

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN MANAGING YOUTH MIGRATION IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of international experience in managing youth migration in post-conflict societies based on the comparative analysis of foreign practices. The relevance of the topic is due to the large-scale forced displacement of Ukrainian youth as a result of armed conflicts, which poses a threat to demographic and socio-economic recovery. The article identifies and characterizes the migration potential of youth of Ukraine in the context of full-scale armed aggression, identifies the main trends in youth migration flows, and the degree of their irreversibility. The methodological basis of the study is an integrated approach to the analysis of international youth migration, which combines quantitative and qualitative methods. A comparative analysis of migration and demographic indicators for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Georgia, and the Member States of the European Union, as relevant post-conflict practices, has been carried out. Based on the systematization of data, socio-economic factors of youth migration have been identified, including the level of security, the state of the labor market, access to education, the quality of social services, and prospects for post-war reconstruction. The effectiveness of national migration management policies in the studied countries has been assessed, and the relationship between the institutional potential of states and the scale of return and reintegration of young migrants has been established. The socio-economic effects of youth migration for both donor and recipient countries have been identified, including the effects of brain drain, transformation of labor markets, and risks of depopulation.

Keywords: Youth Migration, Post-Conflict Societies, Management of Migration Flows, State Migration Policy, Socio-Economic Consequences.

JEL Codes: J61, F22, O15, D74, J24.

Introduction

The problem of youth migration in post-conflict societies is of particular importance in the context of global instability at the beginning of the XXI century. Armed conflicts that have engulfed various regions of the world, from the Middle East to Africa and Eastern Europe, have caused an unprecedented movement of the young population, which is traditionally the most mobile and at the same time the most vulnerable demographic group.

This issue is of particular relevance in the context of the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine in 2022, which provoked the migration of young people from Ukraine.

According to UN estimates, more than 6 million people have left Ukraine (UNHCR. 2026), including a disproportionately high share of young people. This creates new challenges for public authorities to ensure the protection of migrants abroad and the introduction of an effective mechanism for their future reintegration. Migration is not new and accompanies military conflicts; it is advisable to study and implement the already accumulated international experience.

However, despite a significant number of studies in the scientific literature, there is still no systematic comparative analysis of state practices of youth migration management in the post-

conflict context. Most of the available works either consider migration policy as a whole, without singling out the youth dimension, or focus on individual cases without international comparison.

Taking into account the experience of such countries as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Georgia and EU member states that received large youth contingents of forced migrants, it allows us to form a basis for improving the domestic state migration policy.

Literature review

The analysis of modern scientific research indicates a significant attention to the problems of youth migration, in particular in the context of socio-economic transformations and crisis phenomena, but a comprehensive study of this problem in the conditions of post-conflict societies remains fragmented. The scientific literature is dominated by the approach according to which the key drivers of youth migration are economic factors, primarily the level of employment, income, and professional opportunities. In the study Naterer A., Lavrič M. (2022) it has been proven that with the increase in the level of development of countries, the influence of the factors of “necessary” migration decreases, while the role of “ambition factors related to self-realization and access to better opportunities increases. This confirms that youth migration is not exclusively a reaction to the crisis, but is formed under the influence of a wider range of motivations.

An important area of research is the analysis of the NEET phenomenon as one of the key indicators of the socio-economic vulnerability of young people. The NEET level varies significantly depending on institutional conditions, in particular the effectiveness of the labor market, the educational system, and social policy, while emphasizing the heterogeneity of this group and the need for differentiated policies (Assmann M. L. et al., 2021). In addition, analytical materials show that after global crises, the level of youth unemployment and NEET does not automatically recover, but requires targeted state intervention, which is especially important for post-conflict economies (Stéphane Carcillo et al., 2024).

Scientific papers and analytical reports additionally emphasize that even in developed countries, young migrants often face higher risks of socio-economic marginalization, which indicates the complexity of integration processes (OECD, 2025; Vasylytsiv T. et al., 2024; Jakubek P. et al., 2023).

A separate block of research is devoted to the specifics of youth migration in post-conflict conditions. The papers focus on the fact that traditional economic policy instruments, in particular employment or education programs, are insufficient without taking into account the psychological and social consequences of conflicts, including traumatic experiences, which affect the ability of young people to integrate into the labor market. Educational and psychosocial components (Mayengo N et al., 2025; Fantinelli S. et al., 2024).

Marhasova V. et al. (2024); Yermine M. et al. (2026) analyze the features of ensuring national security, investigate migration trends and active citizenship, and propose an approach to studying activity in migration studies. De-Santis A. et al. (2026) analyzed the influence of the media on perceptions of youth migration through traditional and social platforms in the context of perception and decision-making, and investigated the sociological consequences of youth migration.

At the same time, the analysis of modern publications allows us to identify a number of unresolved aspects of the problem that necessitate further research. Most of the papers consider individual economic, educational or institutional factors of migration in isolation, while their interaction in the context of post-conflict transformations remains insufficiently studied. There is a limited number of comparative studies that would simultaneously cover different post-conflict countries and allow us to identify universal and specific patterns of youth migration management. Integral approaches to assessing migration pressure and the effectiveness of public policy, which would combine quantitative indicators with qualitative characteristics of the socio-economic environment, remain insufficiently developed. The long-term consequences of mass forced migration for the structure of human capital, especially in the context of economic recovery after conflicts, have been studied to a limited extent.

Thus, the existing scientific work forms the theoretical basis for the study of youth migration, but does not provide a comprehensive vision of the mechanisms of its regulation in post-conflict societies, which necessitates this study aimed at integrating different approaches and forming a holistic model of analysis and management of youth migration processes.

The article is aimed at analyzing the international experience of managing youth migration in post-conflict societies to identify the key socio-economic drivers of migration processes, assess the effectiveness of the state migration policy, and determine its impact on the formation of human capital and economic development. Particular attention is paid to the identification of the most effective foreign practices of regulating migration flows, as well as to substantiating the possibilities of their adaptation in Ukrainian conditions, taking into account the specifics of the current stage, the end of which will necessarily require post-crisis recovery, which will allow the formation of

reasonable recommendations for minimizing the negative consequences of the outflow of young people and increasing the effectiveness of state policy in the field of migration management.

Methodology

To study the international experience of youth migration management in post-conflict societies and conduct a comparative analysis of foreign practices, a set of general scientific and special methods was used. The methodology of the study is based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to the analysis of international mobility of the population, in particular, youth migration in post-conflict societies. The basis for quantitative calculations is international statistical databases; data from these sources cover key indicators of international migration, including migrant statistics, migration flows, employment indicators, and socio-economic characteristics of migrants. Generalized methodology. The study is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. International Youth Migration Research Methodology

Indicator	Formula	Explanation of variables	Purpose
Net migration (Net Migration)	$NM = I - E$	I - immigration. E - emigration	Determination of the general migration balance of a country
Net Migration Rate	$NMR = 1000 \times (I - E) / P$	P - the average annual population	Standardization of migration flows between countries of different sizes
Share of young people among migrants, %	$YM = (M_{15-29} / M_{total}) \times 100$	M ₁₅₋₂₉ - migrants aged 15-29, M _{total} - total number of migrants	Assessment of the role of young people in migration processes
Youth unemployment rate	$YUR = (U_y / L_y) \times 100$	U _y - unemployed youth, L _y - economically active youth	Determination of economic pressure on young people
NEET share	$NEET = (NEET_y / T_y) \times 100$	NEET _y - young people who do not study and do not work, T _y - Total Youth	Assessment of social exclusion of young people
Remittances in % of GDP	$RGDP = (R / GDP) \times 100$	R - remittances of migrants, GDP - Gross Domestic Product	Measuring the economic effect of migration for a country
Migration pressure index	$MPI = (E/P) \times 1000$	E - emigration, P - population	Estimation of the intensity of population outflow
Index of Institutional Capacity of Migration Policy	$MGI = (\sum w_i \times x_i)$	x _i - normalized policy indicators, W _i - scales	Comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of state migration management
Share of employment of migrants	$EMP = (E_m / M_m) \times 100$	E _m - employed migrants, M _m - total number of migrants	Assessment of the integration of migrants into the labor market
Rate of change of the indicator	$\Delta = ((X_t - X_0) / X_0) \times 100$	X _t - the value in the final year, X ₀ is the base year	Analysis of the dynamics of migration processes

**Source: formed by the authors on the basis of World Bank (2026); United Nations Migration Statistics (2026); ILOSTAT (2025); UNHCR (2026).*

The indicators of Table 1 allow for generalizing the system of key analytical and calculation formulas proposed for assessing international youth migration and form the methodological foundations of the study. Their content reflects the transition from a simple description of migration phenomena to their formalized quantitative measurement, which will ensure the comparability of results between countries with different levels of economic development, demographic structure, and intensity of migration processes. The central place is occupied by the indicator of net migration, which is calculated as the difference between immigration and emigration flows and allows you to determine the general direction of the country's migration balance, while the migration rate derived from it ensures that absolute values are brought to a relative dimension through rationing for the population, which is critical for comparisons between countries.

A separate group of formulas consists of indicators that characterize the structural features of migration, in particular, the share of young people among migrants, which will assess the degree of involvement of the most mobile age groups in migration processes, as well as indicators related to the labor market, such as the level of youth unemployment and the share of NEETs, reflecting the deep socio-economic causes of migration behavior. Taken together, these indicators will reveal not only the fact of migration, but also its structural prerequisites, which is key for the analysis of youth mobility in post-conflict societies.

Macroeconomic indicators play an important role in the calculation system, in particular, the share of migrants' remittances in the gross domestic product, which is used to assess the economic effect of migration for donor countries and will allow quantifying the degree of dependence of national economies on external labor resources. Along with this, the index of migration pressure is used, which, due to the ratio of emigration flows to the population, will allow assessing the intensity of the outflow of human capital and identifying countries with the highest risk of demographic exhaustion.

To assess the institutional component, it is proposed to use a generalized index of the effectiveness of migration policy, which is based

on a weighted aggregation of normalized indicators and reflects the level of development of state mechanisms for regulating migration processes, integration of migrants and programs for their return. The final element of the system is the indicator of the rate of change, which will allow analyzing the dynamics of migration processes in the time dimension and fixing structural shifts between the base and end periods of the study.

The methodology summarized in Table 1 forms a single analytical model that can provide a comprehensive study of international youth migration as a multifactorial phenomenon that combines demographic, social, economic and institutional components. It is this formalization that allows us to move on to their systematic quantitative measurement of migration processes and their comparison within post-conflict societies and developed regions.

Results

The full-scale war continues to significantly affect the migratory mobility of young people in Ukraine, creating new challenges and transformations in migration flows. According to the International Organization for Migration, as of the beginning of 2025, the number of internally displaced persons in Ukraine is about 3.5-3.7 million people, which indicates the preservation of the scale of internal mobility of the population (International Organization for Migration, 2025).

Young people, as the most mobile social group, demonstrate a high level of adaptation to new conditions, but at the same time face significant restrictions in access to education, employment, and social resources in places of displacement. This directly affects their professional and personal growth, as well as the formation of long-term life strategies.

In the current conditions of socio-economic instability and the impact of a full-scale war, the volume of migration flows of young people in Ukraine is undergoing significant changes. Young people remain the most mobile social group, reacting sensitively to changes in the security, economic and educational environment. Of particular importance is the analysis not only of potential migration intentions, but also of the actual implementation of traveling abroad.

According to sociological research, in particular, analysts of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, in cooperation with international organizations, there is a clear dynamic of growth of migration potential in 2022, followed by gradual stabilization in 2023-2026. This is due, on the one hand, to security risks and forced displacement, and on the other hand, to the adaptation of young people to new conditions and

partial reorientation to internal development opportunities.

Figure 1 shows the dynamics of the share of young people who intend to go abroad, as well as the share of those who have already implemented migration experience during 2020-2026, which allows us to assess the ratio of potential and actual mobility of the young population of Ukraine.

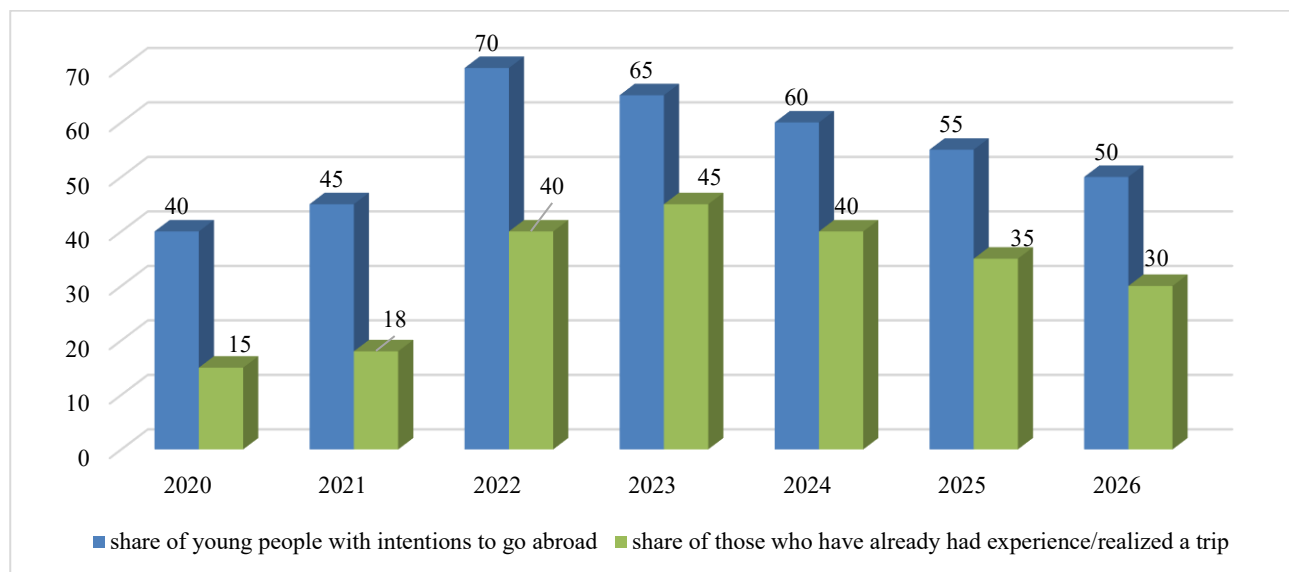


Figure 1. Migration potential of Ukrainian youth

**Source: formed by the authors based on UNDP (2025).*

The analysis of the dynamics of the migration potential of Ukraine's youth in 2020-2026 indicates a significant impact of crisis factors, primarily a full-scale war, on the formation of both migration intentions and their implementation. The highest figures are observed in 2022, when the share of young people with intentions to leave reached 70%, and the share of those who actually left – 40%, which is due to a sharp deterioration in the security situation and forced displacement.

In the following years, there was a gradual decrease in both migration intentions and the actual mobility of young people. This indicates the adaptation of the young population to new conditions, partial stabilization of the situation, as well as a reorientation to the possibilities of self-realization within the country. At the same time, the preservation of relatively high indicators (50% of intentions in 2026) confirms the presence of significant migration potential, which remains sensitive to economic and security factors.

Thus, the migration mobility of young people in Ukraine is characterized by a transition from a forced active phase to a stage of relative stabilization, but it still requires a systematic state policy, in particular on the part of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, which will be aimed at creating conditions for the professional realization of young people in Ukraine and reducing the level of their outflow abroad.

Given the current situation with youth migration in Ukraine, especially in the context of long-term security and socio-economic challenges, it is advisable to study the experience of other countries in the field of migration management. This issue is of strategic importance for the state, since the migration mood of young people directly affects the labor potential, demographic structure and prospects for post-war recovery.

Turning to international practices, in particular the experience of countries that have gone through post-conflict transformation, will

identify effective public policy instruments aimed at reducing the outflow of young people, stimulating their return and creating conditions for self-realization within the country. The use of such approaches is important for the formation of an effective youth policy and ensuring sustainable socio-economic development of Ukraine.

The choice of countries for a comparative analysis of the international experience of managing youth migration in post-conflict societies is due to the need to ensure both the methodological correctness of the study and its regional relevance. Migration processes, especially in forced and youth forms, are a global phenomenon and are recorded in various parts of the world, including countries in Africa, South America and the Middle East, where they are often associated with military conflicts, political instability, economic crises and humanitarian disasters. Large-scale waves of refugees and internally displaced persons are forming in these regions, which creates an important layer of international experience in managing migration flows in the context of prolonged or recurring conflicts.

At the same time, the European region was chosen as the main analytical plane for this study, since Ukraine, which is a key case of a post-conflict society within the framework of the study, is geopolitically, economically and institutionally integrated into the European space. After the start of the full-scale war in 2022, migration flows from Ukraine were mainly directed to the countries of the European Union, which formed a common regional migration circuit, within which both the reception of forced migrants and the implementation of policies for their temporary protection, integration and subsequent reintegration take place.

That is why, to ensure the correctness of the comparative analysis, countries were selected that, on the one hand, have their own experience in post-conflict development and migration flow management, and on the other hand, operate within the European or European integration trajectory of development. Such countries include the states of the Western Balkans and the Caucasus, which have already passed the main peak phases of forced migration in previous, but relatively recent historical periods, but continue to face the consequences of a mass outflow of population, primarily young people. This makes it possible to compare different models of migration management: from reactive stabilization tools after conflicts to more institutionally developed integration systems specific to the European Union.

Thus, the concentration on European countries is due not to the denial of the global nature of migration processes, which are equally inherent in Africa, South America and the Middle East, but to the need to ensure the comparability of institutional, economic and political conditions. In this context, Ukraine is the central element of the analysis as a European country experiencing the current phase of a large-scale migration shock, while other selected states allow us to trace different trajectories of post-conflict recovery and the effectiveness of migration policy within the same regional space.

The analysis of international youth migration, given in Table 2, is a prerequisite for a correct understanding of cause-and-effect relationships in migration processes, since it allows you to identify not only the level of the phenomenon, but also the mechanisms of its change, which is key to the formation of effective approaches to migration management in post-conflict societies.

Table 2. Analysis of migration and demographic indicators, million people

Country	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Share of youth %	Net migration (per 1000 people)	Change 2024 to	
								2020	2022
Ukraine	0.25	0.30	5.50	1.20	0.90	34	-6.8	+0.65	-4.60
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.09	0.08	28	-2.1	-	-0.01
Serbia	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.06	30	-1.5	-	-0.01
Georgia	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.05	31	-2.3	-	-0.01
Europe	1.5	1.6	7.2	3.5	2.8	27	+1.2	+1.3	-4.4

**Source: calculated by the authors on the basis of United Nations Migration Statistics (2025); ec.europa (2025).*

The indicators of Table 2 reflect the dynamics of annual migration flows, including forced migration, in 2020-2024, the analysis of time dynamics demonstrates a distinct unevenness of migration flows, where 2022 is a critical peak period for Ukraine, which is directly related to a sharp deterioration of the security situation and a large-scale escalation of the armed conflict. It is during this period that a multiple increase in departures is recorded compared to previous years, after which in 2023-2024 there is a gradual decrease in the intensity of flows, which indicates a partial stabilization of migration behavior, adaptation of the population to new conditions and limited mobility due to regulatory and infrastructure factors.

Ukraine is characterized by a sharp structural breakdown in migration dynamics: if in 2020-2021 the indicators remained relatively stable and reflected mainly ordinary migration processes, then in 2022 there was an explosive jump in forced movements, which formed a long-term effect of demographic load. In the following years, there was a decrease in annual flows, but they remained significantly higher than the pre-war level, which indicates the incompleteness of the processes of return and the preservation of a high level of external mobility of the population. At the same time, the share of young people in the structure of the population of Ukraine (34%) emphasizes the increased sensitivity of the country to migration losses, since it is the younger age groups that are the most mobile and at the same time critical for the formation of human capital and long-term economic recovery. For the countries of the Western Balkans and the Caucasus, the dynamics of international mobility is much more inertial and without sharp structural shifts in the period 2020–2024, which indicates the dominance of long-term labor migration due to chronic labor market imbalances, relatively low-income levels and limited opportunities for economic mobility of young people.

At the same time, it is important to take into account that these countries have already passed the main peaks of forced migration in previous periods, when armed conflicts and crisis socio-political phenomena were much more intense, therefore, in the time interval of the study, not new

shocks prevail, but the consequences of previous migration waves and their inertial reproduction. The indicator of net migration additionally reflects the general disproportion between emigration and immigration flows. The negative value for Ukraine and the countries of the Western Balkans and Georgia indicates the predominance of the outflow of the population, which forms a stable demographic pressure and aggravates the problem of loss of the working population. On the other hand, the positive significance for Europe as a whole reflects its role as the main host region, accumulating migration flows and partially compensating for its own demographic challenges due to external migration.

All countries under consideration function within the framework of a common global trend of increasing population mobility, but their intensity and consequences differ significantly depending on the level of security and stability, demographic structure, and the country's role in international migration flows. At the same time, the European context is a key environment for analysis, since it is here that the bulk of displaced persons from Ukraine are concentrated, which forms a specific model of regional redistribution of human capital and identifies long-term challenges for recovery and integration policies.

To comprehensively assess the migration pressure and identify the key patterns of the formation of the migration potential of young people in Ukraine, it is advisable to use an integral approach based on a combination of a number of socio-economic indicators. This approach allows us to take into account the multifactorial nature of migration processes, due to the influence of both economic and social determinants.

Normalization of youth unemployment

$$I_{un} = (X - X_{min}) / (X_{max} - X_{min}) \\ = (20.2 - 14.1) / (33.1 - 14.1) = 6.1 / 19 = 0.32$$

NEET Normalization:

$$I_{neet} = (X - X_{min}) / (X_{max} - X_{min}) \\ = (23.4 - 13.1) / (27.2 - 13.1) = 10.3 / 14.1 = 0.73$$

Normalization of GDP per capita:

$$I_{gdp} = (X - X_{min}) / (X_{max} - X_{min}) = (5200 - 5200) / (38000 - 5200) = 0 / 32800 = 0.00$$

GDP per capita inversion:

$$I_{gdp}^{inv} = 1 - I_{gdp} = 1 - 0.00 = 1.00$$

Normalization of the Human Capital Index:

$$I_{hci} = \frac{X - X_{\min}}{X_{\max} - X_{\min}} = \frac{0.62 - 0.61}{0.74 - 0.61} = 0.01 / 0.13 = 0.08$$

Human Capital Index Inversion:

$$I_{hci}^{inv} = 1 - I_{hci} = 1 - 0.08 = 0.92$$

Integral index of migration pressure

$$I_{mig} = I_{un} + I_{neet} + I_{gdp}^{inv} + I_{hci}^{inv} / 4 = 0.32 + 0.73 + 1.00 + 0.92 / 4 = 2.974 = 0.74$$

Based on the normalized data, an integral index of migration pressure was calculated, which allows a comprehensive assessment of the

influence of a set of socio-economic factors on the formation of migration moods of young people. The results obtained are summarized in Table 3, which presents the calculated values of indicators for Ukraine and compares them in the international context, which makes it possible to identify the relative position of the country among other countries and identify key trends in youth migration.

Table 3. Analysis of socio-economic drivers of youth migration

Country	Youth unemployment % (2020–2024 average)	NEET %	GDP per capita (USD, 2024)	Human Capital Index	Migration pressure index
Ukraine	20.2	23.4	5200	0.62	0.74
Bosnia and Herzegovina	33.1	27.2	8000	0.61	1.00
Serbia	24.0	20.1	11300	0.67	0.58
Georgia	27.2	23.3	8200	0.64	0.68
Europe	14.1	13.1	38000	0.74	0.08

**Source: calculated by the authors on the basis of World Bank (2025); Countryeconomy.com (2025); Eurostat - NEET rate (2025).*

The indicators of Table 3 show a significant differentiation between countries in terms of the pressure level on migration processes. The highest youth unemployment rate is observed in Bosnia and Herzegovina at 33.1%, which is significantly higher than the European average of 14.1% by more than 2.3 times and indicates significant structural imbalances in the labor market and limited employment opportunities for the young population. High values are also typical for Georgia, where the youth unemployment rate reaches 27.3%, and Serbia with 24.1%, while Ukraine shows a value of 20.2%, which is also higher than the European level by 6.1 percentage points and indicates an increased risk of the formation of migration intentions among young people. The NEET indicator confirms a similar structure of gaps: in Bosnia and Herzegovina it is 27.2%, in Ukraine it is 23.4%, in Georgia 23.3%, in Serbia 20.1%, while in Europe the value of the indicator is only 13.1%, which reflects a much better integration of young people into the education and employment system in European countries.

The level of economic development, measured in terms of GDP per capita, shows significant asymmetries between regions. The highest indicator is typical for Europe and is 38000 USD, which is in sharp contrast to Ukraine,

where the value is 5200 USD and is the lowest among all the countries in the sample, exceeding the gap by more than seven times. Serbia with an indicator of 11300 USD, Georgia with 8200 USD and Bosnia and Herzegovina with 8000 USD form an intermediate group of middle-income countries that significantly lag behind the European level of well-being. Ukraine is in a zone of increased migratory pressure, Bosnia and Herzegovina demonstrates the maximum level of pressure, which reaches 1.00, which is due to the highest values of youth unemployment at the level of 33.1% and NEET at the level of 27.2%, combined with a low level of human capital. Serbia and Georgia occupy intermediate positions with indices of 0.58 and 0.68 respectively, reflecting a partial stabilization of the socio-economic environment, while Europe is characterized by a minimal index value of 0.08 due to a combination of low youth unemployment, a small share of NEETs and a high level of economic development and human capital.

Table 4 calculates that the average index of migration management efficiency varies significantly between countries and regions. Europe as a whole shows the highest values of this index throughout the study period, with a gradual increase from 0.66 in 2020 to 0.74 in 2024,

indicating a consistent strengthening of institutional capacity and coordination of migration policies migration administration,

where developed EU countries traditionally occupy high positions in the relevant ratings of the effectiveness of policies and practices.

Table 4. Effectiveness of migration management policies

Country	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average index	Return of migrants %
Ukraine	0.46	0.48	0.34	0.37	0.41	0.41	16
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.43	0.44	0.45	0.46	0.47	0.45	23
Serbia	0.51	0.53	0.54	0.56	0.58	0.54	29
Georgia	0.49	0.50	0.51	0.53	0.55	0.52	26
Europe	0.66	0.68	0.70	0.72	0.74	0.70	36

**Source: calculated by the authors on the basis of Migration to and from the EU (2025); MIREX (2025).*

Serbia and Georgia form an intermediate group, where the index value increases gradually: in Serbia from 0.51 in 2020 to 0.58 in 2024, in Georgia from 0.49 to 0.55 over the same period. This indicates a gradual strengthening of management mechanisms, but still a lower level compared to European standards. Bosnia and Herzegovina have even lower values, ranging

from 0.43 to 0.47, demonstrating slower progress in building a migration management system. Ukraine has the lowest scores among all the countries in the sample, with the index falling to 0.34 in 2022 and partially recovering to 0.41 in 2024, due to crisis events that affected the ability of state institutions to effectively coordinate migration processes (Fig. 2).

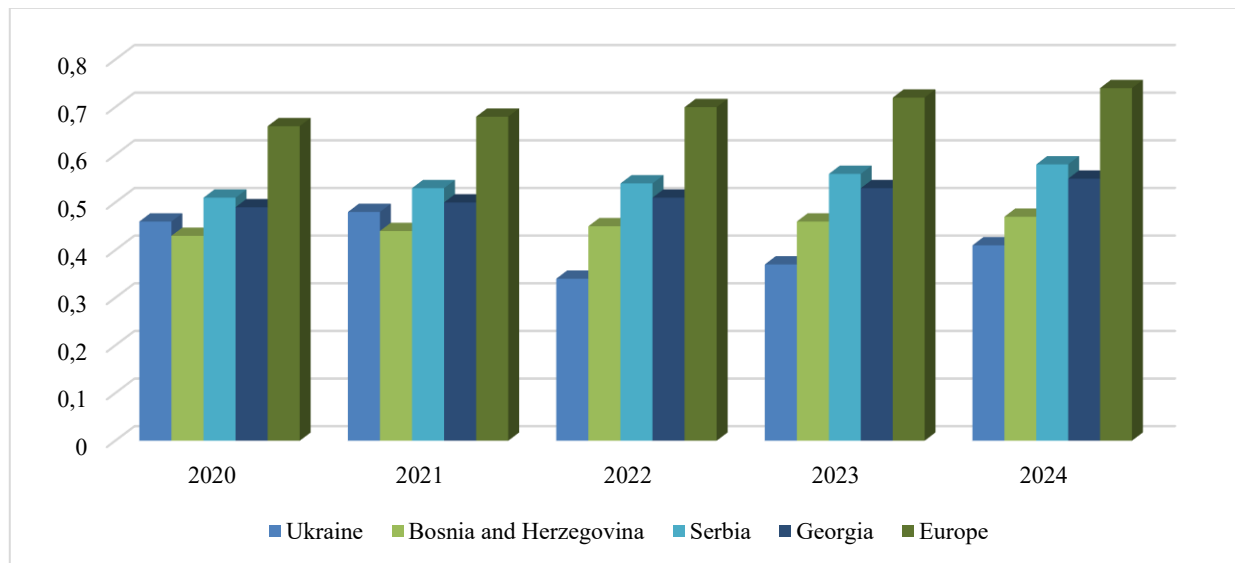


Figure 2. Results of the assessment of the effectiveness of migration management policy

**Source: calculated by the authors.*

The return rate of migrants also shows significant differences. Serbia and Georgia have average return rates of 29% and 26%, respectively, indicating a moderate capacity to implement reintegration and return mechanisms. Bosnia and Herzegovina has a lower rate of 23%, and Ukraine has the lowest rate of 16%, indicating difficulties in implementing effective migrant return and reintegration programmes, which are

largely dependent on the security situation, administrative capacity, and resource base of the state.

The indicators of Table 5 show differentiation between countries both in terms of the level of external cash flows in the form of remittances and in the ability of economies to transform migration processes into a positive economic result.

Table 5. Analysis of socio-economic effects of migration

Country	Remittens (% of GDP)					Employment of refugees %	Change 2024 to	
	2020	2021	2020	2020	2024		2020	2022
Ukraine	8.1	7.6	10.7	9.9	9.6	44	+1.5	-1.1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	10.6	10.9	11.3	11.1	11.0	56	+0.4	-0.3
Serbia	8.3	8.6	9.1	8.8	8.7	61	+0.4	-0.4
Georgia	11.6	12.1	13.6	12.9	12.6	59	+1.0	-1.0
Europe	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.3	66	+0.1	-0.2

**Source: calculated by the authors on the basis of TradingEconomics.com (2025); CEIC Data (2025); Eurostat (2025).*

The highest values of the share of remittens in GDP during the study period are typical for Georgia, where the indicator increases from 11.6% in 2020 to a peak value of 13.6% in 2022, followed by a decrease to 12.6% in 2024, which indicates a high dependence of households on external incomes of labor migrants and the sensitivity of this flow to changes in migration activity. Bosnia and Herzegovina also shows consistently high values at the level of 10.6-11.3%, indicating the structural dependence of the economy on remittances, while Ukraine is characterized by fluctuations from 8.1% in 2020 to 10.7% in 2022, followed by a decline to 9.6% in 2024, reflecting a sharp increase in external migration during the crisis period and partial stabilization after the peak. Serbia shows more stable dynamics in the range of 8.3-9.1%, while Europe holds the lowest values at the level of 1.2-1.5%, which confirms its status as a predominantly host region and not a source of labor migration.

The analysis of the dynamics of changes shows that the largest increase in remittances between 2020 and 2024 is observed in Ukraine, where the indicator increased by 1.5 percentage points, which reflects the strengthening of the role of external employment in the formation of household incomes. In Georgia, the increase is 1.0 percentage points, while in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, the changes are less pronounced and amount to about 0.4 percentage points, and in Europe, the changes are minimal and do not exceed 0.1 percentage points, which indicates the relative stability of migration flows.

The refugee employment rate demonstrates significant differences between countries in terms of the ability to integrate forcibly displaced persons into the labor market. The highest level is recorded in Europe as a whole and is 66%, which reflects the developed mechanisms of integration

and active employment policy. For Serbia, this figure reaches 61%. For Georgia – 59%, for Bosnia and Herzegovina – 56%, which indicates an average level of institutional capacity. Ukraine has the lowest refugee employment rate at 44%, which indicates limited opportunities for the integration of forcibly displaced persons into the formal labor market in the context of the crisis load.

The integral balance of migration effects in 2024 further confirms the identified trends. The most positive value is observed in Europe at the level of +0.61, which reflects the predominance of economic benefits from migration processes over the loss of human capital. On the other hand, all labor-exporting countries show negative balance sheet values, with the most critical value being characteristic of Ukraine (-0.28), which is explained by a combination of high losses of human capital and a relatively lower level of refugee employment. For Bosnia and Herzegovina, the balance is -0.14, for Georgia - 0.09, for Serbia - 0.04, which indicates a gradual approach of the latter to a neutral level due to more effective integration of migration resources and higher employment of migrants.

The totality of the considered indicators demonstrates that youth migration in the post-conflict period is formed under the influence of economic, social, and institutional factors at the same time, and the key determinant is not only the level of economic recovery, but also the ability of the state to provide integration mechanisms for young people as the most mobile group of the population.

A comparative analysis of macroeconomic indicators shows that countries with faster economic growth demonstrate a higher level of retention of the young population within the country. At the same time, even under the conditions of economic recovery, there is no

automatic reduction in migration outflow, which emphasizes the limitations of an exclusively economic approach to managing migration processes. In post-conflict societies, the complexity of policies that combine economic incentives with educational. Social and institutional measures are crucial.

The analysis of youth employment indicators and the level of integration in the labor market shows that countries that implement active programs for employment. Professional retraining and support for the first job achieve significantly better results in reducing migration pressure. Especially effective are the models in which the state cooperates with the private sector and international organizations. forming flexible mechanisms for young people to enter the economy after crisis periods. At the same time, in countries where the labor market remains structurally unbalanced, even significant economic growth rates do not compensate for the loss of human capital.

The results of the analysis of socio-demographic indicators confirm that youth migration has a pronounced long-term character and often takes the form of "fixed mobility", when temporary displacements are transformed into permanent residence abroad. This is especially true in post-conflict countries, where the level of trust in institutions is low, and the prospects for social mobility within the country are limited. In such conditions. Even the return of economic stability does not guarantee a quick return of young people.

Separately, it should be noted that the role of the educational and innovation component, which in the comparative analysis is one of the strongest factors restraining migration. Countries that invest in the modernization of education, international academic mobility with a subsequent return mechanism, and the development of innovation ecosystems demonstrate a more sustainable dynamics of preserving the young population. This confirms that migration management in modern conditions should focus not on restricting departure, but on creating competitive internal opportunities.

Thus, an effective model of youth migration management in post-conflict societies is multidimensional and is based on the synergy

of economic recovery. institutional trust, active employment policies and human capital development. International experience shows that the most effective approaches are those that integrate migration policy into the overall strategy of post-conflict reconstruction, rather than considering it as a separate area of regulation. In this system, young people are not the object of restrictions, but are a key resource for the recovery and long-term development of the state.

Conclusions

Generalization of the results of the analysis allows us to assert that the youth migration in post-conflict societies is formed under the influence of a complex interaction of socio-economic, demographic and institutional factors, and the decisive factor is not a separate indicator, but a combination of them. It has been established that the high level of the youth unemployment and a significant share of economically inactive youth create a stable effect of stimulating leaving, which is aggravated by the low level of economic development and limited opportunities for the implementation of human capital. In these conditions. Even the growth of remittances does not compensate for the losses from the outflow of the young population, since they have a predominantly short-term stabilizing effect and do not ensure long-term economic development. Comparative analysis confirms that countries that have already passed the active phase of the conflict are characterized by more stable migration flows and a gradual decrease in migratory pressure, while Ukraine is characterized by a peak load phase with high risks of consolidation of long-term external migration of young people.

The results obtained indicate that the effectiveness of the state policy in the field of migration management directly depends on its integration into the broader system of post-conflict recovery. The most effective approaches are those that combine measures to stimulate youth employment, develop educational and innovative infrastructure, support entrepreneurship, and create conditions for the return of migrants. At the same time, the low level of institutional capacity and limited opportunities of the labor market determine the persistence of a

high level of migratory pressure even in the context of a gradual economic recovery. It is also important that recipient countries demonstrate the ability to transform migration flows into a positive economic effect due to the high level of employment of migrants, which forms an asymmetry of benefits between countries of origin and countries of reception.

In view of this, it is advisable to formulate a number of proposals that are of practical importance for improving the policy of youth migration management. An important area is the creation of incentives for the return of young people, including tax benefits, access to business finance, and reintegration programs. It is also expedient to expand international cooperation with recipient countries to form circular migration mechanisms that will combine gaining experience abroad with the subsequent return and use of this experience in the national economy. Special attention needs to be paid to the development of human capital through investments in education, digital skills, and innovation, which can reduce the long-term propensity of young people to emigrate.

It is advisable to direct further scientific research to deepen the quantitative analysis of migration processes using microdata, which will allow a more accurate assessment of the motivational factors of youth migration and the effectiveness of individual policy instruments. The use of econometric models to assess the causal relationships between socio-economic indicators and migration activity, as well as modeling post-conflict recovery scenarios, taking into account various strategies for migration management, is promising. A separate area of research is related to the study of the long-term consequences of the loss of human capital and the possibilities of its compensation through innovative development and digitalization of the economy. It is also important to study the behavioral aspects of migration, in particular the role of expectations, trust in institutions, and social capital in shaping migration decisions of young people, which will allow the formation of more targeted and effective mechanisms of public policy.

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