

Analysis of the impact of the political situation in Ukraine on the migration situation in the Salzburg Forum countries

Version 27 Apr. 2015

Introduction:

The present paper builds upon the information paper on the *Political crisis in Ukraine* published by ICMPD on February 27, 2014 and the data collected by the Salzburg Forum countries during the period June 2014 - April 2015. The data was regularly collected in the categories agreed between the countries concerned in the Joint Declaration endorsed at the Ministerial Conference of the Salzburg Forum in Modra on 19 June 2014: border management, visas, and asylum. The analysis takes into account information also from other relevant sources (Frontex, EASO, IOM, Russian FMS). ICMPD took the liberty to apply its knowledge and provide with its considerations, which can be potentially relevant for the Salzburg Forum.



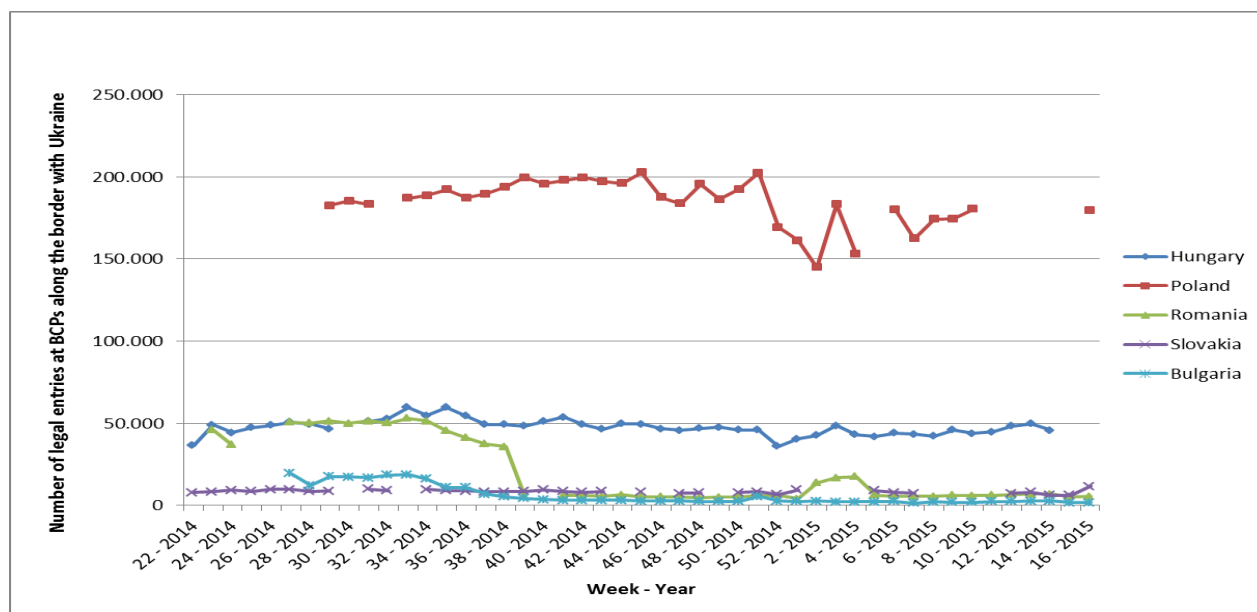
SUMMARY

- **Border crossings:** according to the most recent data, most Ukrainians had entered the SF countries through traditional labour migration routes. The number of illegal border crossings slightly grew compared to the previous year, yet remained moderate throughout the period. During the period April 2014 – April 2015, the East (Russia) has faced an influx of 953,981 Ukrainian citizens who remained in the Russian territory.
- **Visas:** the highest number of visa applications was filed in Poland (542.320), and Poland also reported the highest number of refusals (+23%) of entry of Ukrainian nationals in 2014.
- **Asylum:** the majority of asylum requests is filed inland within the SF countries, with Poland receiving 1.768 applications for asylum, followed by Austria and the Czech Republic with 530 and 555 applications in the covered period, respectively. The rest of the SF saw comparatively very low numbers of applications (38 in Hungary; 27 in Romania; 73 in Bulgaria; and 20 in Slovakia, for the entire period June 2014-April 2015).
- **Other relevant:** among all means of illegal entry by the Ukrainian nationals, the use of fraudulent documents was the most frequently detected, particularly at the Polish land border crossing points.
- **IDPs as issue of concern:** there are currently 1,2 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) on the territory of Ukraine. The combination of the serious economic situation of the country, the continuing impact of the conflict and the climate conditions in winter create the potential for significant increase of the migration flow towards the West.

Border crossings

Legal border crossing: according to the most recent data from the Salzburg countries, most Ukrainians entered the SF countries through traditional labour migration routes. During the period June 2014 – April 2015, the number of legal border crossings remained steady, with a slight decrease in the beginning of 2015, most notable in Poland. With the exception of Romania, the levels of border crossings for the year 2015 are generally somewhat lower than during the last 6 months of previous year for all SF countries.

Legal entries at BCPs along the border with Ukraine



Source: Salzburg Forum countries data

Illegal border crossing: According to the most recent data from FRONTEX, during the period July-September 2014, the number of detections of illegal border-crossing between all EU MS and Ukraine remained moderate (131). The same applied for detections of illegal border-crossing of Ukrainian nationals at the Eastern land borders of the EU (47), including the SF countries. Only 16 of such illegal border crossings were in fact linked to migration.¹ In 2015, according to the statistics of the Polish Border Guard headquarters, Ukrainians were most frequently apprehended (2.000 persons) attempting to enter the country with forged visas or employment contracts.²

Amongst all SF countries, the number of Ukrainian illegal stayers increased especially in Poland, which noted a 93% increase from the beginning of 2014. To a lesser extent, a comparatively higher number of Ukrainians as illegal stayers is registered in Hungary.

Visas

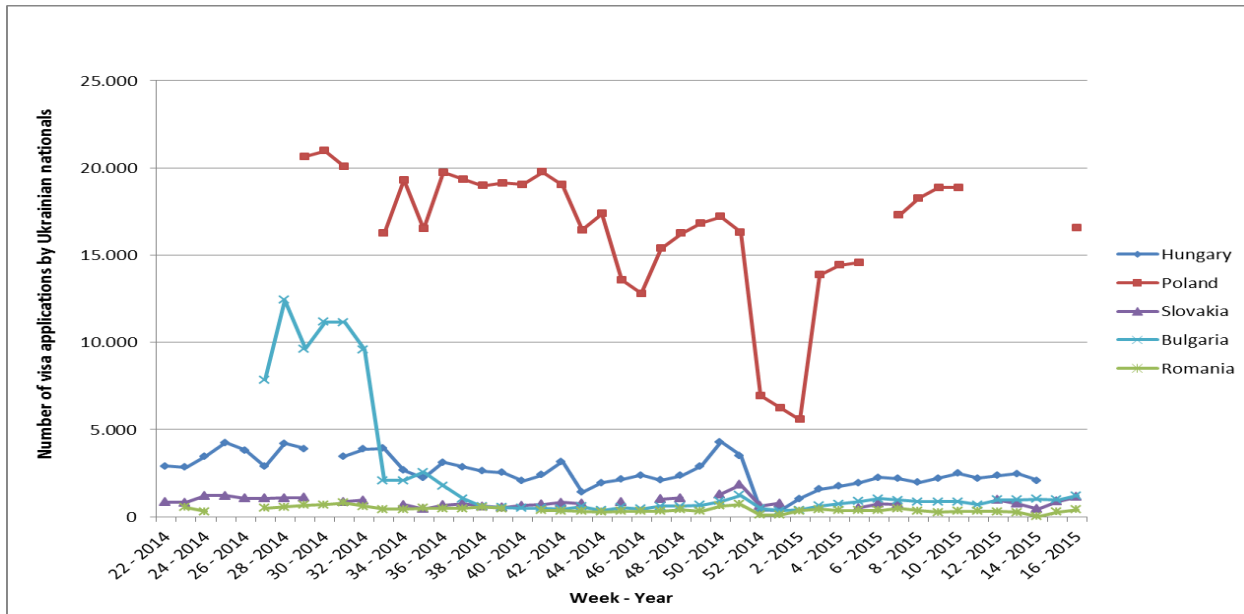
According to the most recent data from those Salzburg countries, which provided the data to the ICMPD Eastern Dimension (Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Romania; the Czech Republic provided data on type D visa, and this data is not included into the analysis), during the period June 2014 - April

¹ http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Fran_Q3_2014.pdf

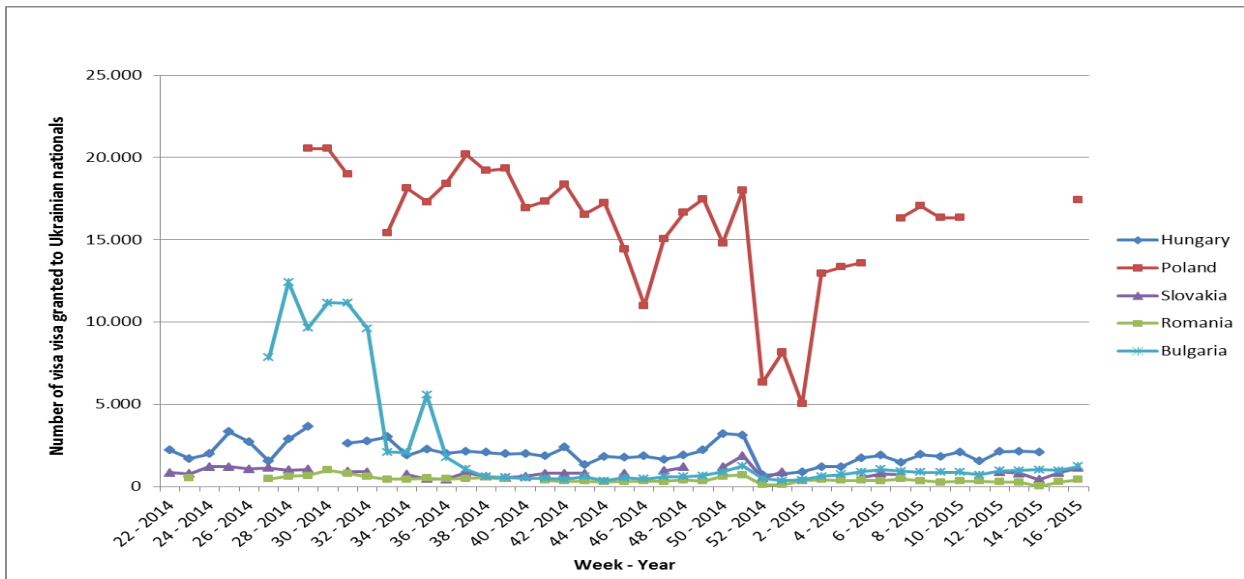
² <http://www.thenews.pl/1/10/Artykul/196108,Rise-in-illegal-immigrants-to-Poland>

2015, the highest number of visa applications was filed in Poland (542.320), with the peak during June 23-July 27, 2014, and then again rising around the period February 2-March 8, 2015. The number of applications in all other SF countries remained relatively low, with the exception of Bulgaria, which experienced an increase in the number of applications during the period June 23-July 27, 2014, and a considerable drop thereafter. Poland issued the most refusals of entry to Ukrainian nationals in 2014, which is also a 23% increase compared to one year ago before the Ukrainian crisis began.

Visa Application by Ukrainian nationals



Visa granted to Ukrainian nationals



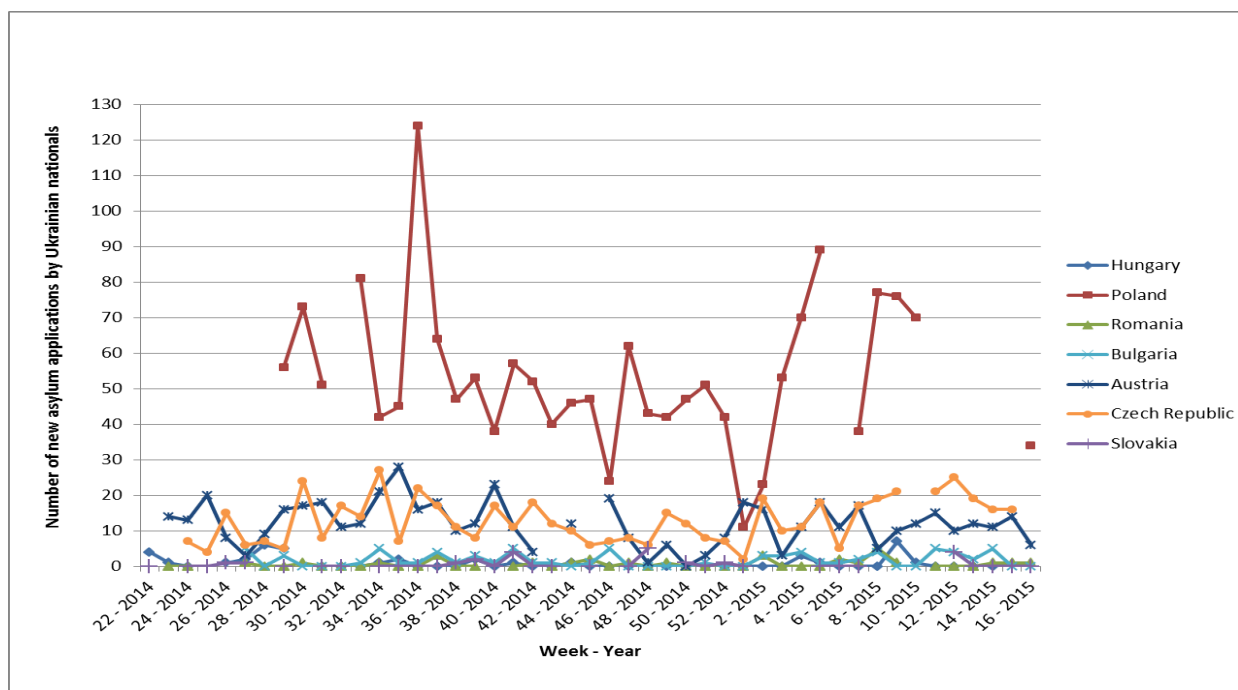
Source: Salzburg Forum countries data

Asylum

According to the most recent data from the SF countries, Poland remains the top country of destination for the asylum seekers from Ukraine with a total 1.768 applications filed during the period June 2014-April 2015. The peak of applications for asylum fell on the first week of September 2014 (124 applications, with a subsequent drop to 64 the following week) and February 2015 (89 applications in one week, with a subsequent drop to 38 applications the week after).

Poland is followed by Austria and the Czech Republic with 530 and 555 applications, respectively. The rest of the SF saw comparatively very low numbers of applications (38 in Hungary; 27 in Romania; 73 in Bulgaria; and 20 in Slovakia).

New Asylum applications by Ukrainian nationals



Source: Salzburg Forum countries data

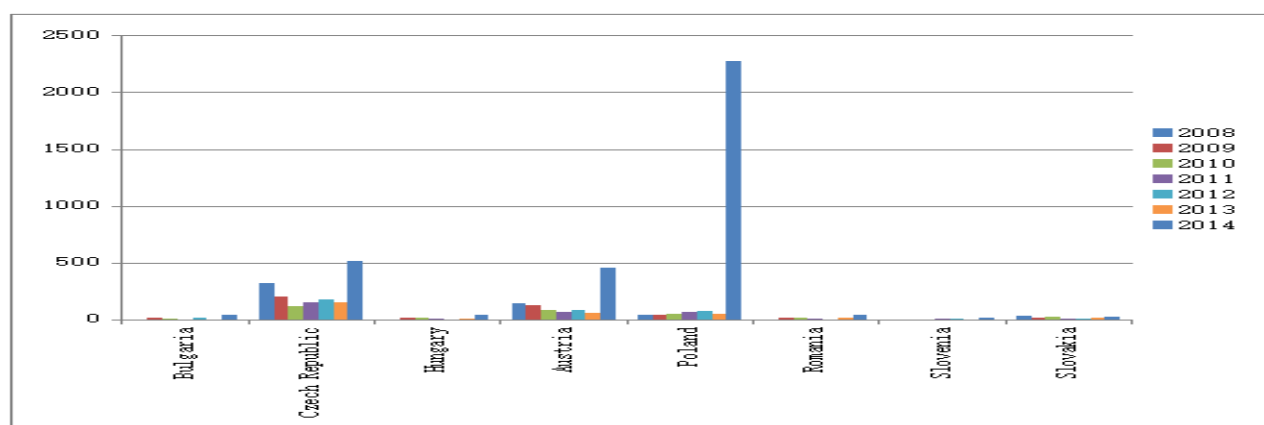
According to Eurostat, in 2014, Ukrainian nationals most commonly filed asylum applications in Poland (2.275 in 2014, compared to 45 in 2013), the Czech Republic (515 in 2014 compared to 145 in 2013) and Austria (455 in 2014 compared to 60 in 2013). This is an observable change compared to 2013, when the highest share of applications for asylum from Ukraine amongst all applications from all countries was filed in the Czech Republic (21% out of the total 695 applications).³ EASO data demonstrates an increase in the number of rejections (+3% in 2013 compared to the previous year, 2012).⁴

³ Notably, the data for the Czech Republic shows a steady decrease in the total number of applications since 2009 (1,235 applications 2009; 775 applications in 2010; 750 applications in 2011; 740 applications in 2012; 695 applications in 2013, which is a -6% change on last year).

⁴ <http://easo.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/EASO-AR-final1.pdf>.

Asylum claims of Ukrainian nationals in the EU and Salzburg Forum countries, 2008-2014

Country / Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
European Union (28 countries)	925	935	830	940	1.095	1.055	14.050
European Union (27 countries)	925	935	830	940	1.095	1.050	14.040
Bulgaria	0	10	5	0	10	0	40
Czech Republic	320	200	115	150	175	145	515
Hungary	0	10	10	5	0	5	35
Austria	140	120	80	65	80	60	455
Poland	40	35	45	65	70	45	2.275
Romania	0	10	10	5	0	10	35
Slovenia	0	0	0	5	5	0	15
Slovakia	30	15	20	5	5	15	25



Source: Eurostat

For comparison, the total number of all applications for asylum of Ukrainian citizens in the EU 28 was 925 in 2008; 935 in 2009; 830 in 2010; 940 in 2011; 1.095 in 2012; 1.055 in 2013, and 14.050 in 2014, which effectively means a 15-times increase compared to 2008. According to EASO, in March-May 2014, over 2,000 applications from Ukrainians in all MS were filed, compared with an average of 100 per month over the past 20 years. These numbers are, however, incomparable to the number of persons who fled to the Russian Federation.⁵

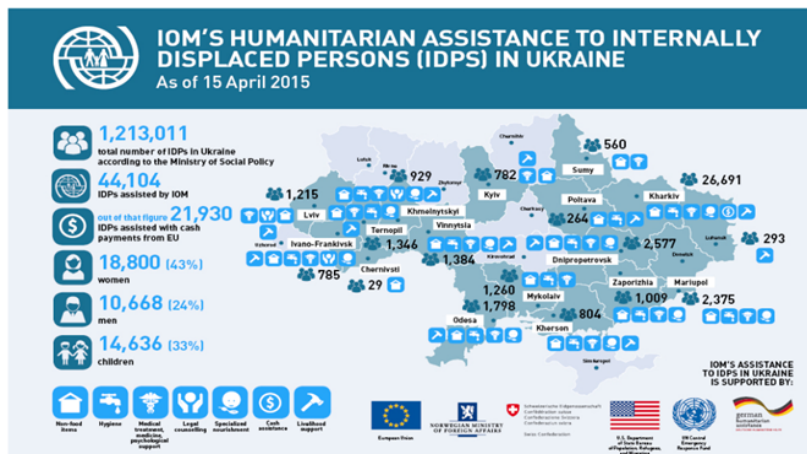
Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine

In March 2014, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol were annexed by the Russian Federation. While Ukraine considers Crimea own temporary occupied territory, the conflict in the Eastern Ukraine represents a priority for the international concerns. Due to the size of Ukraine, it was expected that the conflict itself would not directly affect the whole territory of the country, but the IDP problem does in effect affect entire Ukraine. There are currently some 1,2 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) on the territory of Ukraine⁶.

⁵ 2013 EASO report on major developments with a focus on the human rights and security situation, prepared taking into consideration a combination of quantitative indicators such as applications, pending cases and decisions, did not list Ukraine amongst particularly relevant countries of origin of asylum applicants.

⁶ IOM data; <http://iom.org.ua/en/maps-ioms-assistance-internally-displaced-persons-ukraine>.

Given the geographical and historical proximity, as well as existence of Ukrainian communities in the Salzburg Group countries, in case of spreading violence, certain displacement of minority groups for example towards Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania could be expected. The Czech Republic could become a possible destination country due to its significant Ukrainian minority. Some of the countries may also remain as transit countries only.



Given the economic situation of the country, it can be predicted that Ukraine alone will not be in the position to ensure sustainable good conditions to its IDPs. In connection to standing potential of continuation of the conflict, combined with severe winter climate in some geographical parts of Ukraine and potentially low standard of living conditions provided to IDPs, the winter season may be a reason for intensified migration flow towards neighbouring countries, including EU MS. Autumn 2015 may witness significant increase of mixed migration flows towards the EU and to Russia.

Situation in Russia

The total number of Ukrainian citizens who entered the territory of the Russian Federation from April 1, 2014 until April 8, 2015 and did not depart is around 1 million. On the territory of 71 federative subject, 446 temporary accommodation centres have been set up, which house some 30.000 persons, including 9,000 minors (under 18 years). The private sector accommodated almost half a million persons. The total number of Ukrainian nationals present in the Russian Federation is 2.55 million, thus Russia today hosts approximately 6% of all Ukrainian citizens. Ukrstat estimates the country's population to 42.9 million persons (for comparison, in 2014 the population of UA was 45,426,200 persons; in 2013 - 45,553,000 persons; in 2012 - 45,633,600 persons), excluding the population of Crimea, which the authorities continue to consider a "temporarily occupied territory".⁷ The FMS statistics most likely underestimates the number of migrants.

Since January 1 until April 8, 2015, the number of applications are as follows: 5,919 for refugee status⁸; 36,826 for a residence permit; 180,372 for temporary residence permit; 96,436 to participate in government programmes to promote voluntary resettlement of compatriots to Russia from abroad (with family members); 78,481 for the Russian citizenship; 331,582 statements of temporary asylum. The Russian Federation budgeted 11 billion roubles for the support and humanitarian assistance to the refugees from Ukraine.⁹

⁷ <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>.

⁸ During 2008-2013, the number of Ukrainian citizens and stateless persons arriving from Ukraine who applied for temporary asylum in Russia was 13 families / 17 persons.

⁹ http://www.fms.gov.ru/about/statistics/info_o_situatsii_v_otnoshenii_grazhdan_ukrainy/.