

EuroCommerce (commerce sector) (last updated 16 May)

Below is a (non-exhaustive) outline of our national associations' and company members' efforts to help Ukrainian refugees access the labour market:

- **Jerónimo Martins** (food retail, Portugal/Poland): In both Poland and Portugal, a simplified hiring plan was developed to facilitate and accelerate the access of Ukrainian refugees to the labour market. Since the beginning of the war, Jerónimo Martins Group has given more than 500 job opportunities to Ukrainian refugees.
- **Belgium:** EuroCommerce member Comeos is involved in the following initiatives:
 - o Retailers work with the public employment services to advertise vacancies for Ukrainian refugees.
 - o On the sectoral level, Ukrainian refugees are given the possibility to follow language courses in Dutch and French to help them integrate in the Belgian labour market more easily. These courses are offered to all employees employed in the Joint Labour Committees 119 – 202 – 311 and 312 via the sectoral fund “Commerce Training” (www.commercetraining.be). Commerce Training offers language courses up to 40 hours. These courses are organised in collaboration with the employers and unions.
 - o Finally, the Flemish government has made an offer to make an additional budget available to the retail sector to help Ukrainian refugees integrate in the labour market. Currently discussions are ongoing with regards to how the budget can be used at its best, for example by offering additional language courses.
- **Cyprus:** The Cyprus-Ukraine Business Association, which is operating under the auspices of the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (member of EuroCommerce), has an open line of communication with the Embassy of Ukraine in Cyprus whereby requests regarding accommodation and employment are directly forwarded to the Association so that businesses can endeavour to facilitate them. Companies are looking for ways to employ refugees under the new regime of temporary protection. Skills matching seems to be an obstacle at this point. Integration of the labour force seems to be slightly better in the city of Limassol.
- **Czechia:**
 - o Members of the Czech Confederation of Commerce and Tourism were from the beginning very active and provided support to their Ukrainian employees and their families. Many retailers undertook to pay employees who had to travel to Ukraine on the basis of a recall order (conscriptio) for a period of 3 months after their departure at least 50% of wages.
 - o Czech retailers are also very active in offering jobs to Ukrainian refugees. **The structure of the refugees is dominated by women due to the war**, so they search employment in **less physically demanding positions**, especially in positions where Czech as a language is not so much required at the beginning. Despite large numbers of Ukrainian refugees possessing high qualifications, those interested in finding jobs in the Czech Republic are mainly looking for employment in manual labour and short-term work opportunities, this is due to the fact that people fleeing the

conflict in Ukraine are counting on staying in the Czech Republic only temporarily. **Czech retailers are offering hundreds of jobs the Ukrainian refugees within their stores and distribution centres as Shop Assistant, Assistant Store Manager, Store Assistant, Stock Assistant, Selector, Logistics Assistant, as well as other office-based administration positions.** Those refugees who can speak English can find jobs also in other positions in retail – in IT or in finance departments. Many retailers have already established an **Ukrainian language recruitment helpline and provide Czech language training for successful applicants.**

- Due to the strong interest in employment expressed by Ukrainians fleeing the war and coming to the Czech Republic, CzechInvest and its partners (including the Czech Confederation of Commerce and Tourism) have established the [Jobs4ua.cz](https://jobs4ua.cz) platform. The platform can be used by verified Czech employers that are seeking employees and Ukrainian workers can use the website to search for the most suitable job opportunities. All job advertisements are available in both the Czech and Ukrainian languages.

- **Lithuania:** The Lithuanian government has approved changes to the procedure for employing Ukrainians, which simplify procedures and eliminate some bureaucratic barriers. All Ukrainians, which have arrived to Lithuania, can be legally employed in Lithuania and they do not need to get work permit. This really helps retailers recruit people faster. Refugees joins the teams as full-fledged employees with training and full guarantees. Most companies also provide additional bonuses, organizes Lithuanian language courses. There is no exact number of people already working in the retail sector, but for example one of the biggest Lithuania food retail company „Maxima“ already employs 151 Ukrainians. Companies work closely with the employment service.

- **REWE Group** (food retail): REWE Group want to make access to recruiting process as easy as possible for refugees, but language remains the biggest challenge. Since mid-March, REWE Group offers a Ukrainian-language chat function for their job openings, so that initial questions can be clarified quickly and easily.

- **Kesko:** Kesko Ltd is participating in to the Finnish Employers Association´s program [“Security through work”](#). The program encourages Finnish companies to get involved and provide employment for asylum seekers who have a work permit. With the temporary protection status they are also permitted to work in Finland. So far the bottleneck has been the queues in the migration office clearing the work permits. Kesko Ltd, as one of the name partners, is aiming to recruit people in several sectors. In the beginning, in their Logistic centers in several locations around Finland. At a later stage, this may be extended to other sectors such as IT and other roles in retail, such as shop personnel, etc.

Updated information can be viewed here: [Retailers and wholesalers support the people of Ukraine \(commerceforukraine.eu\)](https://commerceforukraine.eu)