



# Ukrainian refugee crisis – Eastern Europe and beyond

## SSEESing NOW on the Russia-Ukraine war

### Expert Briefing

18 March 2022

## BACKGROUND

Over three million people have fled Ukraine so far as a result of the Russian February 2022 invasion, which has caused destruction of civilian infrastructure, has led to civilian casualties, and has forced people to leave their homes seeking safety, protection, and humanitarian assistance. Yet this is not the first refugee crisis that Europe has seen in the last decade. An [online panel](#) discussion was held by the UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES) on 15 March 2022, bringing together a distinguished panel of experts to help make sense of what is happening. This briefing document includes the key point made by each panellist.

Speakers presented the situation ‘on the ground’ with Ukrainian refugees and displaced people from their country’s perspective, including regarding the implementation of the Temporary Protection mechanism launched by the European Union for the first time since its inception (in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars). The speakers also reflected critically on positioning this refugee crisis historically in Europe, as well as contextualising the role of gender, age, and race in shaping the local responses to this displacement.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

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**There are no refugee camps in Poland.**

**Dr Karolina Łukasiewicz**

Centre for Migration Research, Warsaw University

**It’s difficult to speak of the Hungarian state’s unified response to the crisis.**

**Dr Olena Fedyuk**

Central European University, Budapest

**Ukrainian refugees are coming to the Czech Republic – they aren’t staying in Slovakia.**

**Dr Yana Leontiyeva**

Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences

**Germany has been bracing itself for new arrivals since 2015 – this time from Ukraine.**

**Professor Franck Düvell**

Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies, Osnabrück University

**It’s impossible to estimate the number of internally displaced people, as many are prevented from leaving by Russian warfare.**

**Dr Kateryna Ivashenko**

Institute of Sociology, Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, currently in Krakow