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MARIA PIECHOWSKA

Crisis-driven Mobility between Ukraine and Poland. What Does the Available Data (Not) Tell Us

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Ignacy Józwiak, Centre of Migration Research – University of Warsaw (Poland),
i.jozwiak@uw.edu.pl

Maria Piechowska, Centre of Migration Research – University of Warsaw (Poland),
m.piechowska@uw.edu.pl

Abstract

The paper sheds light upon the arrivals of Ukrainians into Poland in the face of political, military and economic developments in Ukraine following the 2013/2014 Euromaidan events. The authors make use of the available primary and secondary sources to analyse Ukrainian labour and educational migration to Poland, shuttle trade and shopping tourism as well as asylum seeking. The recent development of these different forms of mobility from Ukraine to Poland against the backdrop of political crisis, armed conflict and economic recession in Ukraine can be reflected in the light of Ukraine's peripheral position and historically and politically shaped Polish-Ukrainian relations. The official statistics indicate a general increase in different forms of mobility between the two countries and, given the conflict-driven economic stagnation, the authors claim that further influx should be expected and Ukrainian migration is likely to become a consistent part of the Polish social landscape.

Keywords: Ukraine; Poland; mobility; crisis; labour

Abstrakt

Artykuł rzuca światło na kwestię przyjazdów Ukraińców do Polski wobec politycznych, wojskowych i gospodarczych wydarzeń na Ukrainie będących następstwem wydarzeń Euromajdanu z przełomu lat 2013/2014. Autorzy wykorzystują dostępne (pierwotne i wtórne) źródła analizując ukraińską migrację zarobkową i edukacyjną, a także handel wahałowy, turystykę zakupową i uchodźstwo. Obserwowalny rozwój różnych form mobilności z Ukrainy do Polski wobec politycznego kryzysu, konfliktu zbrojnego i gospodarczej recesji jest również poddany refleksji w świetle peryferyjnego położenia tego kraju oraz historycznie i politycznie ukształtowanych stosunków polsko-ukraińskich. Oficjalne statystyki wykazują ogólny przyrost różnych form mobilności pomiędzy dwoma krajami. Biorąc pod uwagę wynikającą z konfliktu gospodarczą stagnację, autorzy dochodzą do wniosku, że przyjazdy nie ustaną, a ukraińska migracja stanie się częścią polskiego krajobrazu społecznego.

Słowa kluczowe: Ukraina, Polska, mobilność, kryzys, praca

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1. Introduction¹

This paper sheds light upon mobility between Poland and Ukraine in the face of the ongoing political and economic crisis in the latter. This mobility can take different forms: labour migration to Poland (in its predominantly circular and seasonal shape), shuttle trade and shopping tourism, educational migration, and the emerging issue of asylum seeking. The legal framework and migration strategies might change, but the pressure to circulate or attempts to settle are quite unlikely to cease in the near future. We argue that they can all be considered a part of the wider processes of Polish-Ukrainian relations, in not only the political and economic dimensions, but the symbolic one too. It is in this context that we shall examine the observable “pro-Ukrainianness” of the Polish political elites (regardless of the political party affiliation) as well as the general Polish advocacy for Ukraine in the international forum. By backing its largest Eastern neighbour, on the one hand Poland strengthens its position in Central and Eastern Europe. On the other hand, opening the Polish labour market to seasonal workers from – not exclusively but mainly – Ukraine answers not only the demands for low-paid and unskilled labour (also in the face of Polish emigration to other EU countries). Accepting seasonal migrants, students and shopping tourists can also present Poland as offering a helping hand to the impoverished and war-torn country. As a consequence, allowing labour and educational migration might be regarded as a supplement to development aid.² This kind of approach has been suggested by officials in the two recent Polish governments. For instance, it can be seen in the February 2015 official letter of the Ministry of the Interior (in Ewa Kopacz’s government) to the Helsinki Foundation of Human Rights. Answering the question about Poland’s readiness to accept Ukrainian refugees, the letter pointed to Poland’s “openness to migration (including economic) from that country” (HFfHR 2014). In January 2016, in her address to the European Parliament, Prime Minister Beata Szydło stated that Poland had accepted 1 million Ukrainian refugees, in fact referring to the estimated number of labour migrants. As the actual number at that time was two individuals, this caused a widespread debate in the media as well as among experts in Poland and abroad (see for example: Czarnecki 2016; Sieradzka 2016; Szary, Lawson 2016).

Using the available primary and secondary sources (including official statistics as well as media coverage), we focus on the observable increase in the interest among Ukrainians in using border and cross-border relations with Poland. Subsequently, we place this phenomenon

¹ The research was supported by the IVF Standard Grant titled “Cross-border cooperation at the time of crisis on neighbor’s soil” (No. 21510578).

² However, as we shall see in the further part of the paper, the Polish government has also been providing Ukraine with actual aid.

in the wider context of Polish-Ukrainian relations, especially the expanding Polish influence in Ukraine. We point to migration and other forms of cross-border mobility related to employment, education and entrepreneurship as part of this larger process. When analysing the development of mobility between Ukraine and Poland against the backdrop of the recent turmoil, Ukraine's peripheral position as well as historically and politically shaped Polish-Ukrainian relations are emphasised. It is in this context that we suggest interpreting the mobility between the two countries in the framework of core-periphery and dependency relations. This kind of overview and conceptual framework can serve as a starting point for possible further research and methodological reflection on the mass arrivals of Ukrainians into Poland. We find this particularly relevant in the context of the current turmoil in Ukraine (armed conflict in the Donbas region and consequent economic recession in the country as a whole) and both countries' position in international politics in the face of competition over Ukraine's influence between Russia and "the West". It is also noteworthy that what we are describing and analysing is a dynamic process which is undergoing changes, perhaps even as we type this sentence.

Ukraine is one of Europe's top migrant-sending countries, and Ukrainians are one of the largest groups of third-country migrants in the European Union (Fedyuk, Kindler 2016: 1). Globally, it is estimated that between 2 and 7 million Ukrainian citizens work abroad, with the numbers differing due to various definitions of migrants and migration and the sources and methodologies applied in estimations (Leontiyeva 2014; Duvell, Lapshyna 2015; Fedyuk, Kindler 2016). As Yana Leontieva states, "There is no doubt that estimates of Ukrainian migrants in Europe might also be somewhat imprecise, due to the lack of a fully standardized definition and to the specifics of migrant statistics in member-states" (2014: 5). This also applies to Poland, where the actual number is difficult to grasp but can be estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands, and approaching one million. Subsequently, remittances have their share in household budgets as well as the Ukrainian economy. According to the World Bank, in 2014, with a total amount of 7.354 billion USD, they contributed 5.6% of the Ukrainian GDP. This number places the country alongside Morocco (6.3%), Myanmar (4.8%), Ghana (5.2%), and Egypt (6.5%). By way of comparison, the figure for Poland was 1.4%.³

³ In Mexico, which serves as a common reference in migration and borderlands studies (for a comparison to Ukraine, see: Duvell 2006; Leontiyeva 2014), the rate is 1.9%; however, the absolute value for this country was more than three times bigger than for Ukraine. Still, figures place Ukraine rather far from the world's leaders in terms of receiving of remittances, such as Tajikistan (36.6%), Nepal (29%), Tonga (27%) or Moldova (26%). Source: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues/brief/migration-remittances-data>. A recent IOM report estimates the same share between 2 and 5%, and describes the remittances' share in GDP as "relatively small" in comparison to other South Eastern and Eastern Europe countries (IOM 2016: 54).

The 2014 political and military developments in Ukraine (i.e. Russia's seizing of Crimea and armed conflict in Donbas) resulted in economic recession in the country, which was already hit by the 2009 crisis. The exchange rate of the Ukrainian hryvnia in relation to the euro and US dollar decreased about threefold, and the 2015 GDP was twice as low as that in 2013. The remains of the heavy industry and mining (both dependent on the Russian market and both actually shrinking since the country's independence) have faced further disintegration (see: Iwański 2015; Kravchuk 2016).⁴ These conditions have increased the pressure to migrate and to use the state border as a resource and as a strategy to overcome social and economic difficulties. Poland serves as one of the main receiving countries for Ukrainian migrants, who are also the largest immigrant group here, and their influx keeps increasing. As we shall see, the level of international protection (refugee status or subsidiary protection) granted to Ukrainian citizens is almost non-existent, while it is relatively easy to obtain some form of legal work permit. It appears, then, that conflict-driven displacement can easily be channelled into labour migration.

As we have suggested, migration and circularity between the two neighbouring countries can be inscribed in the core-peripheral and semi-peripheral dependency relations as well as the so-called "modernising processes" (see: Böröcz 2014b; Malyuk 2014). From this perspective, Ukraine appears as the periphery of the world economic system, providing the countries of the system's core (as well as semi-peripheries) with raw materials, components, semi-products and cheap workforce. The process of Ukraine's peripherisation accelerated in the 1990s and 2000s (see: Malyuk 2014a; 2014b).

As suggested by József Böröcz, migrant remittance dependency appears as an "aspect of the dependence of a society on the economic, political, and social conditions (...) which results from value transfers by its own citizens who sell their labour power abroad. Just like dependency on aid or on foreign direct investment, remittance dependency is a process whereby external structural conditions are internalized so that the migrant emitting society loses much of its control over its domestic economic, political, social, etc., processes." (Böröcz 2014b: 14-15). In this manner, some countries of the former Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc have turned to peripheral and semi-peripheral societies facing instability and pressure for precarious international and cross-border employment (Böröcz 2014a). In the

The same study indicates that most of the remittances support people's families in Ukraine, who in turn spend it mainly on food, clothing and home appliances (IOM 2016: 56).

⁴ For data on exchange rates and the changes in GDP, see also:

<http://www.xe.com/currencycharts/?from=USD&to=UAH&view=10Y> and

<http://www.tradingeconomics.com/ukraine/gdp>.

case of Ukrainian migration to Poland, this applies to both sending and receiving countries, as migrant workers escape the uncertainty of the Ukrainian labour market and face precarious working conditions in Poland (Wegenschimmel 2016).

2. Political background: Poland and the Ukrainian crisis

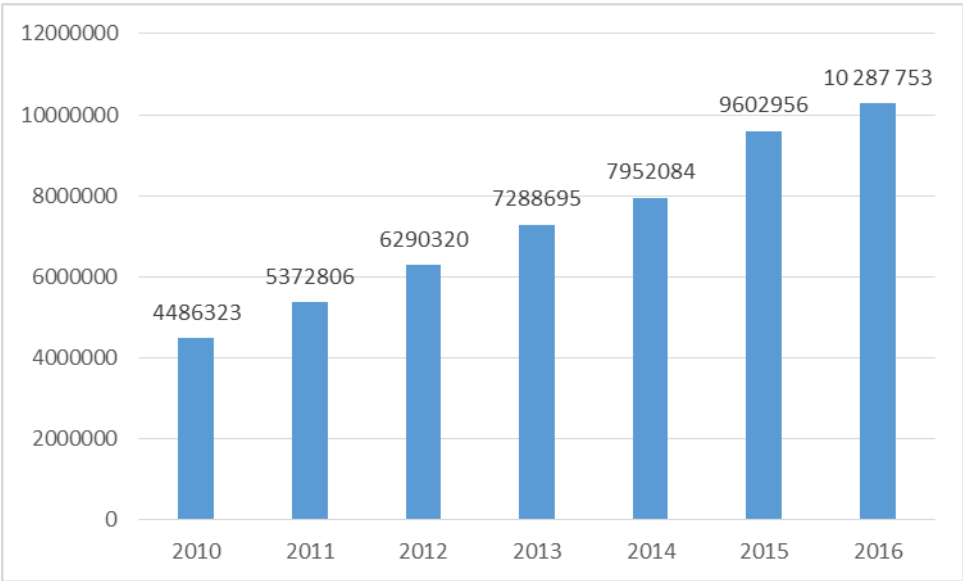
During the events of the so-called Euromaidan in Ukraine (i.e. the opposition protests lasting from November 2013 to February 2014 that led to the overthrow of the president and a change of government), the Polish government as well as all the opposition parties expressed their concern over the situation in Ukraine and potential solutions. Poland was also among the first to recognise Arseniy Yatsenyuk's interim government in February 2014. Support for the Euromaidan was also seen among Polish NGOs, which organised rallies in front of the Russian and Ukrainian embassies in Warsaw as well as debates, concerts and other Ukrainian-oriented events in large Polish cities. Some of them also gathered funds, medications, and other supplies for the protesters in Kyiv (and later for the Ukrainian army involved in Donbas). This coincides with general pro-Ukrainian attitudes and the interest in the country among political elite opinion leaders and NGOs already observed since the so-called Orange Revolution of 2004/2005. Russia's annexation of Crimea and the armed conflict in Donbas fuelled further statements of solidarity and support for Ukraine's territorial integrity. In anticipation of the influx of Ukrainian asylum seekers, the capacities of the reception centres were expanded and plans for putting up provisional ones in case of emergency were drafted in the framework of the two programmes adopted by the government: *An outline of the case of emergent influx of a high number of foreigners from Ukraine into Poland (Konceptcja w przypadku nagłego napływu dużej ilości liczby cudzoziemców na terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z Ukrainy)* and *The Ministry of Interior's action plan for organising reception, transport of foreigners/refugees and their stay in Poland (Plan działania resortu spraw wewnętrznych w zakresie organizacji, przyjmowania, transportu i pobytu na terytorium RP cudzoziemców/uchodźców z Ukrainy)* (MSWiA 2014). Furthermore, in 2014 and the first half of 2015, 13 million PLN (3.25 million EUR) was donated to humanitarian aid (Polska Pomoc 2014). The government also expressed its responsibility for the Polish co-ethnics in the war-torn territories. Under the joint effort of the prime minister and the eight ministries, 178 Ukrainian citizens of Polish descent and their families (regardless of ethnicity) were evacuated from the Donetsk and Lugansk regions and relocated to Poland via Kharkiv, before being placed in reception centres (Biuletyn Migracyjny 2014; MSZ 2015). Despite the small number of individuals affected, this action serves as an example of Poland's direct

engagement in Ukraine also on a symbolic basis (showing responsibility also for its non-citizens) and the way the symbolic aspect meets the very practical one of the state’s direct intervention.

3. Border, checkpoints and the influx of Ukrainians into Poland

The Polish-Ukrainian border, with a total length of 535 km, is the most often crossed eastern border of the EU (Frontex 2015: 13). Fourteen land border crossings are located there, eight of which are road crossings: Budomierz–Hrushiiv, Dołhobyczów–Uhryniv, Dorohusk–Yahodyn, Hrebenne–Rava-Ruska, Korczowa–Krakivets, Krościenko–Smilnytsia, Medyka–Shehyni, Zosin–Ustiluh; six are railway crossings: Dorohusk–Yahodyn, Hrebenne–Rava-Ruska, Hrubieszów–Volodymyr-Volynskyyi, Krościenko–Khyriv, Przemyśl–Mostyska, Werchrata–Rava-Ruska. There are also plans to open six more crossings in the future. Data published by the Border Guard shows a significant increase in the number of crossings at the Polish-Ukrainian border by foreigners.

Figure 1. Total number of arrivals of foreigners on the Polish-Ukrainian border (in millions)

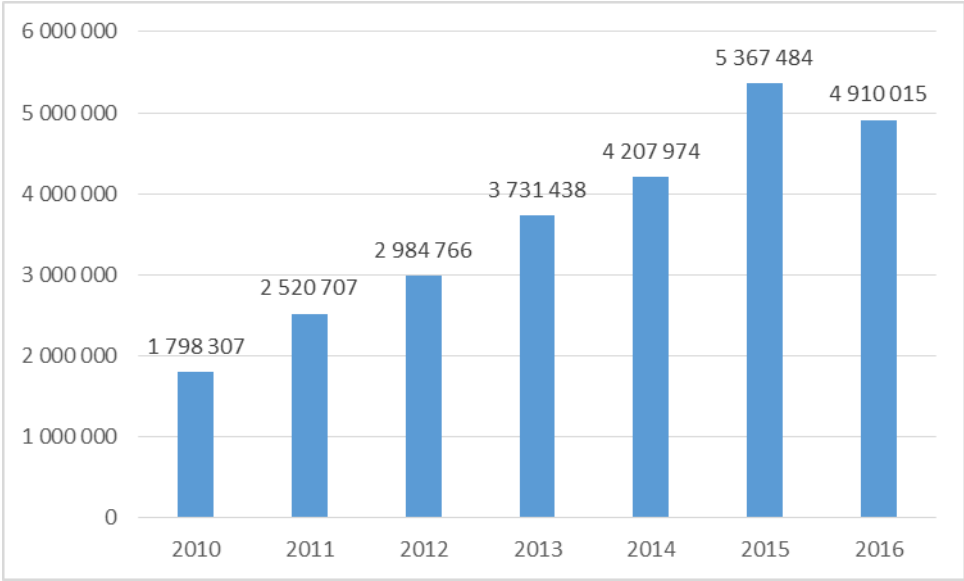


Source: own elaboration based on Polish Border Guard statistics (SG 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016).

The data presented in Figure 1 shows all border crossings by foreigners, but we can assume that most of them were actually Ukrainians. When we compare this data to all arrivals on all borders, we can see that the majority were undertaken by citizens of the bordering countries. For example, in 2012 persons belonging to this category were responsible for over

92% of entries (Kaczmarczyk et al. 2013). A special category of trans-border mobility relates to local border traffic. The LBT agreement with Ukraine was signed in 2009, and since then its popularity has been increasingly growing. By the end of 2014, about 220,000 LBT Cards were issued.

Figure 2. Number of border crossing of Ukrainians into Poland within the Local Border Traffic



Source: own elaboration based on Polish Border Guard statistics (SG 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016).

Comparing the total number of border crossings with those related to LBT, we can see that LBT contributes to nearly half of all cross-border mobility between the two countries. However, a slight decrease in the use of the LBT procedure could be observed in 2016. A possible reason might be the undertaking of seasonal employment in Poland by those who used to commute for other short-term activities. It is also noteworthy to acknowledge the number of Ukrainians who attempted to cross the border illegally, i.e. were apprehended with false or invalid documents (such as invitations) and returned. Most of these attempts took place on the Polish-Ukrainian border, but some Ukrainian citizens were also apprehended at other borders.

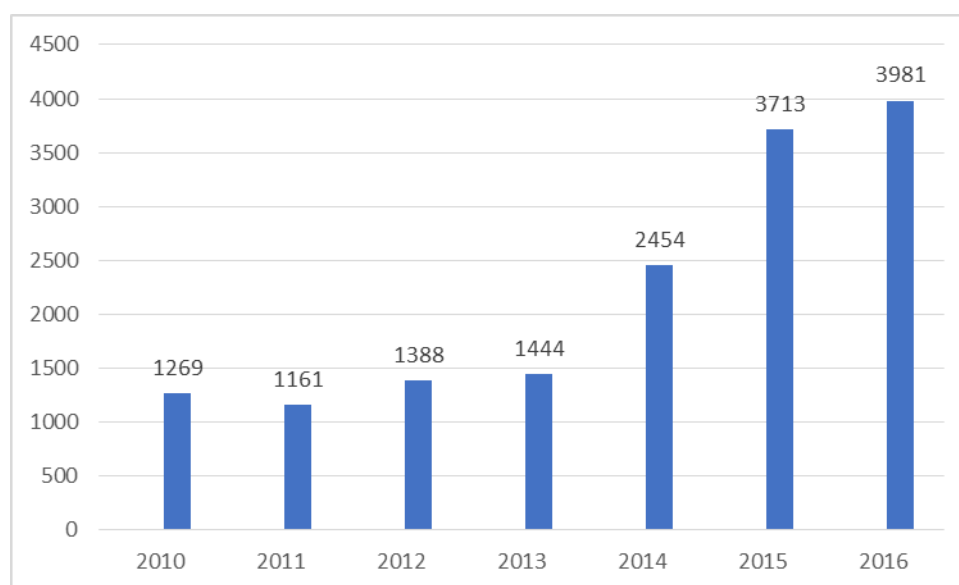
Table 1. Attempts to cross the external EU borders illegally by Ukrainian citizens

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<i>External EU borders</i>							
Russian border	3	0	0	7	14	6	5
Belarusian border	2	3	2	4	7	11	21
Ukrainian border	813	627	639	756	1004	2002	1761
External EU connections: sea ports	0	0	0	1	2	0	0
External EU connections: airports	36	98	104	66	141	139	150
External EU Border – total	854	728	745	834	1168	2158	1937
<i>Internal EU borders</i>							
Lithuania	0	2	3	3	4	18	83
Slovakia	21	1	0	5	17	26	32
Czech Republic	220	190	253	173	446	670	1158
Germany	169	239	377	360	767	779	651
Sea border – internal EU connections	2	0	5	63	46	38	42
Airports – internal EU connections	3	1	5	6	6	24	78
Internal EU borders – total	415	433	643	610	1286	1555	2044
TOTAL	1269	1161	1388	1444	2454	3713	3981

Source: own elaboration based on Polish Border Guard statistics (SG 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016)

A comparison of the total number of illegal border crossing by Ukrainian citizens in past years indicates a huge increase beginning in 2013.

Figure 3. Total attempts to cross the border illegally made by Ukrainian citizens

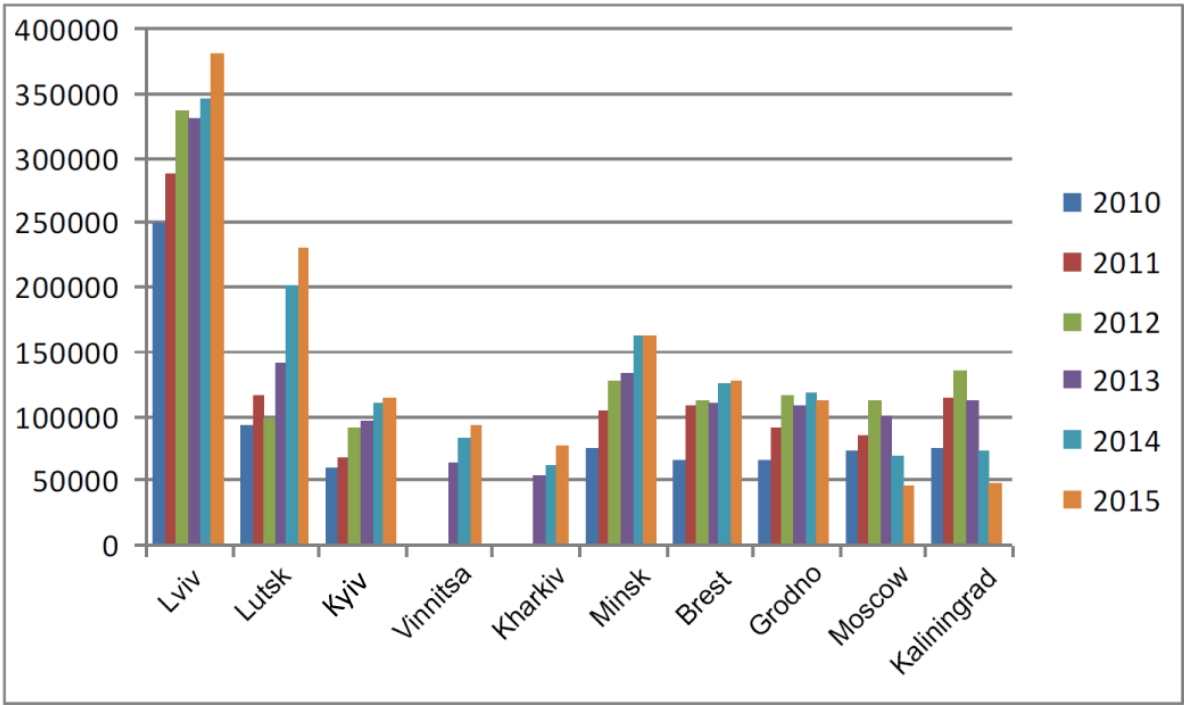


Source: own elaboration based on Polish Border Guard statistics (SG 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016)

4. Workers, students, shoppers, asylum seekers. Stylised facts and what they (do not) tell us

In order to get into Poland, Ukrainian citizens need visas, which are issued in six consulates in Ukraine: in Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, Vinnitsa, Lutsk and Odessa. The consulates in Sevastopol and Donetsk were evacuated in 2014 and 2015 as a result of the Russian annexation of Crimea and armed conflict in the Donbas region. Five of them (i.e. all operational ones except Odessa) are among the ten Polish consulates issuing the largest number of visas worldwide. What is more, among all Schengen countries, it is Poland that issues the largest number of visas to Ukrainians.

Figure 4. Number of visas (both Schengen and national) issued in the 10 most “active” Polish consulates

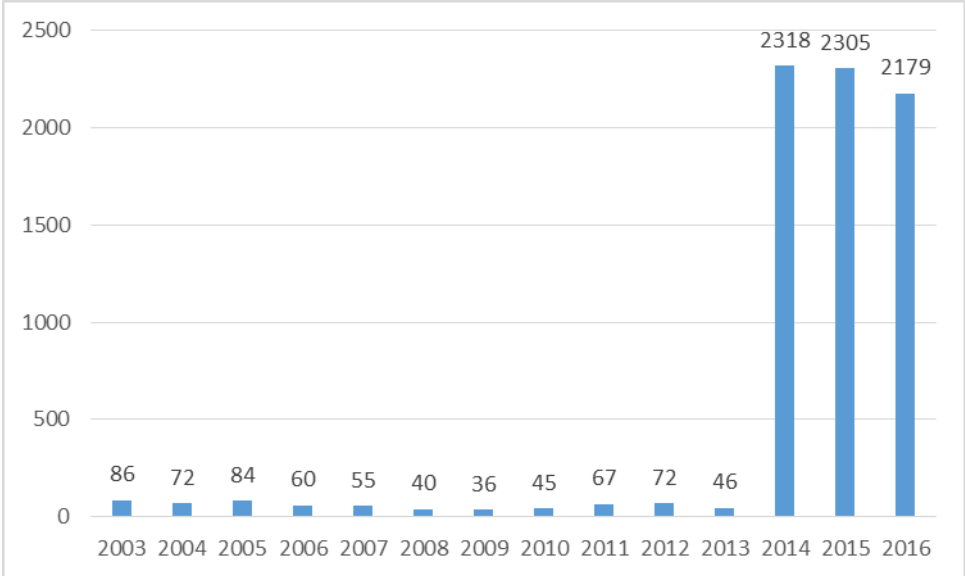


Source: own elaboration based on Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MSZ 2015)

According to data and statements published by the Office for Foreigners, the migration situation in Poland in 2014 and 2015 as well as the first half of 2016 was dominated by an increased influx of Ukrainians, related to the situation in Ukraine (UDSC 2014; UDSC 2015; UDSC 2015b; UDSC 2016). However, as we can see in Figures 5 and 6, this does not translate into international protection granted to Ukrainian citizens. The number of

applications from asylum seekers has clearly increased in comparison to the period before the turmoil. This is also the case with the granted statuses; however, the actual numbers are hardly noticeable. The applicants who point to the unfeasibility of staying in Ukraine claim Ukraine’s inefficiency in providing assistance, general dislike of displaced persons from the East, objection to the military draft or fear of persecution due to their relatives’ engagement on the side of the separatists (UDCS 2016). However, in generic terms, Ukraine is considered a secure country.

Figure 5. The number of Ukrainian citizens who applied for international protection in Poland in 2003-2016 (until the end of October)



Source: own elaboration based on data from the Office for Foreigners (UDSC 2014; UDSC 2015; UDSC 2015b; UDSC 2016; UDSC 2017).

Table 2. Decisions on granting and rejecting international protection to Ukrainian citizens⁵

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Closing of investigation	253	373	764	227
Rejections	396	652	1 775	3697
Granting of subsidiary protection	14	6	24	64
Granting of tolerated stay	9	11	6	1
Granting of refugee status	2	-	2	32

Source: Office for Foreigners UDSC 2014; UDSC 2015; UDSC 2015b; UDSC 2016; UDSC 2017)

As we can observe, only a small number of Ukrainian citizens were granted some form of international protection. Some researchers suggest that it is not war in Eastern Ukraine that works as a push factor, but more the worsening economic situation in the country as a whole,

⁵ The combined number of decisions by the Office for Foreigners and the Refugee Council.

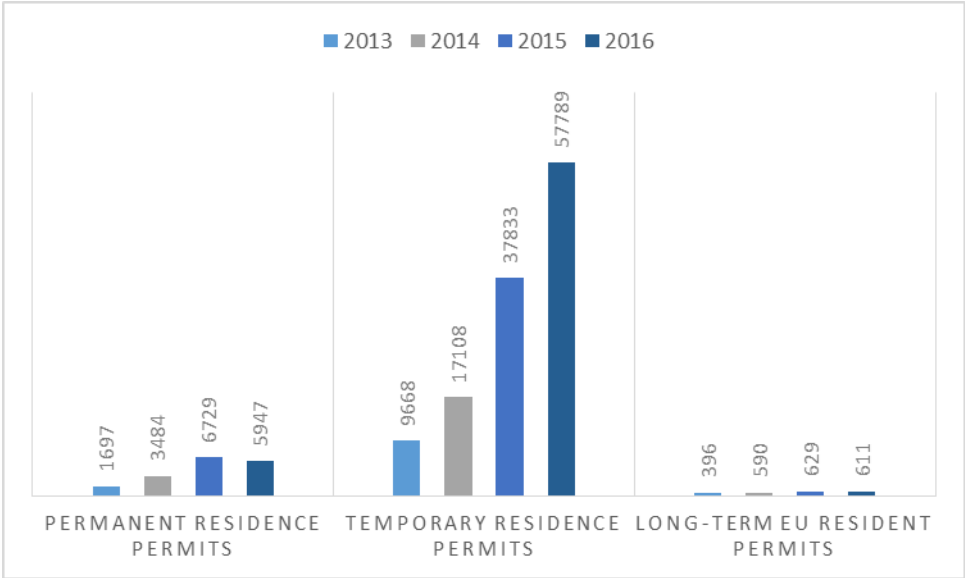
and the majority of people seeking international protection are economic migrants, i.e. not directly impacted by military operations (Jaroszewicz 2015). Nevertheless, the deteriorating situation in Ukraine is related to the armed conflict and political turmoil (see: Iwański 2015; Duszczuk 2016; Kravchuk 2016).

There are several ways for Ukrainian citizens to work legally in Poland. As a general rule, non-EU nationals holding a residence permit can work legally with no additional permits required. These permits are needed, however, by visa and temporary residence permit holders. A temporary residence permit is issued for a period up to three years, and it allows people to work or run a business (often leading to self-employment). Furthermore, citizens of Belarus, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the Republic of Armenia are entitled to take up employment on the basis of a so-called “declaration of intent to entrust a job to a foreigner” (or simply a “declaration”). Introduced in 2007, this procedure allows an individual to work in Poland for six months in a year without a work permit or the necessity to conduct a labour market test. Also since 2007, Ukrainians who can prove their Polish descent can be granted the so-called Polish Charter (officially referred to as the Polish Card – *Karta Polaka*). This document is issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to citizens of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan and confirms one’s belonging to the Polish nation (understood in ethnic terms). It also entitles its holders to a Polish multiple-entry national visa, work in Poland, insurance and a discount on public transport. A student visa also secures the right to work without a permit. It also applies to graduates of Polish secondary schools or those who completed full-time studies or full-time doctoral studies at Polish universities and other academic institutions.

Since 2013, the number of Ukrainians working and residing in Poland has increased more than threefold. In 2015 the number of permanent residence permits was 6729; 37,833 temporary residence permits; 629 long-term EU resident permits; 2 refugee statuses; 25 supplementary protections; and 6 tolerated stays. This means double the increase in comparison to the year before (3484 permanent residence permits; 17,108 temporary residence permits; 6 supplementary protections; 11 tolerated stays). In 2013 the numbers were as follows: 1697 permanent residence permits; 9668 temporary residence permits; 396 long-term EU resident permits; 2 refugee statuses; 5 supplementary protections; 8 tolerated stays (UDSC 2015b). However, these are statuses issued to persons already residing in Poland, so they do not reflect the influx dynamics. The year 2016 saw a slight decrease in the number of permanent residence permits (5947) in comparison to the year before (6729). On the other

hand, a significant growth could be observed in the number of temporary residence permits (57,789). This was also the case with refugee statuses and supplementary protection; however, these both remained hardly noticeable, with 32 and 64 persons respectively (UDSC 2017).

Figure 6. Residence permits for Ukrainian citizens



Source: own elaboration based on UDSC 2015b

Apart from the turmoil, the increasing number of Ukrainians being granted a temporary residence permit in Poland could result from the 2014 amendments to the law on foreigners, which liberalised the conditions of arrival and settlement in Poland (Duszczuk 2016: 42). The changes enabled the alumni of Polish universities to stay and work for a period up to one year after graduation, as well as extending the period of temporary residence to three years and granting the possibility of legalising the stay for humanitarian reasons⁶ (Brunarska et al. 2016: 122).

The majority (62%) of Ukrainians work in Poland on the basis of the aforementioned simplified procedure (a “declaration”). According to a study conducted by the National Bank of Poland and the Centre of Migration Research Foundation, the average stay of Ukrainian migrants in Poland is five months. Ukrainians find employment mostly in household assistance (37% – almost exclusively women), construction and renovation (23.6% – almost exclusively men) and agriculture (19% – balanced in terms of gender). Apart from the general increase in numbers, since 2014 the share of men has increased (58% among those who first

⁶ The latter could possibly be used by persons from the war-torn territories already staying in Poland as seasonal workers or temporary residents.

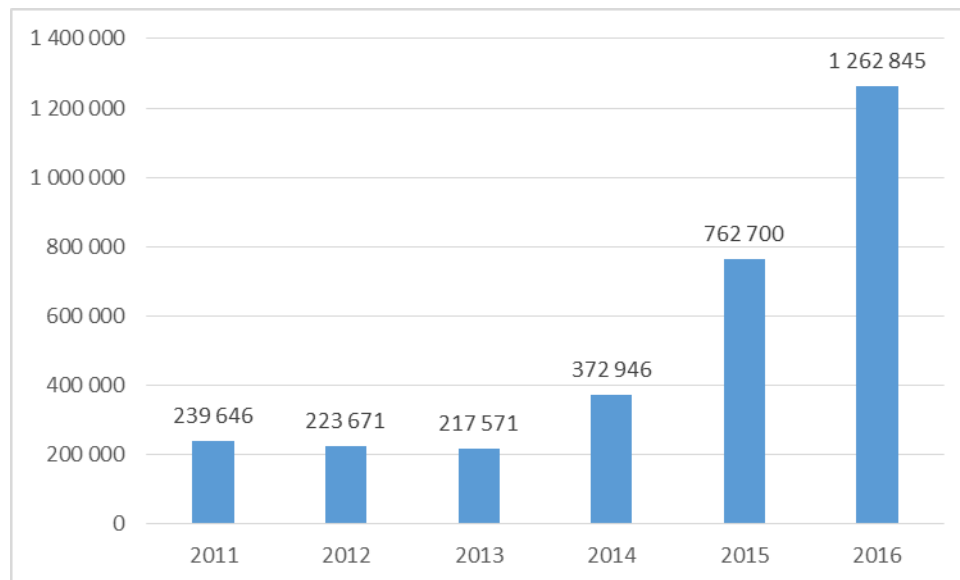
came in or after that year, against 33% among those who used to come prior to the turmoil), which can be explained by attempts to avoid the military draft. The income median was estimated at 2000 PLN, which is approximately 500 EUR (NBP 2016: 22-24).

As a general remark, we should also note that these figures do not fully represent the number of Ukrainians working or living in Poland. The actual numbers are difficult to grasp, due to the predominance of the seasonal and circular character of migration, irregular employment during documented stay in Poland or visa overstaying, as well as the number of students and Polish Charter holders active in the labour market (Brunarska 2014; Brunarska et al. 2016). What is more, the number of employers' declarations does not present the actual number of seasonal workers either (see: Szulecka 2016b). It might actually be bigger than the actual number of workers, as some work in more than one place (i.e. more than one declaration is issued per person). The number of declarations has kept growing, which is not necessary the case with workers. There are several problems with estimating the number of Ukrainians working in Poland on the basis of employers' declarations. First of all, the document registered by Polish employers is only a declaration of intent to offer temporary seasonal employment to a foreigner. Not all Ukrainian recipients of declarations ultimately apply for a visa, and not all of them show up to work for their employer after applying and obtaining it.

Research conducted by CMR in 2015 reveals that it is a usual practice among employers to register around 30% more declarations than they need to. Moreover, they do not employ the same people they "invited" (as it is commonly referred to). Around 30% of their Ukrainian workers came to Poland on the basis of another employer's declaration (Górny et al. 2016: 90). Some employees would also work at more than one employer, with declarations being issued for each of them. Nevertheless, the numbers clearly show an increasing tendency, and even if we can speak of some mismatch between the official and the actual numbers, the latter is growing anyway (Górny et al. 2016). However, the situation might change with the planned changes in the "declaration procedure" and its replacement with seasonal and short-term work permits for non-EU citizens that are currently being discussed (Biuletyn Migracyjny 2016; Biuletyn Migracyjny 2017; Szulecka 2016). The amendments are supposed to adjust Polish regulations to the 2014 EU *Directive on the conditions of entry and stay of third-country nationals for the purpose of employment as seasonal workers*, which points to agriculture, horticulture and tourism as sectors "dependent on the passing of the seasons" (EUR-Lex 2014: 2). This kind of short-term work permits preceded by a labour market test would be accessible to all third-country nationals, but the citizens of Ukraine as well as Armenia,

Belarus, Georgia, Russia and Moldova would be exempted from the labour market test. “Declarations” would remain for the citizens of the aforementioned six countries in the non-seasonal sectors (Biuletyn Migracyjny 2017).

Figure 7. Number of declarations registered for Ukrainian citizens



Source: own elaboration based on Ministry of Labour and Social Policy statistics (MPiPS 2011; MPiPS 2012; MPiPS 2013; MPiPS 2014; MPiPS 2015; MPiPS 2017).

As regards the Polish Card, Ukraine ranks second, after Belarus, in terms of numbers of applications. In 2015 there were 9647 applications. The annual consular report from 2015 acknowledges the growth in interest in the document in Ukraine, “which cannot even be reflected in statistics on applications”, and that the queues, larger than ever before, for interviews “can last a few months”. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this results from the “political-economic situation” in the country, which apart from standard proceedings requires additional verification of documents provided (MSZ 2016: 24). Notably, since May 2014, Polish Charter holders are entitled to a permanent stay in Poland (see: Szulecka 2016). In May 2016 further amendments were introduced in order to simplify settlement in Poland. Document holders will be able to apply for Polish citizenship after one year of residency, instead of three (Biuletyn Migracyjny 2016b). This change is likely to make the document more attractive and lead to a further increase in applications.

Difficult to measure in terms of statistics, but no less important in terms of cross-border relations and the use of the border as a resource, is shopping tourism. This term is officially used in Ministry of Foreign Affairs documents and visa procedures, as the “shopping tourism (national) visa” can be issued to inhabitants of the Lviv, Ternopil, Ivano-

Frankivsk, Chernivtsy, Transcarpathia, Volhyn, Rivne, Vynnytsia, Khmelnytskyi and Zhytomyr regions (*oblasts*). It can be issued for a period of up to one year, with each stay having a maximum length of seven days.⁷ In 2013 shopping was also the most popular reason for issuing LBT permission cards in Ukraine border regions (Piekutowska 2016: 108). According to the official statistics, in the last quarter of 2015, visitors from Ukraine spent over 2 billion PLN (500 million EUR), which is 28% more than in the same period the year before, while the analogous numbers for Belarus and Russia decreased (by 19% and 34%).⁸ Importantly, shopping tourism in the framework of local border traffic contributed to 47% of these expenses (GUS 2016b). What is more, official, large-scale import-export is shrinking, while shopping tourism and small scale cross-border trade (including shuttle trade) are experiencing a boom and record-breaking value. According to some research and media coverage, in many shops and wholesalers in the Lubelskie and Podkarpackie voivodeships, Ukrainians comprise the majority of customers (Kuchaj 2015; Piekutowska 2016: 109-110).

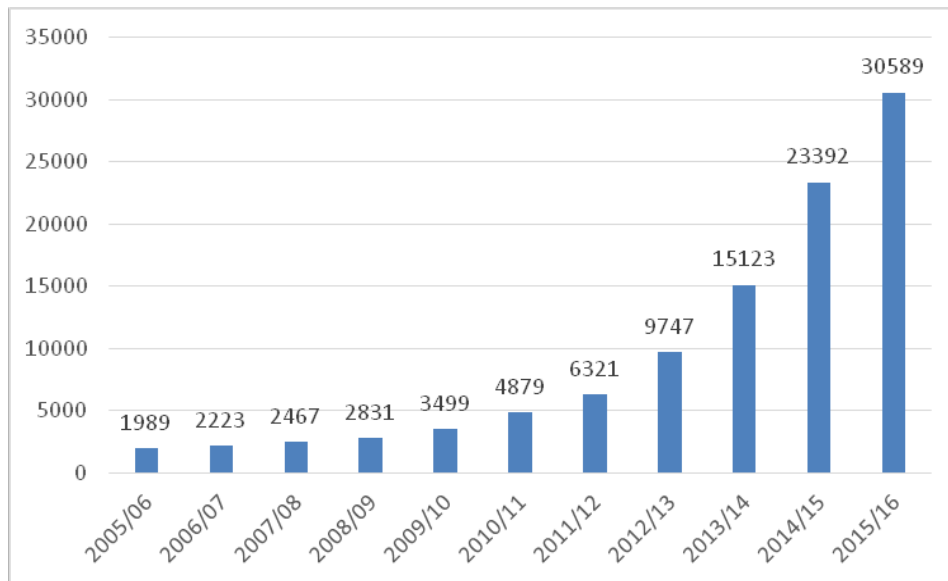
The dynamic of the influx of Ukrainian students to Poland deserves a separate study. Here we might suggest that, on the one hand, studying in Poland can be considered as part of the “utilisation of cross-border contacts”, as it provides a student-visa holder not only with the possibility to obtain higher education abroad, but also with the chance to travel and, no less importantly, work in Poland.⁹ In general, studying in Poland is becoming more and more popular.

⁷ Source: <http://www.polandvisa-ukraine.com/Polish/other.html>.

⁸ The reasons are the Russian sanctions on some Polish products and the Belarusian limits on the amounts of goods allowed to be brought into the country.

⁹ Source: http://www.migrant.info.pl/Prawo_do_pracy_dla_student%C3%B3w.html.

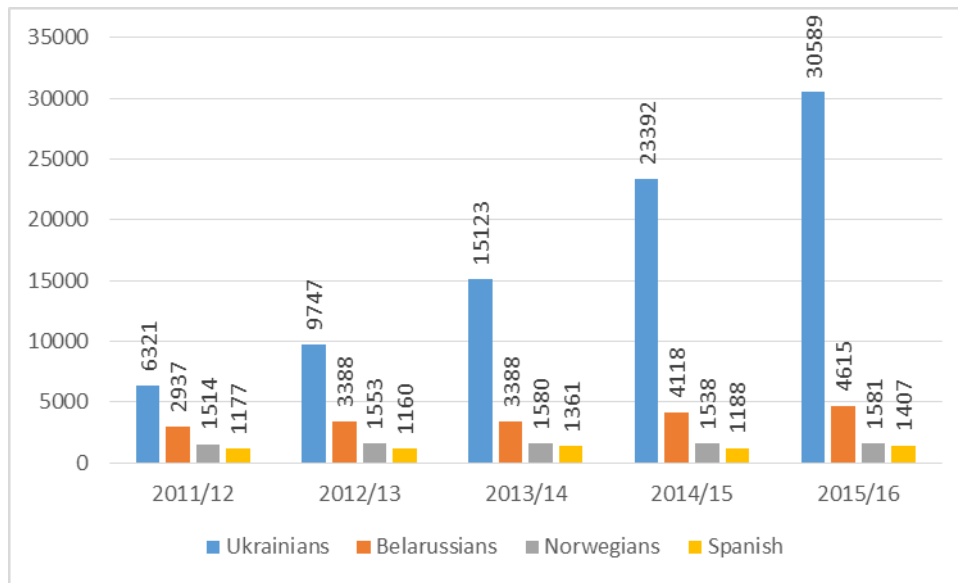
Figure 8. Ukrainian students in Poland



Source: Central Statistical Office (GUS 2016), studyinpoland.com

Most universities and other tertiary education institutions actively recruit in Ukraine, Belarus and Russia, and translate their websites into Ukrainian and Russian. Ukrainians comprise over 50% of foreign students in Poland, which is the result not only of universities' marketing campaigns but also of the difficult situation in Ukraine as well as some scholarship programmes. However, the majority of foreign students, including Ukrainians, pay for their education. Due to the high number of Ukrainian students at Polish universities, some have encountered tensions between themselves and Polish students. For example, in the city of Opole, Polish students protested against Ukrainians "taking their places" in dormitories, while in Lublin they complained about their lack of integration and poor knowledge of Polish (see: Saturczak 2015; Gunia 2014). Some experts have already pointed to the possible threat of xenophobic attitudes among Polish students if no proper integration measures are taken. As the coordinator of the "Study in Poland" programme states, the issue of the so-called "Ukrainianisation" of Polish higher education institutions has become popular, and academia as well as people responsible for educational policies should pay particular attention to the moods among students and implement solutions aimed at integrating Ukrainian students into the life of academic and local communities in Poland (Study in Poland 2016).

Figure 9. Ukrainian students compared to other foreign students



Source: Central Statistical Office, Study in Poland (studyinpoland.com)

5. Concluding remarks and notes for further debate

The influx of Ukrainian citizens into Poland and what can be described as general interest in using the state border and Polish-Ukrainian cross-border links have clearly increased over the last three years (i.e. since 2013). In the light of the presented data, we can expect further growth of labour migration, educational migration (which can also be considered as labour-related, as students tend to combine education with work) and shopping tourism. Interestingly, the last of these shows no signs of decrease, despite the unstable rate of the hryvna, the value of which has more than halved in the period in question. The situation in Ukraine is unstable, and the country's and society's future remain uncertain. However, regardless of the further developments in terms of the situation in Donbas and Crimea as well as the political and economic situation in the country as a whole, its economic effects are likely to be sensed in the country and beyond its borders long after the turmoil ends. Therefore, we can expect that the pressure to migrate and to utilise cross-border links will prevail.

With the simplified procedure for seasonal employment in Poland, Polish businesses receive a relatively low-paid and disciplined workforce. In this way, the Polish state does not carry the cost of the immigrants' social accommodation (schools and kindergartens for their children, pension fund, unemployment benefits, communal housing etc.) or integration programmes. What is more, the majority of Ukrainians working in Poland are employed in the

framework of “civic contracts”, instead of work contracts, and there are large, hard to estimate numbers working in the shadow economy, despite accessible legal options to work. This state of affairs cements the temporary, precarious condition of the Ukrainian migrants in Poland, who are likely to find employment, earn money and send it back to Ukraine, but the majority of them are rather unlikely to establish their careers here. This uncertainty is likely to increase with the planned changes in seasonal and short-term employment of foreigners in Poland.

Added to the generally observed *pro-Ukrainianness* of Polish political elites and opinion leaders, the situation creates a peculiar circumstance whereby opening the labour market to seasonal work can be considered as a form of a development aid or international protection of displaced persons. This seems to correspond with the public statement about an alleged one million Ukrainian refugees in Poland, while referring to the general number of migrants, the majority of whom do low-skilled and low-paid jobs, often with no health insurance or any forms of social security.

The available statistics clearly show increased mobility between the two countries. This mobility can be considered as part of the wider phenomenon of Ukraine’s dependency on Poland and other countries, on foreign aid as well as foreign labour markets and financial remittances. The statistics, however, do not fully disclose the issues we have suggested. Some of the points (such as working conditions, hourly wages, and housing conditions) need both qualitative and quantitative in-depth studies. We hope that our overview can serve as a background or departure point for this kind of analysis in the future.

The economic recession in Ukraine is rather unlikely to cease only with the end of the armed conflict or Russia’s possible withdrawal from Crimea. Ukrainian migration is therefore likely to become a consistent part of the Polish social landscape. The Ukrainian and Russian languages can already be heard in Polish cities on a daily basis, while Ukrainian-related issues are more and more present in public spaces, as is the need for further research upon them.

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