

# (un)Effectiveness of the Temporary Protection EU Act – A Study with Ukrainian Refugees Job Applicants

Luca Fucmaco

## **Abstract**

This is the first study to investigate the effectiveness of the EU temporary protection act (Implementing Decision, 2022/382). We conducted a matched pair correspondence test from March 24 to September 9, 2022, in the Czech labour market, where the so-called “Lex Ukraine” allows refugees an immediate free access to the domestic labour market. We sent unsolicited job inquiries for unskilled positions where language, skills, experience are irrelevant, and the ability to interact with native coworkers or customers is not expected. We compare five groups of applicants: Czech natives (reference group), Ukraine refugees with either Ukraine or Russian ethnicity, Ukraine and Russian permanent residents. We find a series of relevant results. First, Ukrainian refugees (regardless of their ethnicity) face a lower response rate than Czech applicants, despite the Lex Ukraine, and despite the irrelevance of language barriers and skills. Second, Ukraine refugees with Russian ethnicity are treated worse than compatriots with Ukrainian ethnicity, and are treated the same as Russian permanent residents, suggesting there is ethnic misidentification. Third, the response rate of all refugees and permanent residents groups decreases over time. Fourth, the response rate of refugees with Ukrainian ethnicity increases with the increase in the war victims, but at a decreasing rate, suggesting there is collectivist psychic numbing. Fifth, the response rate of refugees with Russian ethnicity is orthogonal to the quantity of war victims, which suggests a lower empathy toward them. The end of the paper discusses the next steps of this ongoing study.