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Anticipating Displacement: EUAA looking into Migration Trends in Ukraine



As the Russian war of aggression on Ukraine continues and the situation in Ukraine remains volatile, the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) has strengthened its capacity to combine near to real-time situational awareness, data collection in the field and forecasting. The aim is to go beyond reactive analysis and ensure Member States are equipped to manage not just today's asylum-related migration flows, but tomorrow's as well.

In July 2025, with no end to the conflict in Ukraine in sight, the fighting is going on with increasing intensity. In June, Ukraine's Security Service launched "Operation Spiderweb," targeting Russian strategic bombers, followed by a maritime drone strike that damaged the Kerch Bridge and drone attacks that forced the Russian authorities to temporarily close Moscow airports. Russia responded with intensified aerial attacks on Kyiv and other cities. Simultaneously, ceasefire talks in Türkiye produced no progress beyond a prisoner exchange. These developments reinforce the urgency of equipping EU countries with modern, mixed-method tools to anticipate and prepare for any potential renewed displacement, ensuring that Member States remain responsive in a volatile geopolitical environment.

A multifaceted approach to intelligence

The EUAA's intelligence capability includes Human Intelligence (HUMINT) gathered through the EUAA's Surveys with Arriving Migrants from Ukraine (SAM–UKR), a flexible tool used to collect testimonies from persons displaced by the Russian invasion who are currently in the EU+. It captures experiences, intentions and aspirations, which in turn allows the Agency to understand push factors, the scale of integration in host countries and possible return prospects.

Separately, Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) enables the EUAA to monitor near to real-time conflict events and geopolitical developments that may trigger migration — including, for example, the Russian bombardment of Ukraine's power infrastructure. These various types of qualitative insights are then combined with EUAA's own quantitative data to produce short-term forecasts according to the needs of Member States and European policymakers.

Investing in cooperation with local partners

In Ukraine, the EUAA is collaborating with a Ukrainian public opinion company, Gradus Research, to gather real-time insights on migration intentions. The collaboration offers insights gathered within Ukraine, before displacements materialise at the EU external border. Gradus' ability to deliver real-time assessments has enabled the EUAA to monitor changes in sentiment following key military and political events.

Evgeniya BLYZNYUK, sociologist, CEO & Founder of Gradus Research.

By systematically monitoring migration intentions and pull & push factors, we enable the EUAA and Member States to base their preparedness on real-time intelligence — supporting evidence-based planning in a fluid and high-stakes context. Our survey technology allows us to deliver results in real time, which is a crucial factor in a rapidly changing environment and the emergence of new and evolving risks for the population. Therefore, we don't collect abstract migration sentiments (like a general desire to migrate at some point in the future), but rather capture real, current sentiments on the ground

Evgeniya BLYZNYUK Sociologist, CEO & Founder of Gradus Research

Protection in a Dynamic Environment

In 2025, the share of the population intending to leave Ukraine within the next six months **remains at 13 %** of respondents. **Poland** and **Germany** continue to be the most preferred destinations, primarily due to job opportunities, family ties, access to benefits and support (with a significant increase compared to the previous wave), and safety. Key push factors — such as threats to life and the risk of occupation — have remained stable since the beginning of 2025. Despite ongoing risks, including hostilities and economic concerns, **71 % of respondents plan to stay in Ukraine** if the active phase of the war ends.

At the end of May 2025, **around 4.4 million people** were benefitting from temporary protection in the EU+. While **Germany** and **Poland hosted the largest in absolute numbers, Czechia hosted the most beneficiaries *per capita*.** These figures illustrate not only the scale of current protection efforts, but also the need for continued investment in preparedness — including intelligence-led, forward-looking tools that can anticipate renewed displacement, returns, or onward movement.

As Russian attacks on Ukraine continue, the Council has recently extended temporary protection for another year, until March 2027. At the same time, Ukrainians in Europe consider more permanent alternatives to temporary protection like applying for asylum. Clearly, understanding the views of displaced Ukrainians will play a crucial role for any successful transition. The EUAA has the tools, partnerships and expertise needed to inform policy makers, enabling them to navigate it.

Background

The EUAA's intelligence-led activities are anchored in its legal mandate to gather and analyse information on root causes, migratory and refugee flows in support of early warning and Member State preparedness. They feed into scenario development, capacity planning, and contingency plans including regular updates to asylum trends, structured foresight exercises, and the integration of both traditional and non-traditional data sources. Thus, the EUAA supports Member States with agile, evidence-driven tools in the dynamic operational landscape of the ongoing war in Ukraine.

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