

Rebuilding Sustainable Careers for Ukrainian Women Displaced by War: The Role of Public and Non-Governmental Organisations in Lithuania

Asta Savanevičienė

Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania
asta.savaneviciene@ktu.lt

Meda Andrijauskiene

Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania
meda.andrijauskiene@ktu.lt

Gita Šakytė-Statnickė

Kaunas University of Technology, Klaipėda Higher Education Institution, Lithuania
gita.statnicke@gmail.com

Rūta Salickaitė-Žukauskienė

Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania
ruta.zukauskiene@ktu.lt

Natalija Mažeikienė

Kaunas University of Technology, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania
natalija.mazeikiene@vdu.lt

Rūta Čiutienė

Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania
ruta.ciutiene@ktu.lt

Abstract

The war in Ukraine has significantly increased the number of war refugees across Europe, including Lithuania, with women making up the majority of this population. Unlike the traditional refugee profile often associated with lower educational attainment, many Ukrainian women arriving in Europe are well educated, possess prior work experience, and demonstrate strong motivation to integrate into the labour market. Nevertheless, while attempting to enter the host country's labour market, they frequently encounter various challenges such as language barriers, difficulties in the recognition of qualifications, and childcare responsibilities.

This context encourages a deeper understanding of how sustainable careers for war-displaced women can be rebuilt and strengthened. A sustainable career is not only about employability. It also includes the ability to realize one's professional potential, adapt to a

new economic and social environment, and continuously develop within a chosen field while maintaining well-being and long-term productivity.

The aim of this study is to explore the role of Lithuanian public and non-governmental organisations in rebuilding sustainable careers for Ukrainian women displaced by war. To achieve this aim, 30 semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of Lithuanian public and non-governmental organisations contributing to refugee integration into the labour market and society. The study included participants from municipalities, the Employment Service, ministries, and non-governmental organisations such as Caritas.

The findings highlight the importance of cooperation between public and non-governmental sectors in rebuilding sustainable careers for Ukrainian women in Lithuania. Institutional efforts create opportunities for refugee women to participate more actively in the labour market, effectively utilize their skills, and develop long-term career prospects. By examining how support mechanisms operate in practice, this study provides valuable insights into the development of more inclusive labour markets and expands the understanding of sustainable careers in the context of forced migration.

Keywords: Sustainable Careers, women, forced migration, public and non-governmental organisations