



# Women & Children in Crisis: Ukrainian Refugees in the EU

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# What is a Refugee?

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines a refugee as “someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.”



# Background/ Historical Context of war

- Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24th (OECD 2022).
- Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP)
- 7,843,714 Ukrainian refugees in Europe (Operational Data Portal 2022).
- 6,540,000 Ukrainians are internally displaced people (International Organization of Migration 2022).
- 42% of Ukrainian refugees are children while 83% of the adults were women in Lithuania (OECD 2022).
- “War on women (Cindoglu 2022)”

## Economic Assimilation

“People are here with their kids, but without husbands, without parents, and often without money or work”

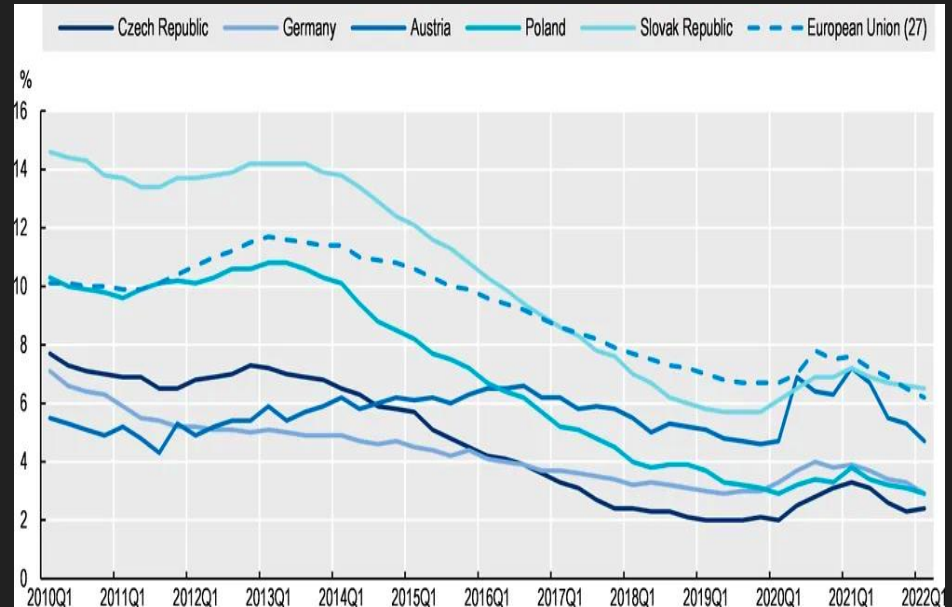
-Olena Nikolaenko,  
Ukrainian Refugee



# Lack of opportunities

- Women made up 47% of the workforce in Ukraine
- Ukrainian refugees have higher levels of education.
- “Domestic, office or hotel cleaners and helpers”
- Poor Working Conditions
- Child Care
- Consequences

OECD Quarterly unemployment rate in selected EU countries, 2010-22

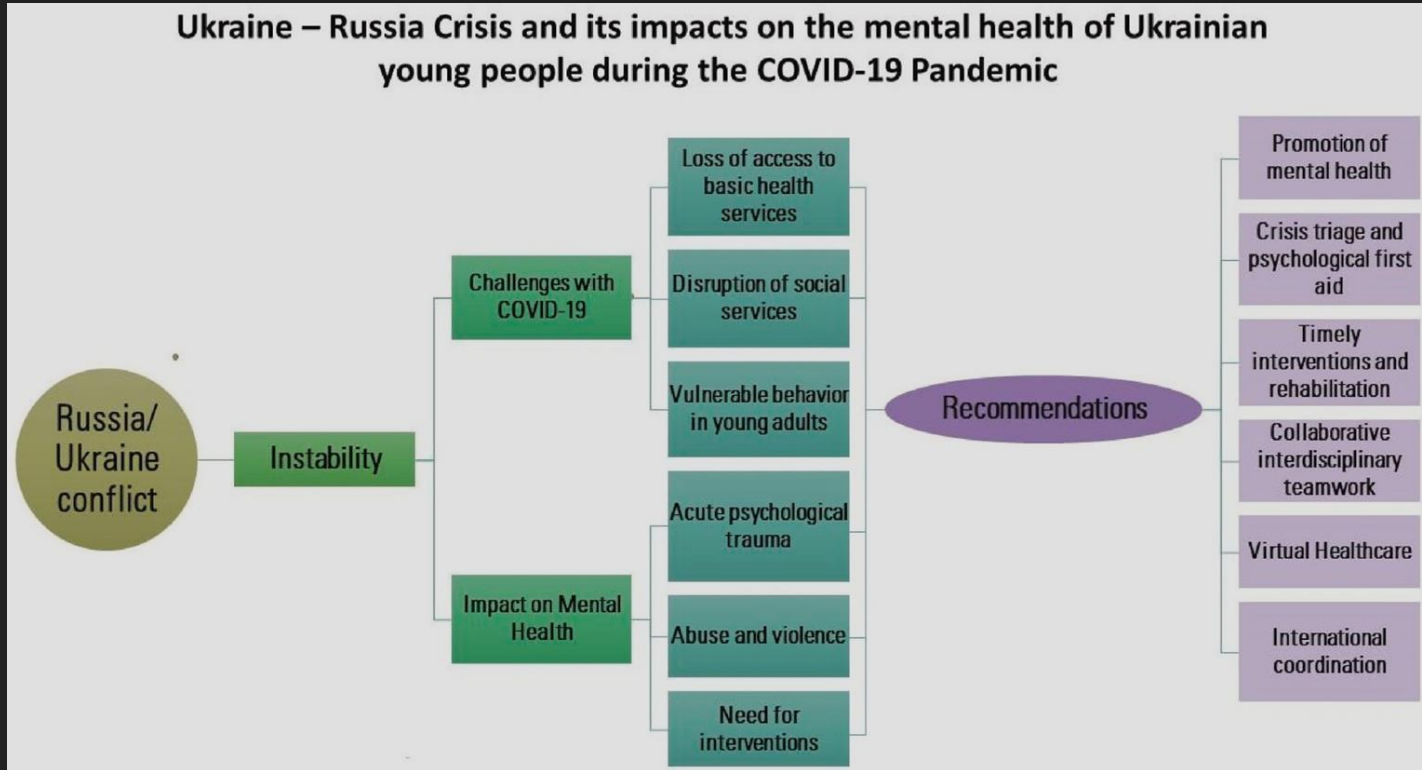


# The Separation of Families

- Martial Law instituted on 24 February 2022
- 78% of refugees to bordering countries had to separate from at least one immediate family member (UNODC)



# Mental Impact of Separation



# Risk of Exploitation and Trafficking

- Traffickers exploit situations of mass chaos
- EU's Common Anti-Trafficking Plan have found the threat of trafficking to be high (UNODC)
- Sexual exploitation, forced labor, illegal adoption and surrogacy, and forced criminality
- 2001 EU Temporary Protection Directive; “Dublin Regulation”





# Access to Healthcare

- Language barriers, unfamiliarity with the receiving country's health system, and lack of knowledge regarding their rights and entitlements to accessing services
- Chronic diseases: Type 1 Diabetes & Asthma
- Low COVID-19 immunization rate



# Rape as a Weapon of War

- Humiliation
- Domination
- Forced impregnation
- Shame
- Male bonding/cohesion
- Torture



# Sexual & Reproductive Healthcare

## How many health care facilities were destroyed by the Russian military

- 927** health care facilities have been damaged or destroyed
- 127** objects were completely destroyed and cannot be restored
- 59** hospitals have already been fully restored
- 38** billions of hryvnias are needed to restore the medical infrastructure
- 5** regions in which the medical infrastructure was most affected: Kyiv, Chernihiv, Donetsk, Mykolaiv and Kharkiv oblasts.

# Susceptibility to Trafficking & Abuse After Emigrating



“Risks [of conflict-based sexual violence] are exacerbated by the dissolution of protective social and civil structures during humanitarian crises. [...] Lack of family support intersects with vulnerabilities such as age, refugee status and gender and increases the risks they face throughout their migration trajectory.” (Neal, et al.)

# Conclusions

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