ievgeniia Dragomirova) perspective, it was easier to join the academic family in Glasgow given her experience taking part in international projects such as those of the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme. As Director of the Third Age University for more than six years at Donetsk University of Economics, she found herself moving to the UK as a Ukrainian forced migrant researcher, but didn't face any difficulties in socialisation or receiving support from colleagues at the University of Glasgow.

However, from her experience working with Ukrainian migrants, the psychological burden resulting from a forced change of residence, and the need to go through a procedure of qualification recognition (which has time and cost implications), can become a barrier to integration as can caring for children and older family members. Despite these problems, many of the migrants feel the need to find a secure long-term job a high priority.

Historically, however, it has often taken up to 10 years to reach an employment rate of 50% for refugees and up to 20 years to have a similar employment rate as the native-born. Bringing refugee women into employment has been particularly challenging in many OECD countries, as female refugees on average have lower activity (57% compared to 77%) and employment rates (45% compared to 62%) than refugee male (European Commission and OECD 2016).

There are also other challenges for refugee women's integration, including lower host country language levels, higher prevalence of health problems, greater likelihood of social isolation and limited social networks (Liebig and Tronstad 2018). Addressing these challenges effectively is essential for host countries as poor integration outcomes among migrant women not only have long-lasting consequences on their own outcomes but also on their children's outcomes in host societies (OECD 2020b).

Furthermore, Scheve and Slaughter (2001) and Mayda (2006) have highlighted that local people with a lower level of skills feel threatened by the competition in the labour market that arises from immigration.

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that 74% of Ukrainian refugees in the European Union hold a bachelor's or master's degree and 76% were previously employed in Ukraine. Relative to other refugees, the OECD has concluded that the Ukrainian refugees' educational profile along with co-existing social networks can enable relatively easy access to employment which in turn can facilitate greater integration. However, with women and children comprising up to 90% of Ukrainian refugees, there are specific challenges, such as schooling for children, childcare, and emotional and psychological support,

especially for children. However, given the need to provide services for women with families, formal education for older migrants (40+) hasn't been a priority. These older migrants often can't speak the language of the host country, attend language classes, and sometimes take on part-time employment outside class hours where they also receive on-the-job training for their work contribution.

In a similar way, as mentioned in the UK's *Draft Refugee Integration Strategy (2022-2027)*[1], migrants have different experiences of social inclusion and integration which can be «intergenerational and takes place at multiple levels including the individual, family and the community and incorporates all aspects of life» (Executive Office 2022, 12).

Older migrants (60+) often look to family members, mostly younger people aged 14-16, to assist them with language and skills for living in the host country. While there are some work programmes specific to the needs of older adults, they do not assist the older generation to find work. The expectation to engage in work to a later age (in the case of Ukraine many older adults have already retired by 60), can also lead to problems of psychological adjustment. There is therefore a need to find ways to deal with the economic integration and socialisation of older migrants in the host country.

To conclude, given the university's expertise in teaching and learning and in developing their third mission, they might in the future play a greater role in providing support for the involvement of the older generation who wish to acquire the knowledge necessary for socialization and employment. Professionals from both the host country and Ukraine could work together to support greater integration of older migrants. A synthesis of intergenerational interaction, formal and non-formal education, and the involvement of employers could bring much-needed knowledge and skills and assist in making older migrants feel valued and more integrated with the local community and help them to reach their full potential.

4. The EU Erasmus+ Programme and Horizon 2020 Programmes: Forerunners of International Academic Solidarity with Ukraine

The Bologna process, which modernised higher education, and participation in various European Commission (EC) programmes over a period, has enabled Ukrainian academics and researchers to bring skills and knowledge already gained to the European Union and the wider European area. A particular EC programme, Erasmus+[2] (Erasmus+ 2023), is the framework for cooperation in the field of education, youth and sports. The idea underlying the programme is to jointly develop quality reforms of education systems, increase the productivity of higher and vocational education institutions, and provide quality higher education and training to meet the needs of the European labour market. Erasmus+ has brought many opportunities for the higher education system of Ukraine (Fig. 2). More

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[1] See <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/draft-refugee-integration-strategy> (2023-07-01).
[2] See <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu> (2023-07-01).

than 200 higher education institutions and more than 3000 public organizations in Ukraine have taken part in programmes and established cooperation with international partners since 2014[3] (Mission of Ukraine to the European Union 2021).
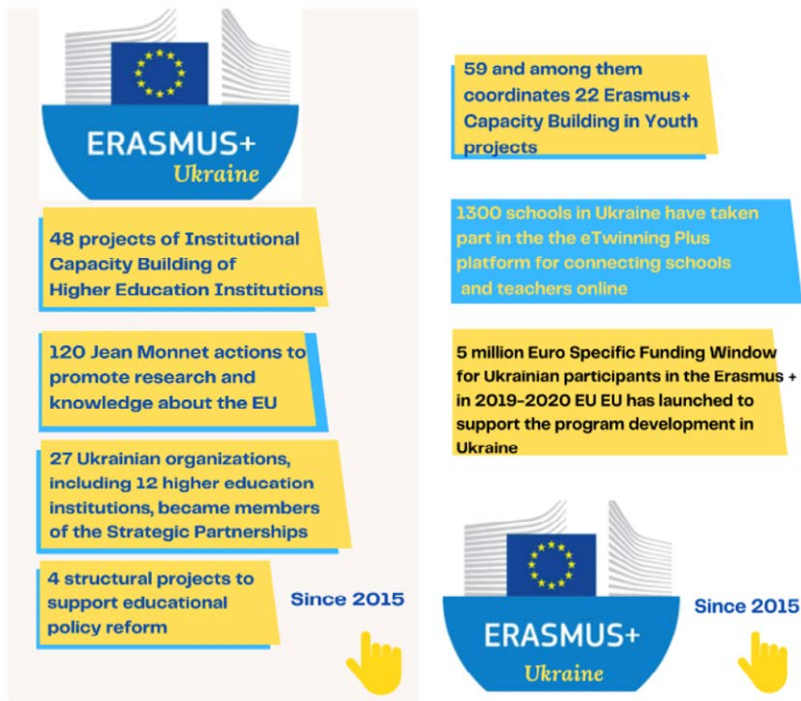

Figure 2 – Erasmus+ activities supported in Ukraine since 2015 (processing from Erasmus+ 2023).

Ukraine's has participated not only in the Erasmus+ programme, but also the Horizon 2020 programme of research of the EC since 2016. The EC reports that

Since 2016, Ukraine was fully associated to the EU's Horizon 2020 and EURATOM Research and Training (2014-2020) programmes. Under Horizon 2020, Ukraine participated in 230 projects, involving 323 participants, for a total funding request of €45.5m. Ukraine has been particularly strong in researchers' mobility (MSCA), energy, climate and transport[4] (European Commission 2023a).

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[3] See <https://ukraine-eu.mfa.gov.ua/en/2633-relations/galuzeve-spivrobitnictvo/klyuchovi-tendenciyi-politiki-yes-u-sferi-osviti-ta-kulturi-programa-yes-erazmus> (2023-07-01).

[4] See <https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/europe-world/international-cooperation/association-horizon-europe/ukraine_en> (2023-07-01).

Since 2022 there has been an agreement for Ukraine to accede to the successor Horizon Europe programme which runs until 2027. These programmes collectively have enabled Ukrainian researchers and students to move to other countries for study and research purposes, as well as to collaborate in research and innovation projects from home.

It is of note that from the first large migratory flows across the Mediterranean Sea and the Balkans in 2015 and early 2016, academic expertise and insights have become much sought-after. Rigo reports that migration «has become a tool of knowledge and expertise production» (2018, 507). New funding opportunities have emerged for research relevant to policymakers who can use the research findings for designing or implementing policies (Scholten 2018).

The academic environment in host countries has become a supportive community for the most vulnerable groups of forced migrants – women and children, who wanted to develop their careers and continue with their studies. At this point, however, there are no official statistics on the total number of teachers and students who have gone abroad and whether they continue their activities remotely.

Looking at universities as a home for migrants, a considerable number of Ukrainian representatives of the university's academic area obtained the researcher status in European universities. According to the survey undertaken by Maryl et al. (2022), of 619 responses from the target group of the study, those who were employed by a scientific institution in Ukraine as of 24 February 2022 and left Ukraine as a result of the Russian invasion on or after that date, 27.3% moved to Poland and to 22.1% to Germany with a notable numbers found in other countries such as Czech Republic (8.1%), Austria (5 %), Switzerland (5.2%), UK (3.5%)[5], and France (3.2%) and located mostly in larger urban areas (61%).

The skills and knowledge which Ukrainian scholars and researchers are currently developing in host countries are extensive. As they become more familiar with the research culture of European and UK Universities, they will be well-placed to take back the new skills and competencies they have developed. This new knowledge should in turn prove useful in the rebuilding of the higher education system of Ukraine and in the reconstruction of towns and cities across its territories in the future.

5. The Recognition of Ukrainian Qualifications

Due to problems with recognition of qualifications, skills and work experience, many refugees and migrants end up unemployed or underemployed. Many highly skilled refugees and migrants are working in low-skilled, temporary, and badly paid jobs. This a loss not only for the affected persons but also for the host societies and their economies.

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[5] These numbers will have swollen in the UK subsequent to 2022 as a result of the British Academy, Researchers at Risk scheme reported later in this chapter.

Challenges persist regarding the movement of migrant workers across borders, as highlighted by OECD, not all migrants have access to recognition procedures: eligibility may depend on (1) the migrant's legal status, (2) «the type of qualifications», or (3) «the country» in which the qualifications were obtained (OECD 2020a, 2020b).

Many resources can support the recognition of qualifications held by refugees and displaced people by the European Commission, the ENIC-NARIC centres, and through initiatives such as the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees. The Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science also has an open-access state database, the Unified State Electronic Database on Education (USEDE), which is used to verify documents and retrieve information on studies for applicants with incomplete documentation. All these procedures are aimed at reducing the difficulties of forced migrants and helping them adapt to new conditions while reducing the level of costs for the maintenance of migrants through their employment.

The assistance in barrier-free employment and continuation of work in places of migration is provided by professional institutions and, in the case of Ukrainian migrants, by universities, academies and NGO's and various foundations.

6. Support Schemes for Ukrainian Researchers in the EU and UK

In 2022 there were 42 damaged or completely destroyed higher education institutions in Ukraine, including 33 universities that operate as relocated educational institutions.

In European universities, the development of fellowship schemes is making an important contribution to the upskilling of Ukrainian academics, supporting colleagues in Ukraine and in enabling them to continue with ongoing research.

In the European Union, a new dedicated fellowship scheme – MSCA4Ukraine (part of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions announced by European Commission) – was established to provide support for displaced researchers from Ukraine. This support will enable displaced researchers to continue their work at academic and non-academic organisations in EU Member States and in Horizon Europe Associated Countries and at the same time maintaining their connections to research and innovation communities in Ukraine. The scheme can also facilitate researchers' reintegration in Ukraine if conditions for safe return are met, to prevent permanent brain drain and to contribute to strengthening the Ukrainian university and research sector and its collaboration and exchange with the international research community.

The MSCA4Ukraine Programme is implemented by a consortium comprised of Scholars at Risk in Europe hosted at Maynooth University, Ireland (the Project Coordinator), the German Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the European University Association, the French national PAUSE programme hosted by the College de France, and with the Global Scholars at Risk Network participating as associate partners.

The MSCA4Ukraine scheme first opened for applications in October 2022. In February 2023, fellowship awards were issued to 124 researchers in 21 host countries (European Commission 2023b)[6].

Ukrainian researchers gave preference to taking up work through research grants (59.4%) and internships (51.3%), with over one-third opting for permanent (38.3%) or temporary positions (37.7%). This tells us something not only about personal survival strategies but also about the opportunity provided for professional growth and the education of researcher migrants. It is further evidence of the university's unique role in providing opportunities for Ukrainian researcher migrants' professional development.

According to a survey *Beyond Resilience: Professional Challenges, Preferences, and Plans of Ukrainian Researchers Abroad* (Maryl et al. 2022), the majority of researchers are between 40-49 years (62%), and are senior researchers who received a doctoral degree seven or more years ago, and 34.7% are working remotely at Ukrainian institutions. More than half are attached to foreign institutions, through a scholarship scheme (28.9%), through temporary employment (22.6%), or through a permanent position (3.0%). 5.0% have found non-academic jobs abroad and 7.2% are attached to a social assistance programme.

Research findings (Maryl et al. 2022) also show almost 70% (417) of the researchers had accompanying family members. The majority reported having dependent children (55%) and 18% were accompanied by a mother and 14% by a spouse. Other combinations included father (5.7%), siblings (3.2%) and partner (0.5%).

In the UK, the British Academy, with support from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Council for At-Risk Academics (CARA), the Nuffield Foundation, the Academy of Medical Sciences, the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Royal Society, have together recently established a 'Researchers at Risk' Fellowships Programme.

This programme seeks to assist Ukrainian researchers and academics to continue their work in host UK institutions which currently include the British Museum, the Courtauld Institute of Art, the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, the University of Glasgow, the University of Strathclyde, Queens University Belfast, and Cardiff University Central School of Speech and Drama[7] (Bonner 2023).

Management support for academics rests with non-government organisations such as the Council for At-Risk Academics (CARA) which provides urgently needed help to those in immediate danger, those forced into exile, and the many

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[6] See "European Commission Announces Support for 124 Researchers who Fled the War through MSCA4Ukraine" <https://marie-sklodowska-curie-actions.ec.europa.eu/news/european-commission-announces-support-for-124-researchers-who-fled-the-war-through-msca4ukraine> (2023-07-01).

[7] See "Academy Celebrates Scheme for Refuge of Ukrainian Academics" <https://www.researchprofessionalnews.com/rr-news-uk-charities-and-societies-2023-4-academy-celebrates-scheme-for-refuge-of-ukrainian-academics> (2023-07-01).

who choose to work in their home countries despite serious risks. CARA also supports higher education institutions whose work is at risk or compromised[8].

Forty Fellows (32 of whom are Ukrainian and 8 Russian) impacted by the war in Ukraine have started their placements in the UK.

Ukrainian researchers are gaining an understanding of research and research culture in the host country. As a part of the international academic family Ukrainian scholars are establishing a new wave of international cooperation between European and Ukrainian universities. They have access to new research infrastructure, modern equipment, and it facilities which Ukrainian universities could develop with support from international donors.

The international practice of mentoring is already being transferred from displaced researchers to Ukrainian universities and is supporting the development of internationalisation. It is directly supporting the higher education system in Ukraine despite the high level of brain drain. The experience gained from researcher fellowships can overcome obstacles such as a lack of sufficient infrastructure for good research and professional deficiencies such as a poor command of English and a low level of esteem.

Support from the academic professional community in the field of science and education has made it possible to support many scientists from Ukraine with their professional development and lifelong learning strategies. Ukrainian scientists are continuing to support Ukrainian universities, implementing new European experiences, and maintaining the optimism of a new round of revival of Ukrainian Science with solidarity from the world scientific community.

Conclusion

European countries have stood in solidarity with Ukraine and its people. In response to an invasion of its territory, the EU has shown unity and strength and has provided Ukraine with coordinated humanitarian, political, financial, and material support. By encouraging and supporting work with migrants, universities will strengthen and expand their third mission, acquiring new Ukrainian partner universities, which can lead to positive transformation. The engagement of scholars and researchers in European Universities will also have a role to play in the dissemination of good practices in Ukrainian universities. Lifelong learning will also have an important role to play in supporting Ukraine to build the new resilient cities and communities of the future.

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[8]   During the last 10 years since 2013, CARA has seen significant growth in staffing (6 vs 22), Network members (74 vs 135), Income (£682,896 vs ca £8m in 2022), Fellowship Programme Fellows (24 vs 145) & Cara's voluntary annual subscriptions scheme for universities (£109,000 vs £561,450 in 2021/22 included several one-off top-ups because of the Ukraine crisis).

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