

Refugees from Ukraine in Kraków

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2022

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Abstract

Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 opened a new chapter in the history of European migrations. According to the UNHCR, by early October 2022, 7.6 million forced migrants from Ukraine had registered in European countries, including non-EU member countries. Poland has played a critical role: it is hosting the largest number of refugees in the region and has served as a temporary home for forced migrants transiting Poland *en route* to Western Europe and other parts of the world. Poland's second largest city, Kraków (Cracow), was an important transit point and destination for Ukrainians—those fleeing by train, who came via a direct rail link from Lviv in Western Ukraine and those who used Poland's A4 highway to travel from the Ukrainian border in the east of Poland towards the German border in the west. Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians passed through Krakow between February and October, and many of them temporarily settled in the city. This report describes the results of a survey of Ukrainian refugees in the early phase of their adaptation in Kraków, in May and June 2022. The report provides an overview of the migrants' situation: their circumstances in Ukraine, their reception in Krakow and expectations about staying in Poland. It examines refugees needs and their strategies for socioeconomic adaptation. It also assesses how they perceive the refugee reception system in Poland and the response of Polish civil society. The report concludes with a set of policy recommendations for public authorities at the local, regional and national levels.

Streszczenie

Brutalna inwazja Rosji na Ukrainę w lutym 2022 roku otworzyła nowy rozdział w historii europejskich migracji. Według UNHCR do początku października 2022 r. w krajach europejskich, w tym w krajach spoza UE, zarejestrowało się 7,6 mln przymusowych migrantów z Ukrainy. Polska odgrywa kluczową rolę w tych procesach migracyjnych: przyjęła największą liczbę uchodźców w regionie i pełni rolę tymczasowego domu dla uchodźców przejeżdżających przez Polskę w drodze do Europy Zachodniej i innych części świata. Drugie co do wielkości miasto w Polsce, Kraków, było ważnym punktem tranzytowym i celem podróży dla Ukraińców – tych uciekających pociągiem, którzy przybyli bezpośrednim połączeniem kolejowym z Lwowa w Ukrainie Zachodniej oraz tych, którzy korzystając z polskiej autostrady A4 podróżowali z ukraińskiej granicy na wschodzie Polski w kierunku granicy niemieckiej na zachodzie. Setki tysięcy Ukraińców przejechało przez Kraków między lutym i październikiem, a wielu z nich tymczasowo osiedliło się w mieście. Niniejszy raport opisuje wyniki badania ukraińskich uchodźców we wczesnej fazie ich adaptacji w Krakowie, w maju i czerwcu 2022 roku. Bada potrzeby uchodźców i ich strategie adaptacji społeczno-ekonomicznej. Analizuje również, jak postrzegają system przyjmowania uchodźców w Polsce, oczekiwania dotyczące pobytu w Polsce oraz reakcję polskiego społeczeństwa obywatelskiego. Raport kończy się zaleceniami dla władz publicznych na poziomie lokalnym, regionalnym i krajowym.

Introduction

Poland and some of the Polish largest cities, such as Kraków, have been rapidly transforming over the last decade from places that were mainly sending migrants abroad to those that started to receive them. Yet, nothing prepared the country for the massive influx of refugees fleeing Ukraine which was brutally invaded by the army of the Russian Federation in February 2022. Hence, almost overnight Poland has transformed from a country with largely economic immigration to a country hosting one of the largest refugee populations in the world. According to estimations, the number of Ukrainian refugees in Poland vary between 1,4 million (Pesel registration data from 20.10.2022) to 2 million persons (UMP, 2022a) in addition to around 1,3 million economic migrants who had come to Poland before 2022 (GUS, 2020). The vast majority of refugees sought safety and security in major Polish cities. It was mainly at the regional and municipal level that the influx of war refugees from Ukraine was managed. Krakow's foreign population has at least doubled and currently every 5th resident of the city is a foreigner.

Most of the registry data and existing studies provide only limited information about the refugee population in Poland. Thus, Multiculturalism and Migration Observatory and Centre for Advanced Studies of Population and Religion at the Cracow University of Economics in collaboration with the Vienna Institute of Demography and the Vienna University of Economics and Business decided to conduct a large quantitative survey which was carried out simultaneously in Krakow and Vienna. Two other teams of researchers have been conducting qualitative analysis of the situation of refugees in Krakow as well as support provided to the Ukrainians in the city. In this report we analyse the results obtained during the quantitative research in Poland, Krakow¹.

This report consists of the three parts. After this introduction we present briefly the current information about the Ukrainian refugees in Poland, region of Lesser Poland and city of Krakow on the basis of the existing registration data and research. Then we move to shed light on the methodology of our study, key features of the 500 persons who filled in the paper questionnaires and analyse the obtained results. In the last part we propose some recommendations stemming from the obtained results and key conclusions.

Ukrainians in Poland, Lesser Poland and Krakow in the Light of the Existing Data and Research

As the latest UNHCR report shows half a year since the onset of the Russian invasion, nearly one-third of Ukrainians (over 13 million people) have been forced from their homes making it one of the largest forced displacement crises in the world today. As of the second half of October 2022 there are over 7.6 million people displaced by the war internally in Ukraine and almost similar number of people who fled the country and are present across Europe. Out of

¹ In a few places in the report we refer though to some elements of the Austrian data collected during the same time and with the usage of roughly the same questionnaire by our Austrian colleagues – team led by prof. Isabella Buber-Ennsner and prof. Judith Kohlenberger (Austrian sample: n=1,100 in which 89% were women).

them over 3.8 million refugees from Ukraine have registered for temporary protection or similar national protection scheme (UNHCR, 2022d).

The largest number of Ukrainians fled to the neighbouring countries, and in particular to Poland. Almost 2 million refugees registered for temporary protection in the Visegrad countries (V4) with the largest refugee population in Poland (1,4 million) and the smallest one in Hungary (30 thousand). The V4 countries in total accommodated 26% of all people who fled Ukraine and almost 42% of refugees who reside in one of the European countries except Russia (UNHCR, 2022b). Other countries with sizable Ukrainian refugee populations include Germany, where 670 thousand citizens of Ukraine registered for temporary protection or similar national protection scheme, and 415 thousand persons in Czechia. In the case of the last country, the number of registered Ukrainian refugees makes around 4% of the total population of the country, which means that as a share of the population it is even bigger than in Poland where registered refugees make up around 3,5% of the Polish population (UNHCR, 2022b).

As of 22 October 2022 the number of Ukrainians who registered with the Polish authorities and received Pesel number² reached almost 1 million 420 thousand (Dane.gov.pl, 2022). This group is made up mostly by women with children, followed by some elderly people, but very few working age men. This is due to the general military mobilisation in Ukraine, which prevents most men aged 18 to 60 from leaving the country (OECD, 2022, p. 7). According to the latest registration data men who are 18 years old or older make up only 7,8% of the refugees registered in Poland, while almost 50% of this group is made up by women who are 18 years or older. The remaining groups are children below 18 years, who constitute 42,8% of registered persons (Dane.gov.pl, 2022). On the other hand, Duszczyk and Kaczmarczyk estimate that in the first weeks of the war between 60-80 thousand Ukrainian men working in Poland prior to February 2022 decided to go to Ukraine to join the army or territorial defence (Duszczyk & Kaczmarczyk, 2022).

Additional information about the size of the Ukrainian population in Poland before the new phase of the Russian invasion on Ukraine and after it provide reports of the Union of the Polish Metropolises (hereafter UMP – Unia Metropolii Polskich). They heavily rely on the analysis of data from the mobile devices of population aged 15+ performed by the company Selectivv, which was also used in the studies of the Multicultural and Migration Observatory in 2019 (Pędziwiatr et al., 2019). On the basis of this Big Data analysis combined with other sources of information the UMP estimates that in May 2022 (so during the time when our survey was carried out) the size of Ukrainian population in Poland reached almost 3,4 million. This group consisted of almost 1,5 million Ukrainians who according to Selectivv were in Poland prior to 2022 and almost 2 million persons who arrived after 24th February 2022 (UMP, 2022c).

The UMP reports and other studies rightly point out that the size of refugee population is very fluid and dependent on numerous factors among which the intensity and scale of the military operations play important role as well as reception and integration frameworks refugees encounter in the places to which they flee (CPP, 2022; UMP, 2022a). Some of the persons escaping from war in Ukraine decided after a short sojourn in Poland to go back to Ukraine to reunite with other members of their families, while others moved further to yet other countries. Majority of those who came to Poland, as well as other countries of the region, decided to stay

² Pesel is a number given to all residents of Poland. It is Polish acronym for „Universal Electronic System for Registration of the Population”.

longer and put off their plans of return. One of the first studies carried out by the EWL Migration Platform in collaboration with University of Warsaw in March and April 2022 showed that only 30% of the Ukrainian refugees in Poland declared that they want to remain in that country (EWL, 2022). Similar results were obtained by the UNHCR, who surveyed people in Poland as well as in Czechia, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary. Their study showed that that most people want to return to Ukraine, however 16% intended to return to Ukraine in nearest future and 9% wanted to move to another country of the world. Among those who considered return option, the key reasons for that were: improvement of the situation in Ukraine (40%), economic reasons/access to services (32%) and desire to reunite with family (12%). On the other hand, the main reasons of choosing to remain in the current host countries were: safety (52%), family ties (19%) and economic reasons/access to services (14%) (UNHCR, 2022a).

As of now (October 2022), information about the integration of the refugees in the labour market is scarce. The EWL study showed that only 18% of refugees had any experience of work in Poland and that the fear of having problems with finding job in Poland was the most commonly mentioned anxiety related with the life in Poland. In March-April 2022 when the EWL survey was being conducted, 45% of respondents expressed this anxiety. As we are going to show, between May and June, when our survey data were being collected, this anxiety was still quite high. Yet, according to the latest data released by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies at the beginning of August 372 thousand Ukrainian refugees have already found some jobs in Poland. The largest number of persons started to work in Masovian voievodship (82,8 thousand) followed by Lower Silesian (39,5 thousand), Łódź (36,4 thousand) and Greater Poland (34,5 thousand) (MRiPS, 2022). Most probably many of these jobs are below formal qualifications of refugees involved, but it is clear that for a significant number of them the economic adaptation process has already started.

If access to employment is an important factor influencing refugees' decisions to remain in host countries or return to Ukraine, there are also many more factors involved. Among them the access to financial support as well as housing, education, childcare and other forms of aid play equally important part. Refugees in Poland do not receive any direct financial support from the Polish government apart from one-time 300 PLN (approx. 65 EUR) benefit. However, in the light with *The Act on Support for the Ukrainian Nationals in Connection with the Military Conflict in Ukraine (12.03.22)* the refugees gain free access to childcare, education, health services and most importantly - to social benefits available to Polish nationals. Among these, 500+ child benefit plays the most important role for the women with children up to the age of 18 years old. According to press information by May 12, Ukrainian refugees submitted over 445 thousand 500+ applications which concern approximately 691 thousand children. If their applications are processed then they receive 500 PLN (approx. 105 EUR) per month for each child, which constitute one of the most important financial support of the Polish government to Ukrainian refugees. The refugees are entitled to this financial support as long as they live in Poland. Social Insurance Institution (Zakład Ubezpieczeń Społecznych – ZUS) that pays these allowances reminds people who obtained this support (Polish citizens and immigrants) that if they go abroad they must inform ZUS about it, because after 30 days outside Poland they lose the right to the benefit (Otto-Duszczuk & Nowosielska, 2022). According to the latest information from the Spokesperson of ZUS by the end of October 2022 the payment of 500+ allowances was withheld to around 80 thousand Ukrainian citizens for the aforementioned reasons (Bartman 2022).

In addition to the supports made available by the Polish government, a direct financial support to refugees is being provided in Poland temporarily by the UNHCR. It has carried out a wide registration operation through seven cash enrolment centres, operated either directly by UNHCR or by its partners. UNHCR claims that 360,000 refugees were targeted prioritising the most vulnerable, such as women-headed households, people with disability or health conditions, and other groups. Eligible refugees who enrolled for the programme received 700 Polish zloty (some US\$170) per month for at least three months, with an additional 600 Polish zloty for each household member, to a maximum amount per household of 2,500 zloty (approx. US\$600) monthly for households of four members or more (UNHCR, 2022c). As of 15 August, 264,828 individuals received cash assistance from UNHCR. At the same time, the UNHCR claims that it wants to phase out this programme and it has already closed centres in Gdynia, Poznań and Krakow as “they have now completed their enrolment targets” (UNHCR, 2022d).

Photo 1. UNHCR registration point at Tauron Arena (10.05.2022)



(Photo: Konrad Pędziwiatr)

One of the biggest challenges from the beginning of the Ukrainian refugee crises has been housing. This issue has been only partially resolved by the immense support wave of the Polish citizens and 40+ Polish government programme, which supported financially all persons who have provided housing and food to the Ukrainian refugees (40PLN per one individual per day). The programme was designed to provide help maximum for 120 days and is being extended only if accommodation and food is provided to Ukrainian women who are pregnant or have 3 and more children (below the age of 18) and seniors - women above the age of 60 and men above the age of 65 (Infor.pl, 2022). The recent UMP study showed that 67% of Polish citizens got involved in various initiatives of help to Ukrainian refugees. The most common forms of support were: provision of food (59% of the total in multiply answer question), in-kind assistance in the form of e.g., clothing or housing equipment (44%) and a donation to a fundraiser for refugees (32%). According to the UMP estimations around 525 thousand Ukrainians have benefited from the shelter provided by Polish citizens. The highest number of

refugees who profited from short or longer term housing provided by Poles (40+ and nonsubsidized hosting) are to be found in Warsaw (almost 120 thousand), Wrocław (almost 107 thousand) and Gdańsk (almost 60 thousand) (UMP, 2022b).

According to the information provided to the research team by Joanna Paździo, the Spokesperson of the Małopolska Voivode, from around 507 million PLN spent by the voivodship on the assistance to Ukrainian refugees by the beginning of September 2022 around 215 million PLN (42% of all the assistance) was paid in the form of 40+ allowances to the Polish families in the region hosting Ukrainian refugees. At the same time, the authorities informed that the voivodship compiled a base of approximately 1.1 thousand facilities in all parts of the region of Małopolska (from cheap hotels and guesthouses, through dormitories, as well as facilities transformed to temporarily host refugees – e.g. fire stations). During the peak in the first months of the war, the number of places in this base exceeded 32,000 and almost 24,000 of them were taken by refugees. In September 2022 this base included almost 27 thousand beds. The number of people using this form of assistance has been constantly changing. For example, in June 2022, the number of refugees staying in these facilities decreased from 22,075 to 18,698 (a decline of 3,377 persons). Significant number of found them decided to either return to Ukraine or migrate to yet another country. According to information provided by the voivode's spokesperson, there were approximately 16-17 thousand Ukrainian refugees using the housing facilities provided by the voivodship in September 2022 (Internet communication with Joanna Paździo).

The arrival of large number of Ukrainian children since 24th February 2022 has been constituting an unsolved challenge with regard to the provision of adequate childcare, education and health services. In particular, only scarce information exists about the children that were not enrolled to Polish kindergartens and schools. There has not been clear institutional support for the establishment of Ukrainian classes and schools in Poland (Garbicz & Pacewicz, 2022). While at the beginning of the 2021/2022 school year, there were 133,281 foreign children in Polish compulsory education system, their numbers have radically grown after February 2022. It is estimated that in June 2022 there were around 200 000 Ukrainian children in the Polish educational system (40,000 in kindergarten 140,000 in primary schools and 20,000 in the secondary schools). Some early estimations of the Polish Ministry of Education and Science from April 2022 spoke about approximately 400,000 Ukrainian children in the Polish education system in that in the new school year of 2022/2023 (Pietrusińska & Nowosielski, 2022). The Office of the Polish Ombudsman (BRPO) rang the alarm bell already in May 2022 about numerous issues with equal access of the “war refugees” from Ukraine to healthcare services in Poland. Some of the problems indicated by the BRPO concerned among others the difficulties with access to medical services of persons without Pesel number, small number of refugees who got Covid-19 vaccination in Poland and barriers for Ukrainian medics to find employment in Polish healthcare system in spite of the chronic lack of medical staff (BRPO, 2022).

The main sources of data on Ukrainian refugees in the voievodship of Lesser Poland (Małopolska) and the City of Krakow come from the Pesel registration system as well as reports of the UMP. The first source (Pesel data) mentions 128 thousand refugees registered in Lesser Poland (Małopolska) region at the end of August 2022. Out of them only 8,4% are men aged 18 years old and above. According to the same source, on 24th August 2022 there are 35,7 thousand refugees registered within the borders of the City of Kraków and further 16,1 thousand

in the suburbs of Kraków (powiat). Consequently, in the light of the Pesel registration data there are 51,805 Ukrainian refugees living in larger Krakow - so either within the city borders, or in the proximity of the city (Dane.gov.pl, 2022). According to the second source (UMP research), which takes into account not only refugees but all Ukrainians living in Krakow and around it (so both pre-2022 and 2022 Ukrainians) and relies on Big Data information provided by the company Selectivv, there were an estimated 180 thousand Ukrainians in Krakow in May 2022 and a further 54 thousand in the metropolitan area. The UMP report points out that the size of the city's population has increased in Krakow from almost 780 thousand to 960 thousand and that Ukrainians make up now 19% of the city's population (UMP, 2022c).

New interesting source of information about the size of the refugee population in Poland and in various Polish cities including Krakow comes from the regularly updated presentation-database on "Warsaw during the Refugee Crisis". It takes into account valid Pesel registrations amongst Ukrainian refugees in Poland and excludes all persons who have registered for temporary protection in Poland but returned to Ukraine and did not come back to Poland within the following 30 days. Such persons according the existing regulations automatically lose their valid registration status. According to this combined data from Pesel registration and the Border Guards registers of border crossings there are currently in Poland 1 million 120 thousand Ukrainian refugees with valid Pesel registration numbers (that is around 300 thousand less than what the current Pesel registration suggests) and almost 33 thousand of them live in Krakow and further 12 thousand in the region of Krakow, so in the vicinity of the city (Osica et al 2022).

Research Methods and Key Features of the Sample

In the absence of fully reliable information about the Ukrainian refugees in Krakow, Multiculturalism and Migration Observatory and Centre for Advanced Studies of Population and Religion in collaboration with Austrian researchers from the Vienna Institute of Demography and the Vienna University of Economics and Business, decided to conduct simultaneously in Krakow and Vienna a large quantitative survey. Both teams worked together on the survey questionnaire and methods to be used to ensure the high quality of the collected data. The tool was designed in consultation with experts and refugees in the Polish research team (inter alia dr Oksana Ovsiuk). Then ethical approval was sought and gained from the Ethical Board at the Cracow University of Economics. The Ukrainian research assistants employed in the project (Inna Voznyuk, Marta Yarosh, Sviatlana Luchik and Maria Yarosh) were trained and together with the research leaders visited places where the data was collected.

Photo 2. Pesel registration point at Tauron Arena (10.05.2022)



(Photo: Konrad Pędziwiatr)

The survey was carried out in the form of pen and paper interviews (PAPI) by trained Ukrainian researchers and one of the authors (dr Olena Nahorniuk) between 5th May and 15th of June 2022 in numerous locations where Ukrainian refugees gathered. The key places where the data collection took place were Tauron Arena (Pesel and UNHCR registration spots) where 34% of the respondents were approached by our research assistants and support centres on Daszyńskiego Street 22 and 16 (Warehouse with food and medicine and a consultation centre for refugees) - 33% of answers. Other important places where the research was carried out were Galeria Plaza where Szafa Dobra (a distribution centre of free clothes for refugees) and one of the collective shelters were situated, the Ukrainian Consulate in Krakow, the World Kitchen on the Main Railway Station and other public spaces in Krakow. Altogether, 500 refugees from Ukraine took part in the survey. 55% of the questionnaires were filled in Ukrainian and 45% in the Russian language.

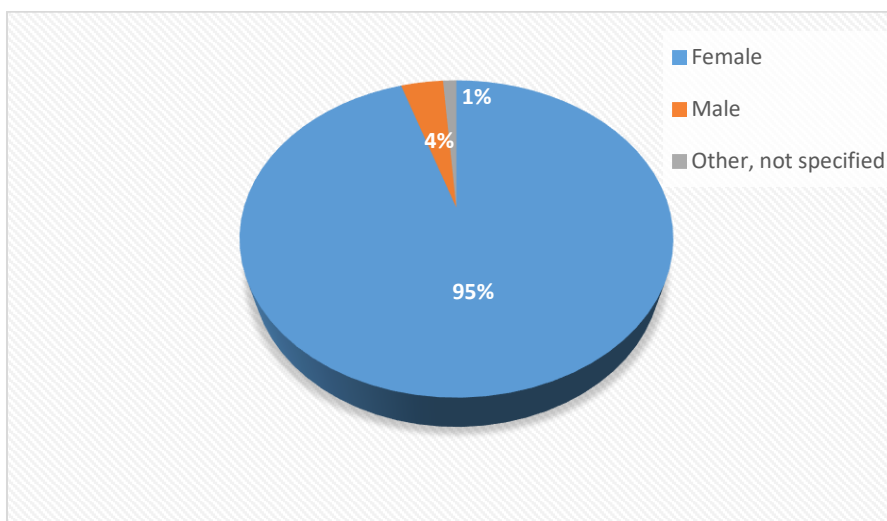
Photo 3. Szafa Dobra in the premises of the former Plaza Gallery (15.05.2022)



(Photo: Konrad Pędziwiatr)

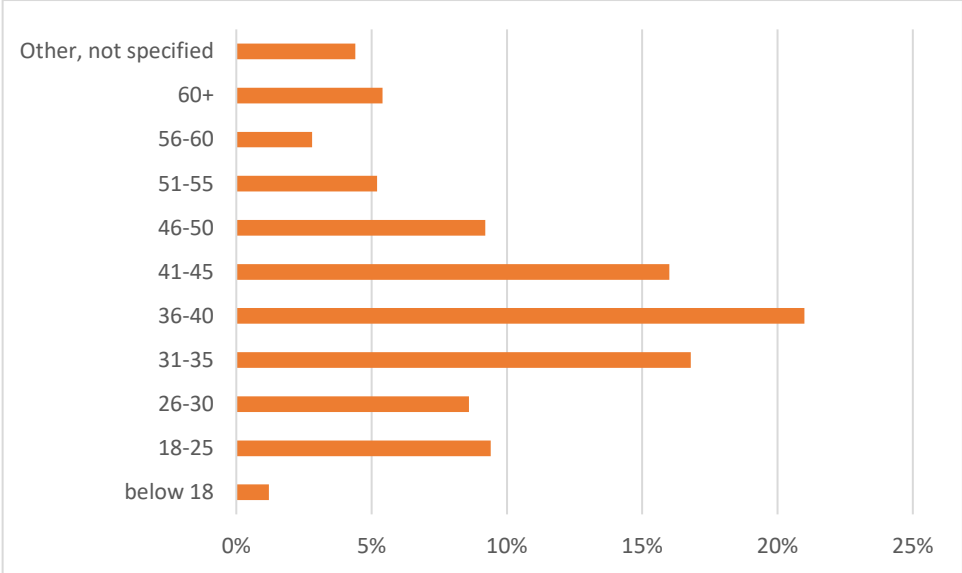
The vast majority of persons participating in the research were women. In our sample 95% of respondents were women, 4% were men and 1% of persons did not specify their gender. As shown above this structure of the sample in which women play the major role is in many ways similar to the aforementioned structure of adult population of registered refugees in Poland.

Figure 1. Gender structure



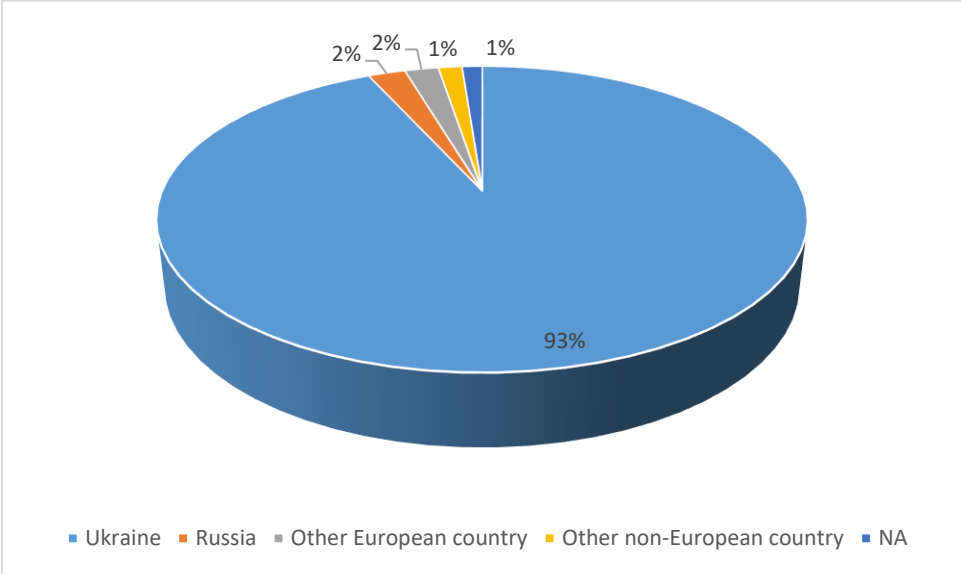
The Ukrainian refugees in Poland are usually persons below 60 years of age. Similarly, in our sample only 5% of respondents were over 60 years old. The largest cohorts of respondents were persons between 31-35, 36-40 and 41-45 years old. These three cohorts combined made up 54% of all respondents in our sample. Smaller groups consisted of persons below 30 years of age and above 46 years old. Overall, the age structure of the refugee population in Poland and our sample was relatively young in comparison to the Polish population.

Figure 2. Age structure



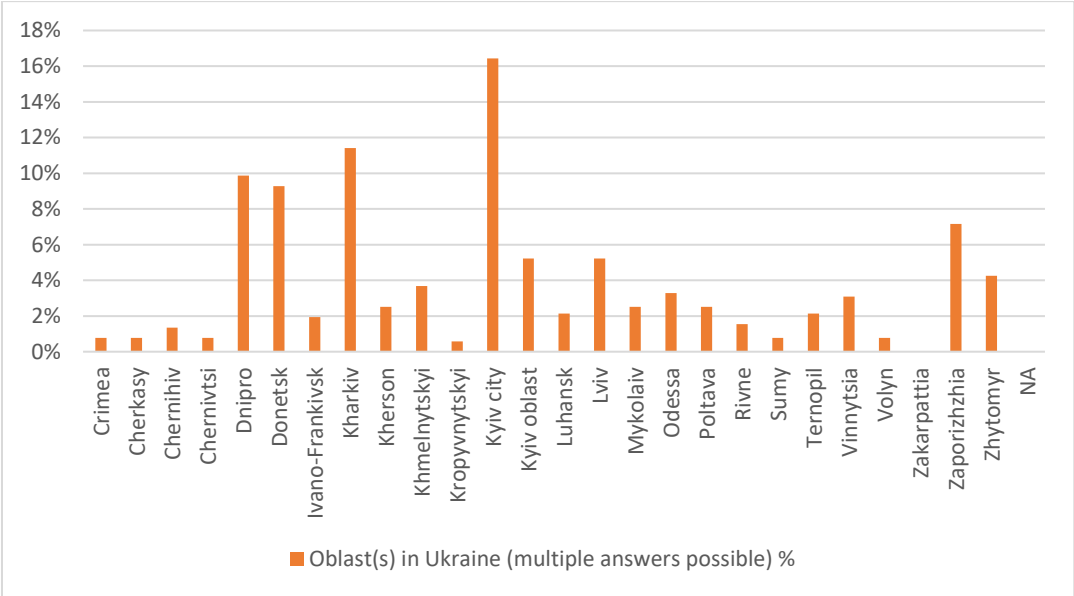
As far as the country of birth of the refugees is concerned, the vast majority of respondents were born in Ukraine. Only 2% of respondents pointed out that they were born in Russia which up until the start of the occupation of Crimea and the beginning of the war in Donbas in 2014 was a very important destination for economic migration of Ukrainians (Malynovska, 2021). 2% of respondents stated also that they were born in other European country and 1% in non-European country.

Figure 3. Country of birth

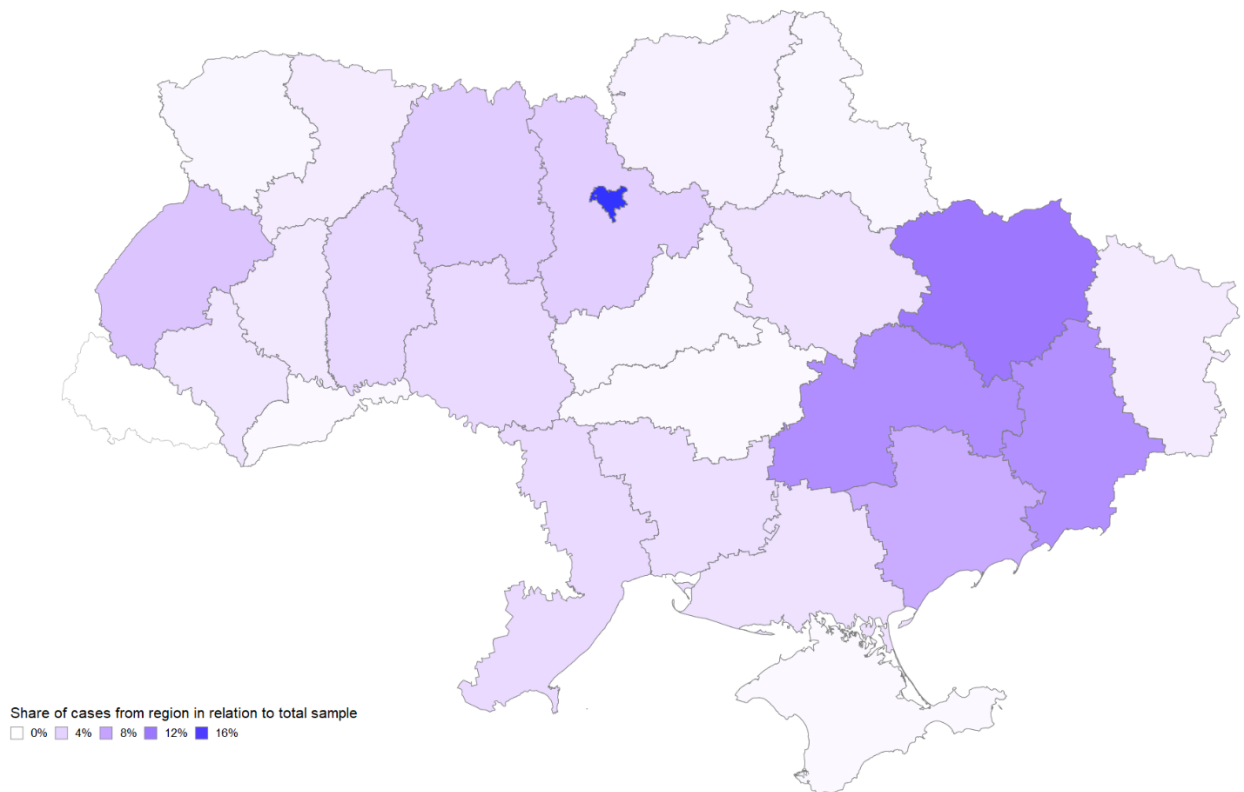


When it comes to the places of origin of the refugees who came to Krakow one may clearly see that all Ukrainian regions are represented in the refugee population. However, at the same time it is also noticeable that particularly numerous amongst the refugees were from the Kyiv city and Kyiv Oblast (together 17% of respondents) followed by residents of Kharkiv, Dnipro, Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia. In other words, residents of the capital city and Eastern regions of Ukraine, that is those most brutally impacted by the ongoing war, were more visibly represented amongst the studied refugees (See Map 1.). Many fewer respondents were from Western and Southern part of the country. Here it is important also to note that in the pre-invasion Ukraine the Eastern regions were those where the Russian language prevailed. This is clearly reflected especially in the information about the everyday language use.

Figure 4. Places of origins of refugees

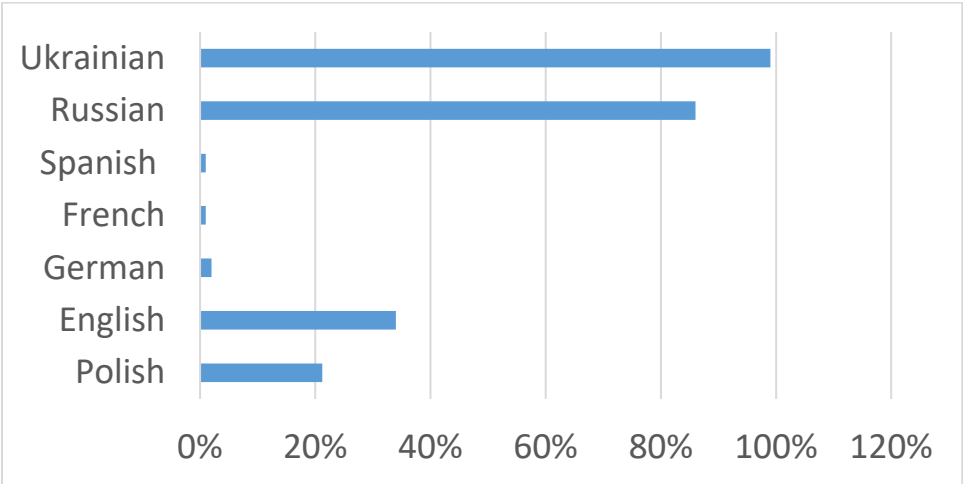


Map 1. Share of cases from region in relation to the total sample



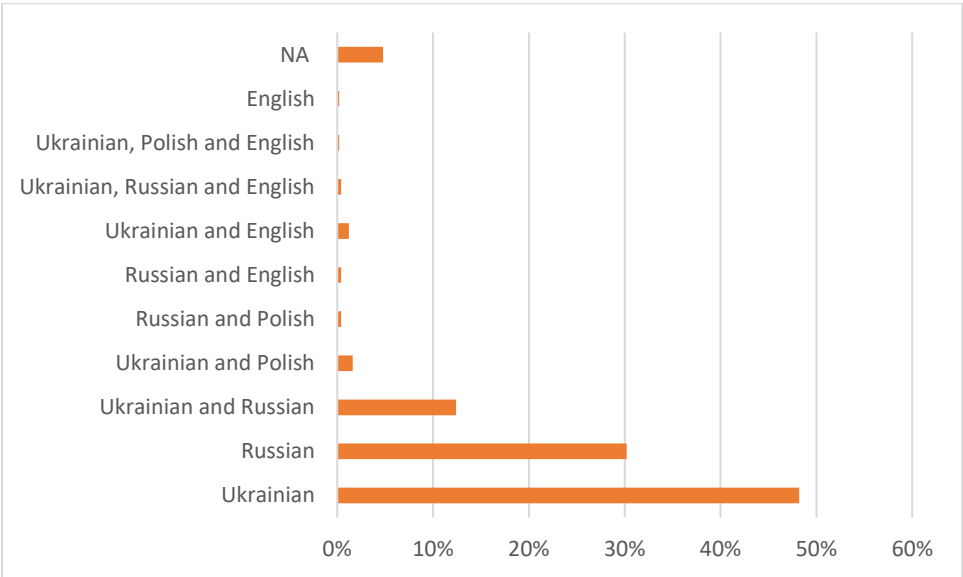
We asked our respondents two questions concerning language issues. One was about the languages they know and the second concerned the language they mostly use in everyday communication. On the first question, almost all refugees declared that they knew the Ukrainian language and 86% said they knew Russian. Furthermore, every third person said she/he knew English and 21% of persons knew Polish. We assume that the knowledge of English and Polish might not necessarily be at the advanced level, but we do not have further information on the proficiency levels. The knowledge of other Western European languages such as German, French and Spanish is only marginal, which may clearly limit the options of further western migration of refugees residing in Poland. At the same time the data of our Austrian colleagues show that among the Ukrainian refugees in Vienna the knowledge of German is much more widespread, which is a clear indicator of high self-selection of Ukrainian refugees further West (Kohlenberger et al., 2022).

Figure 5. Knowledge of languages



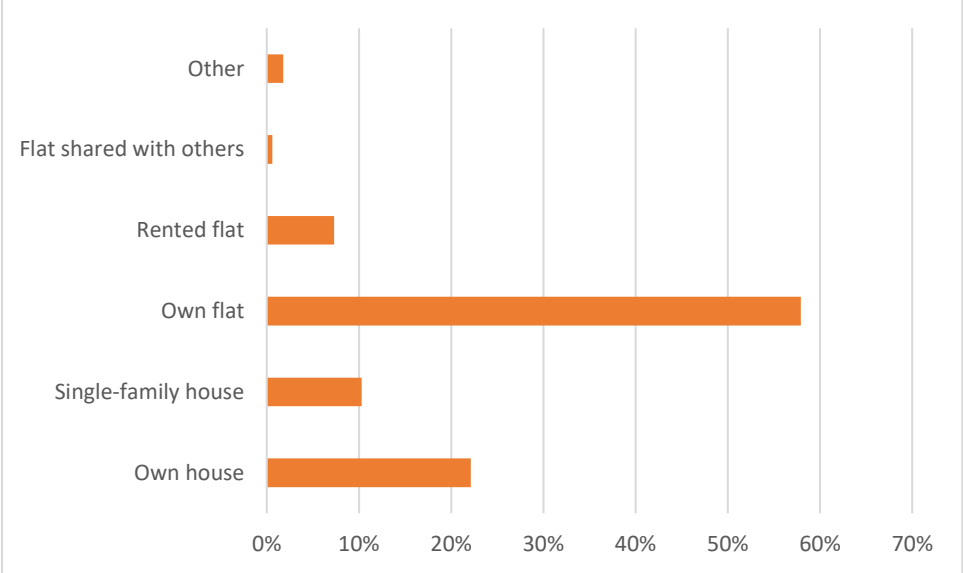
As far as the language used in everyday life the most popular is Ukrainian. Almost half of the Ukrainians in Krakow use Ukrainian in every day life. Second most frequently used language by the refugees is Russian. Almost every third person uses Russian and 12% uses both Ukrainian and Russian. In other words, after Ukrainian the Russian language remains an important tool of communication for significant number of refugees in the city. At the same time, the fact that Ukrainian language is the dominant language, even among important part of the refugees who came from traditionally Russian speaking regions, might be a manifestation of the growing popularity of the Ukrainian language in the war circumstances which clearly acted as an important trigger for further ethnic crystallisation processes. While doing the research we have collected numerous testimonies from refugees for whom Russian had been the main tool of communication before 24th February 2022, but since the beginning of the invasion and numerous war crimes committed by the Russian soldiers in Bucha, Irpin and elsewhere on Ukrainian territory, they decided to switch to Ukrainian language.

Figure 6. Languages used in everyday life (multiple answers possible)



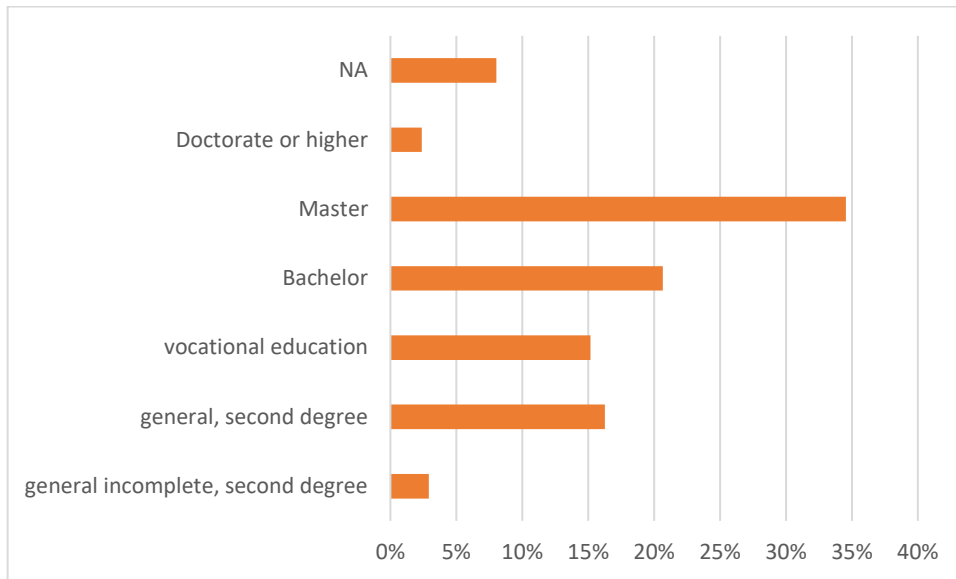
The collected data show very interesting picture of home ownership amongst Ukrainian refugees. Almost 60% of persons who arrived in Poland lived in their own flats in Ukraine. Almost every third refugee owned a house and 10% of them lived in single-family house. Their housing conditions in Ukraine in other words were relatively good, as only 7% had to rent their flats or share flat with other persons (the latest case only 1% of answers). This feature of our sample and refugee population in Krakow may suggest lack of experience with renting accommodation and important factor that may push certain people who find difficulties with finding adequate accommodation in Poland to return to Ukraine. Moreover, that fact of possessing one's own accommodation in Ukraine might act as an important anchor and stimulus encouraging them to return, as the cost of renting the accommodation in Poland including Krakow are rising.

Figure 7. Type of accommodation in Ukraine



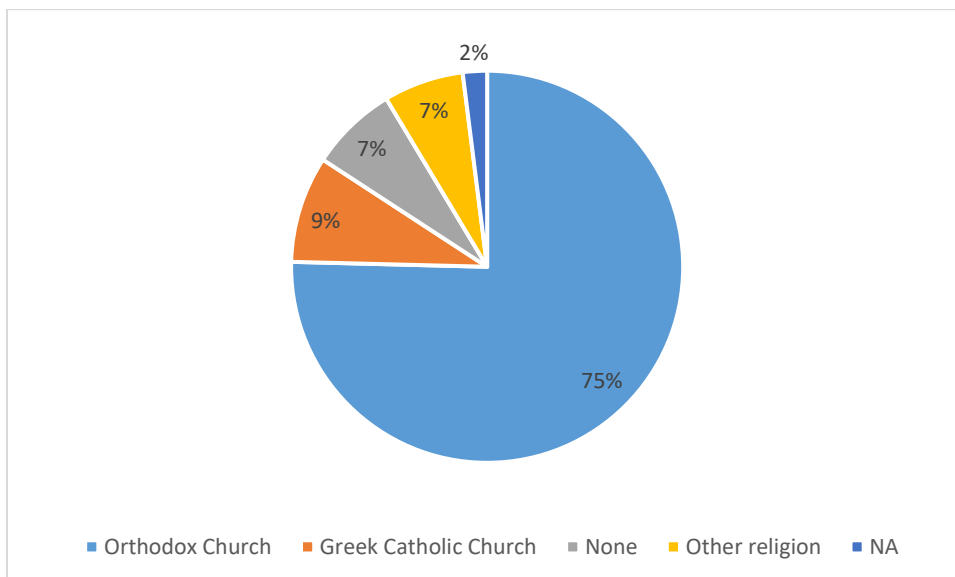
The reports of the Multiculturalism and Migration Observatory including the latest one (Pędziwiatr et al., 2022) repeatedly showed that the economic migrants who mostly settled in Krakow before 2022 were much better educated than Poles. Our current study shows that the same pattern applies also to forced migrants from Ukraine. Interestingly, our analysis of the registration data from 2021 showed that almost 58% of Ukrainian immigrants in Poland had completed tertiary education (Ibid: 28). The data presented below show a similar educational attainment among the refugee population. In it 58% of respondents have attained BA, MA or PHD while smaller groups have lower education. The key difference between the Ukrainian population in Poland before and after February 2022 lies in the gender structure. In the pre-2022 Ukrainian diaspora in Poland was dominated by men, while currently there is significant overrepresentation of women. It is interesting to note that females arriving before 2022 had at least 5% higher education rates than men in the same period. Thus, one may argue that although the current wave of immigration it is characterised by very high incidence of tertiary-educated, it is still slightly lower than in the case of female economic migration to Poland before the war.

Figure 8. Attained level of education



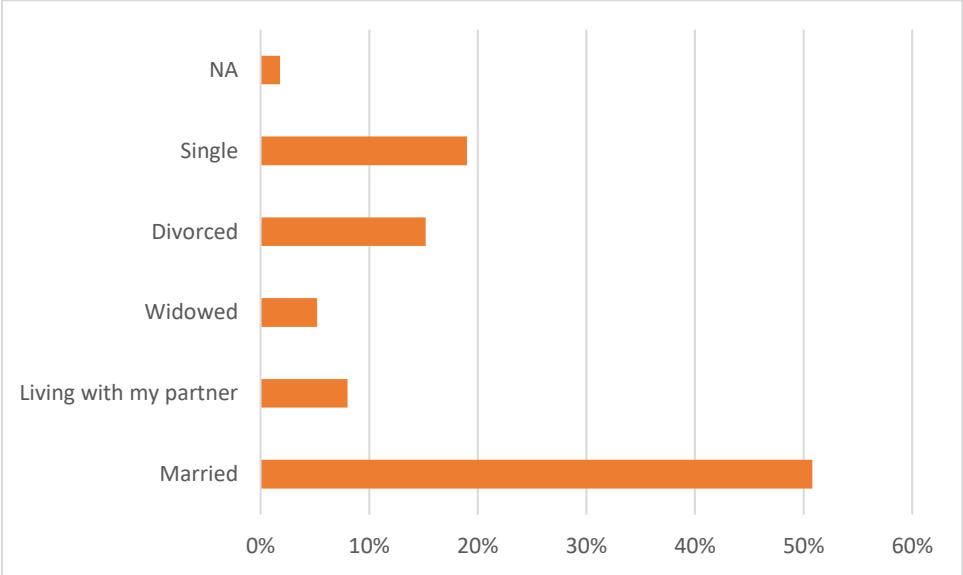
As for the religious affiliation of the refugee population, we decided not to ask specific questions concerning the affinity with one or another Patriarchate. This is a delicate issue particularly in the war time for which we believed we did not have space in the questionnaire. Nevertheless, with the obtained results we were able to draft a general picture of the refugee population in Poland and compare it with the studies carried out in Ukraine. Our findings show that religious affiliation among the Ukrainian refugees in Poland is similar to the that in Ukraine. Namely three-fourth of citizens declared stronger or weaker affinity to Orthodox Church, almost 9% belonging to Greek-Catholic and the rest to other religious communities. The population of ‘non-believers in Ukraine vary depending on the region. While is high in the South and East it is very small in the West. Our findings showing that 7% of refugees had no religion are similar with the Razumkov Centre’s findings concerning Easter regions of Ukraine (Pędziwiatr, Trzeszczyńska, et al., 2022, pp. 30–32), that is those particularly strongly represented in our sample.

Figure 9. Religious affiliation



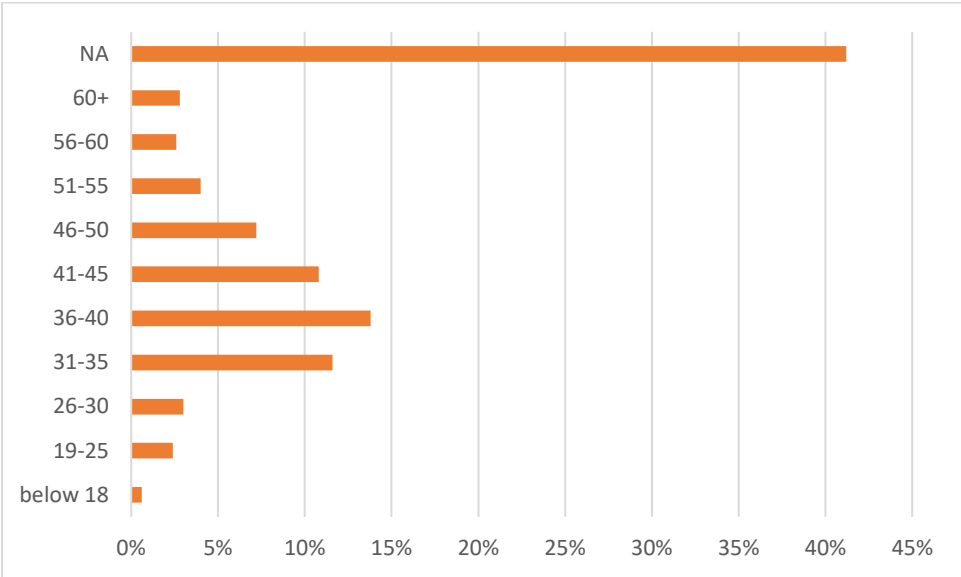
The latest report by the Multiculturalism and Migration Observatory showed that foreign males and females who have been living in Krakow before 2022 are usually single (59% of men and 56% of women) while the married men and women made up 35% of foreigners in Krakow (Pędziwiatr, Stonawski, et al., 2022, p. 30). The arrival of refugees will surely change the composition of the foreign population as far as the marital status is concerned. This is because women who came to Krakow after the January 2022 and made up the vast majority of our sample are most commonly not single but married. 51% of our respondents were married, whereas almost every fifth person was single. The rates of divorce are also much higher among the refugees than in the case of the foreign population in Krakow prior to 2022. If before 2022 divorced people accounted for about 3-6% of the foreign population (higher for women and lower for men), the analysed refugee group included 15% of such persons. 5% of our respondents were widowed, which most probably applied to the oldest persons. Moreover, 8% of our respondents were living with their partners yet were not married.

Figure 10. Marital status



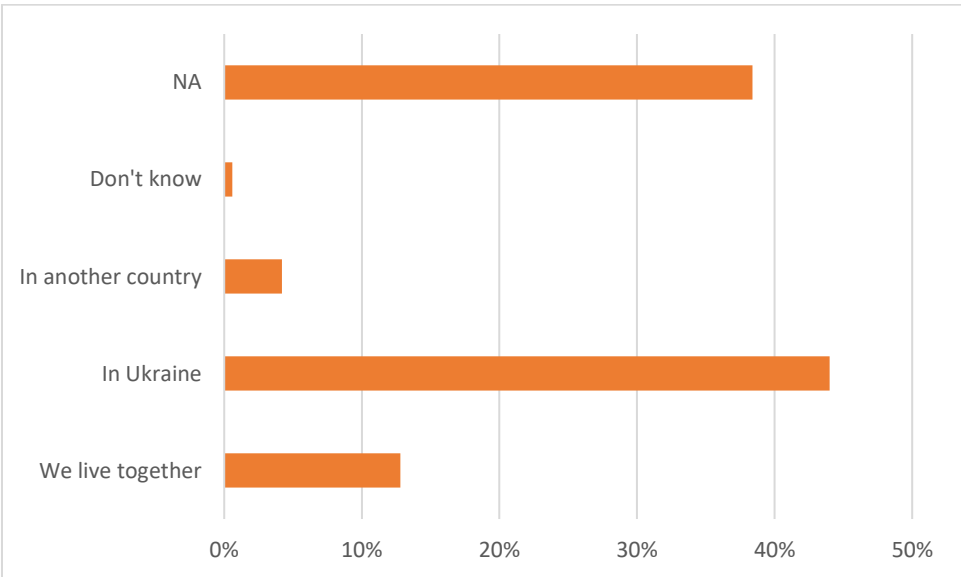
Their partners were most commonly in their thirties or early forties. 14% had their partners between the age of 36-40, 12% between the age of 31-35 and 11% in the age group 41-45. This age structure of the partners is clearly linked with the age structure of the largest cohorts of refugees and their marital status. For 41% of respondents this question was not applicable, which most probably meant they did not have partners yet being too young, or their partners died (applicable for widowed part of the refugee population – usually over 60 years old) and for the divorced persons.

Figure 11. Age of the partners



One of the most dramatic consequences of the ongoing war is the separation of families. Most of the men stayed in Ukraine to fight the Russian aggression while the wave of refugees consists of predominantly women with children and the elderly. Our survey shows that only a minority of refugees (13%) came to Krakow with their partners. 44% of our respondents had their partners in Ukraine. For almost 40% of our respondents this question was not applicable which is consistent with earlier information about women who did not have partners. In the case of 4% of respondents, their partners lived in another country and 1% of respondents did not know the whereabouts of their partners.

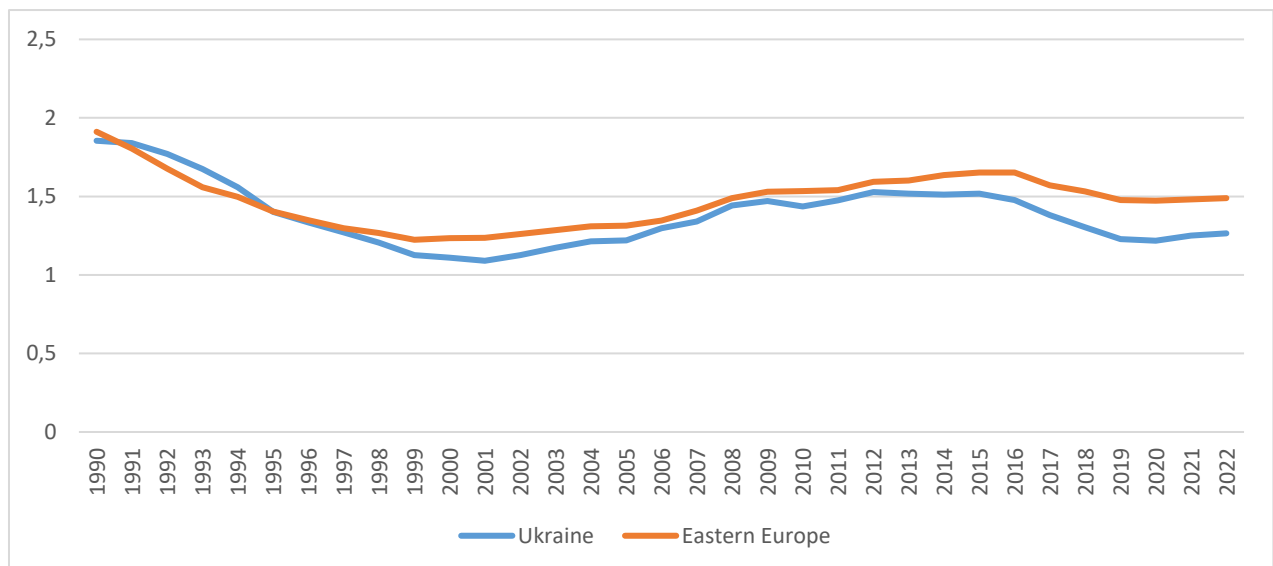
Figure 12. Location of the partner



Demographic Situation

Before the new phase of the Russian invasion in 2022, Ukraine had already been dealing with a serious demographic crisis. Since 1991, the population has decreased by more than 10 million (State Statistics Service of Ukraine). One of the reasons behind the demographic decline is a dramatic drop in fertility rates: as for 2022 it was estimated at 1.26, i.e., much below the replacement rate of 2.1. This index is even lower than the average for the Eastern Europe and is a result of a structural socio-economic and political crisis, strengthened additionally by lack of security since 2014 and the annexation of Crimea and Russian invasion on Donbas (UN WPP 2022). This demographic situation has been definitely aggravated after 24th February 2022: not only by the sheer outflow of a considerable part of Ukrainian population, but also by the fact that a vast majority of forced migrants were females with children (as shown in the previous section). In this section, we focus mostly on children and family situation of the refugees.

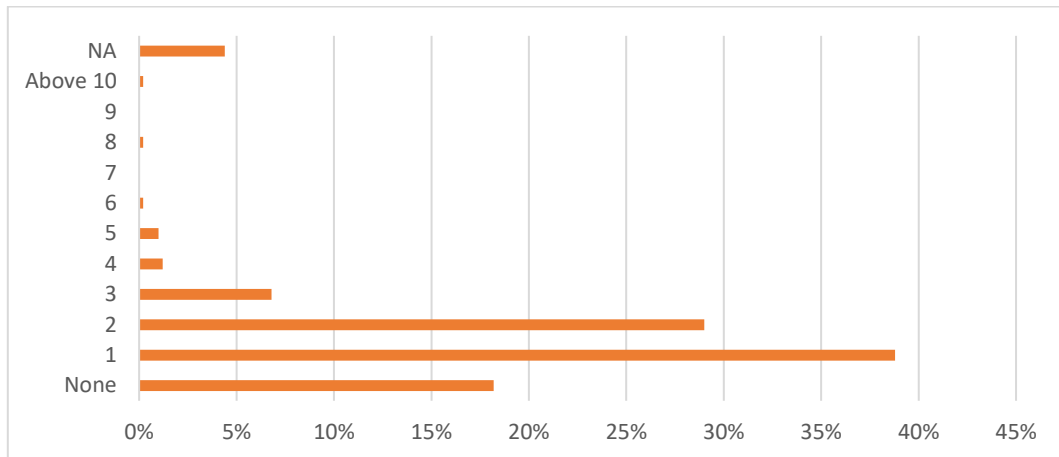
Figure 13. Total fertility rates in Ukraine and Eastern Europe



Source: (UN WPP 2022).

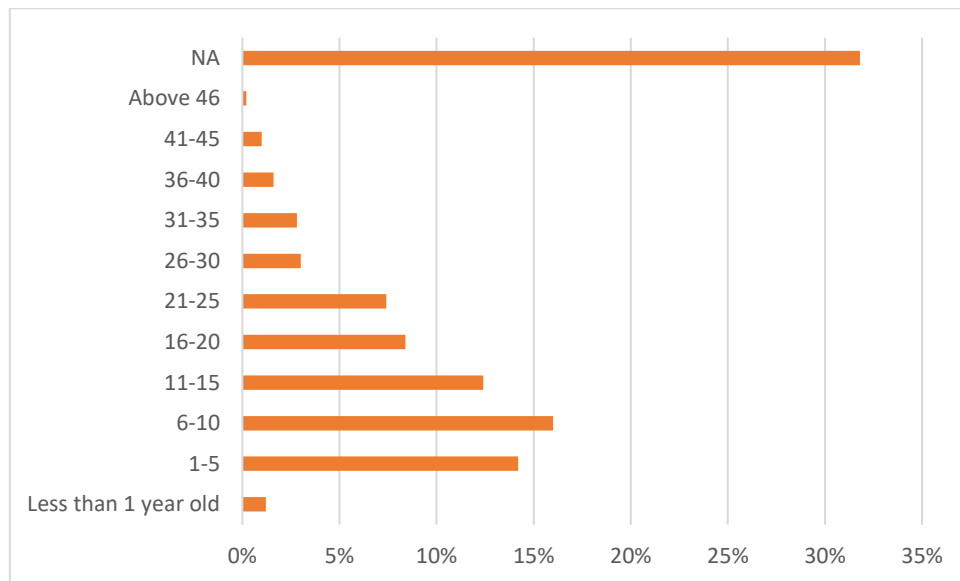
The refugee population in Małopolska region reflects the demographic trends present in entire Ukrainian population, although it is still relatively positively selected from general one: the mean number of children is 1.3, i.e., slightly above the national average. It is worth to keep in mind that many of our respondents are still in reproductive age (below 50 years old), which implies that the total fertility rate among this group can be even higher. Yet, the dominant model is one child per female (39%), only 9% of female respondents had 3 and more children (see figure 14).

Figure 14. Average number of children



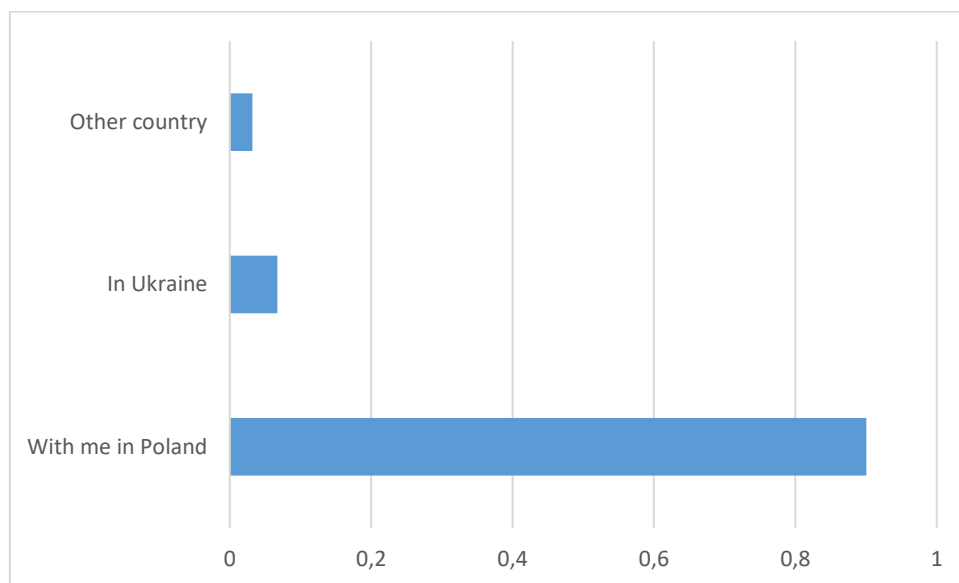
A vast majority (64%) of first (and consequently, second- and further children, if applicable) of our respondents were below 18 years old, which is an important threshold as in case of males of those below the age of 18 were allowed to cross the border after 24th February. Out of oldest children, in just 6% of the respondents had first child aged over 30 (Figure 15). 49% of first children were males, while 51% females.

Figure 15. Age of the first (eldest) child



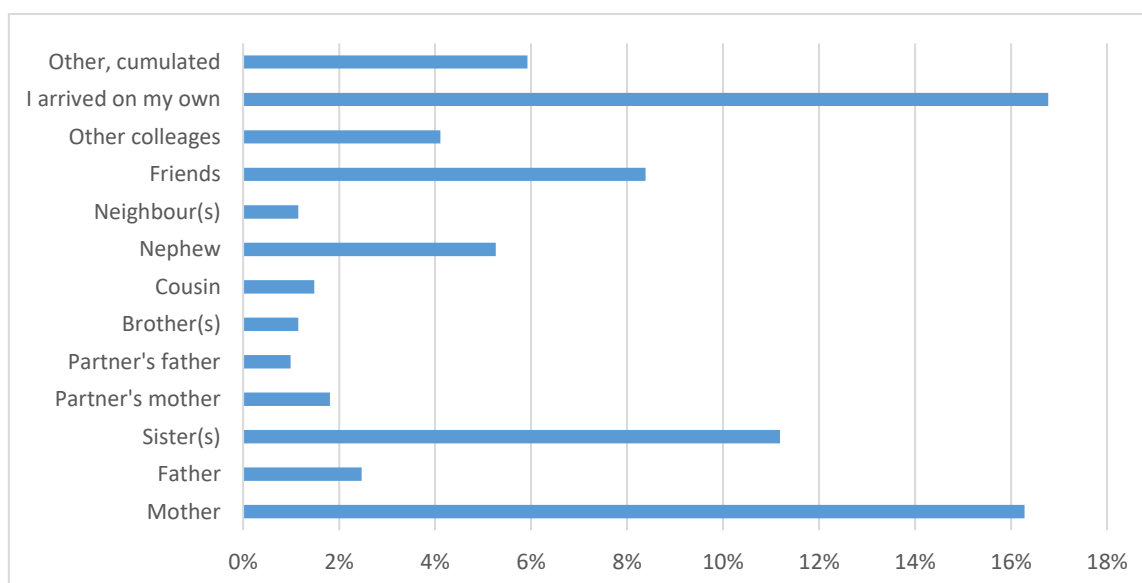
From the perspective of this study, the most important is where these children are currently living. Actually, 90% of the first children stayed with their mothers-refugees in Poland, while only 6.8% stayed in Ukraine (probably because of age 18+) and 3.2% resided in another country (Figure 16). The incidence of the second children who stayed with their mothers in Poland is lower – 75%, while those staying in Ukraine is higher – 10.6%. There is an obvious mismatch between “other country of residence of a second child” (only 3%) and the rest whose fate is unknown. Yet, for obvious ethical reasons we could not ask if this mismatch is a result of death of a child in recent period. Another important finding is the expected motherhood issue: 3.1% of women in fertility age (15-49) have declared that they are expecting a child.

Figure 16. Place of residence of the first child of refugees



It is important to mention, that in spite most of refugees are females, actually a vast majority of refugees did not arrive to Poland alone. There is a great heterogeneity of combinations of refugee families who migrated together: women with own children and mother (grandmother to children), women with sisters, also with (usually older) male member of the family (father, father-in-law). Actually, only 12% of women refugees who left with children migrated to Poland alone (see Figure 17).

Figure 17. Members of family or friends who arrived with refugee to Poland (multiple answers possible)



Housing Conditions of Ukrainian Refugees

As mentioned earlier, housing constitutes one of the major problems in the reception and adaptation of Ukrainian refugees in Poland. There are two key challenges linked with it: the minimal social housing stock in possession of the local authorities and the general shortage of affordable housing. According to experts, there is a shortage of approximately 2,1 million houses in Poland. This situation most frequently affects people with medium and low income. They neither have access to cheap mortgages nor finances to buy the apartments. The social housing in the country estimated at 150-200 thousand premises is insufficient for the needs of the population (Chabasiński, 2018).

The arrival in Poland of around 2 million new residents constitutes a major challenge for the country. The aforementioned 40+ programme of support directed to Polish families who provided refugees with housing and food (initially covering only 60 days and then extended to 120 days of support), takes away some the cost of reception from the individuals to the state institutions. However, this programme (now mostly phasing out) is clearly not sufficient especially in the light of rising costs of rental, living and growing inflation. As shown earlier, the UMP estimations suggest that around 525 thousand Ukrainians have benefited from the shelter provided by Polish citizens. Amongst them, the highest number of persons who profited from short or longer term housing provided by Poles live in and around Warsaw (almost 120 thousand), Wroclaw (almost 107 thousand) and Gdansk (almost 60 thousand) (UMP, 2022b).

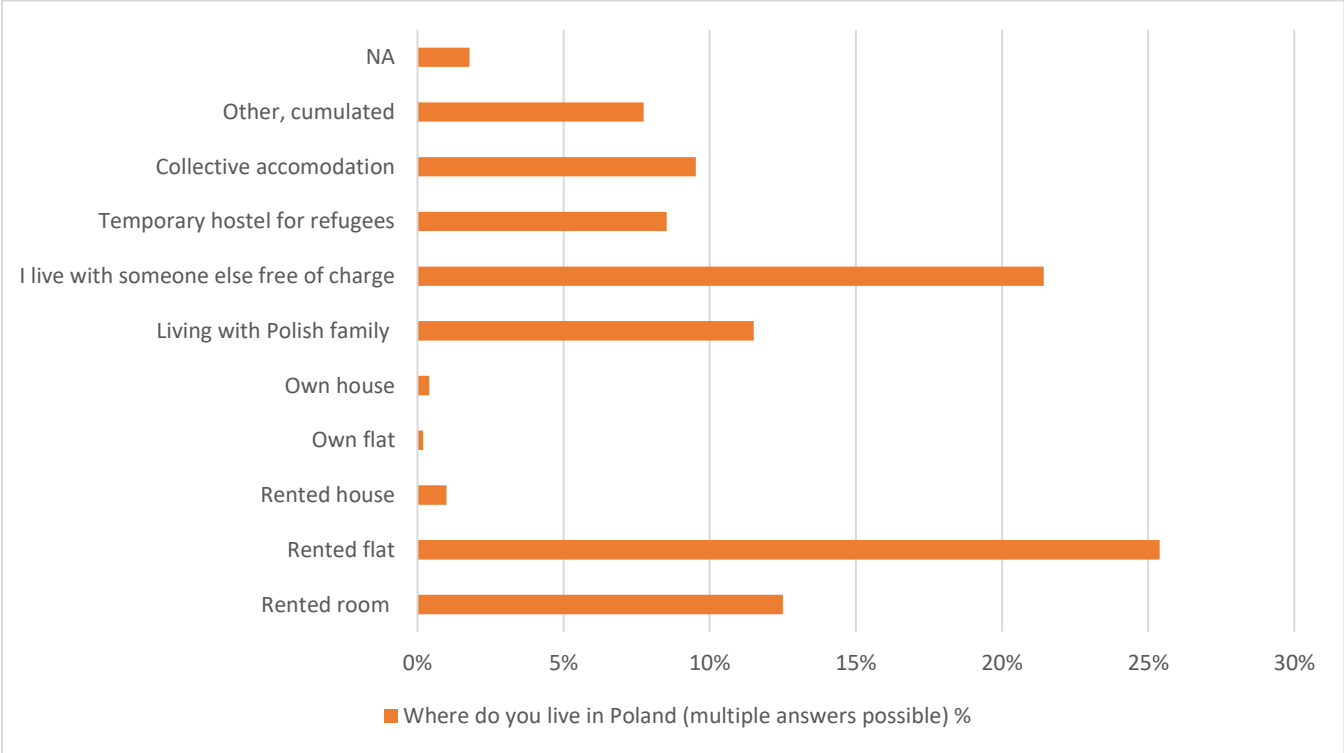
Photo 4. Large poster - Ukrainian flag with words "Solidarity - Partnership") on Galeria Plaza where one of the temporary shelters operated for several months (12.10.2022)



(Photo: Konrad Pędziwiatr)

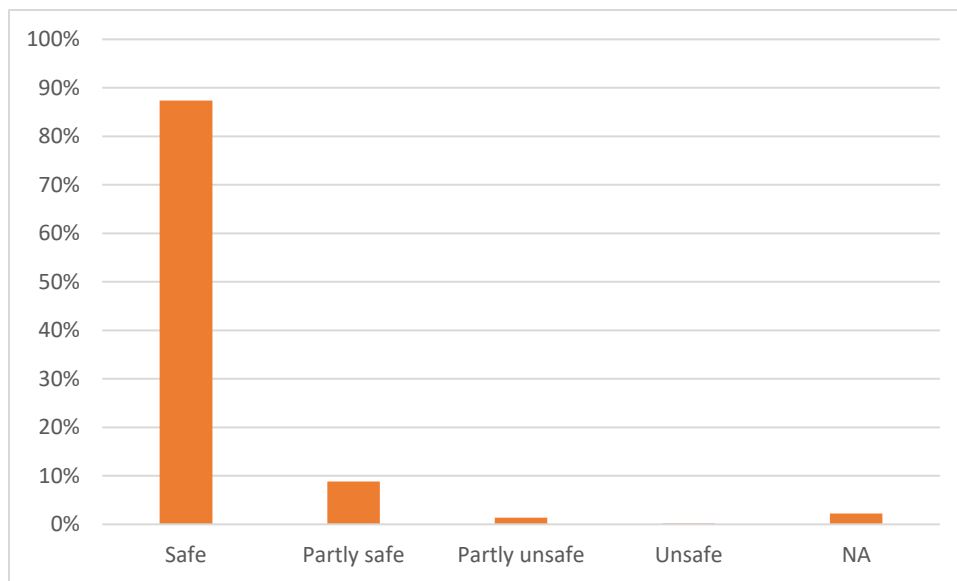
Our findings show that the largest number of people - over one third - were renting flats and rooms (respectively 25% and 13%). Only 1% of respondents were renting houses. This confirms data on socioeconomic status of significant part of the refugee population and their urban middle-class profile. Alongside this relatively well-off part of the refugee population which was able to financially sustain themselves were those who relied heavily on support provided by the Polish society. One third of the refugees were provided with accommodation free of charge usually by a Polish family or lived with the Polish family (respectively 21% and 12% of respondents). Their situation in the face of prolonged conflict and lack of information about the extension of 40+ programme is quite difficult. However, the most difficult is situation of almost one fifth of respondents who stay either in temporary hostels or in other types of places providing collective accommodation. In the refugee literature their situation is often described as a form of semi-homelessness. They do not experience an extreme form of homelessness in which one does not have at all his/her own place to sleep/live but a mild version of it (Wysieńska, 2014).

Figure 18. Current form of housing



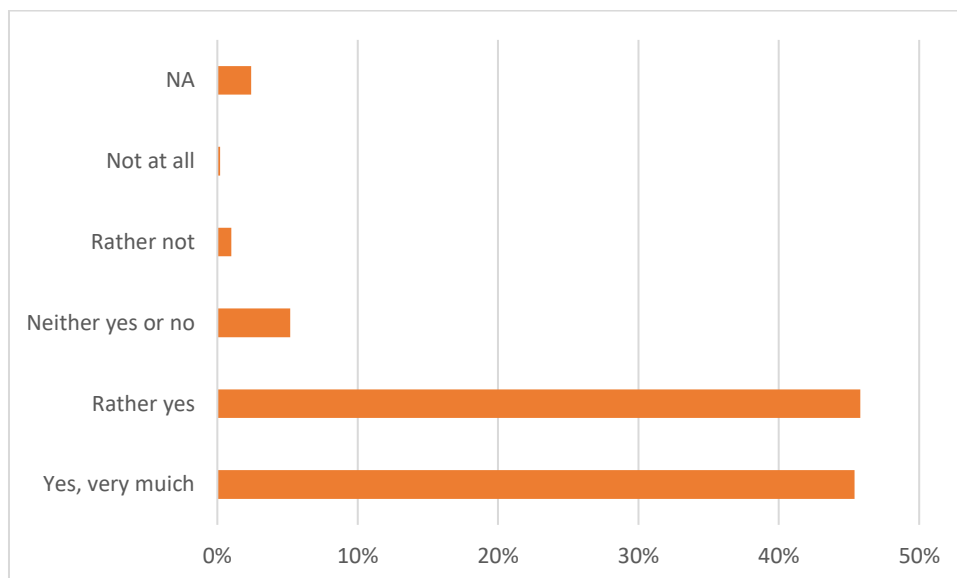
The most important reasons people fled their homes in Ukraine is to gain some safety. Our study shows that - in spite of numerous drawbacks of the reception and integration system in Poland - refugees escaping war in Ukraine feel safe in Poland. Almost 87% of them said they feel safe in the current place of life and further 9 % answered that they feel partially safe. As for the reasons for feeling unsafe, the only reason which appeared minimally in the results was 2% of respondents who were afraid of losing their accommodation.

Figure 19. Sense of safety in the current place of life



One of the key reasons why refugees felt safe in Poland was because Poland's membership in NATO military alliance. All together over 90% of them said that they were feeling safe in Poland as a NATO member. 45% felt very strongly about it and 46% answered rather yes.

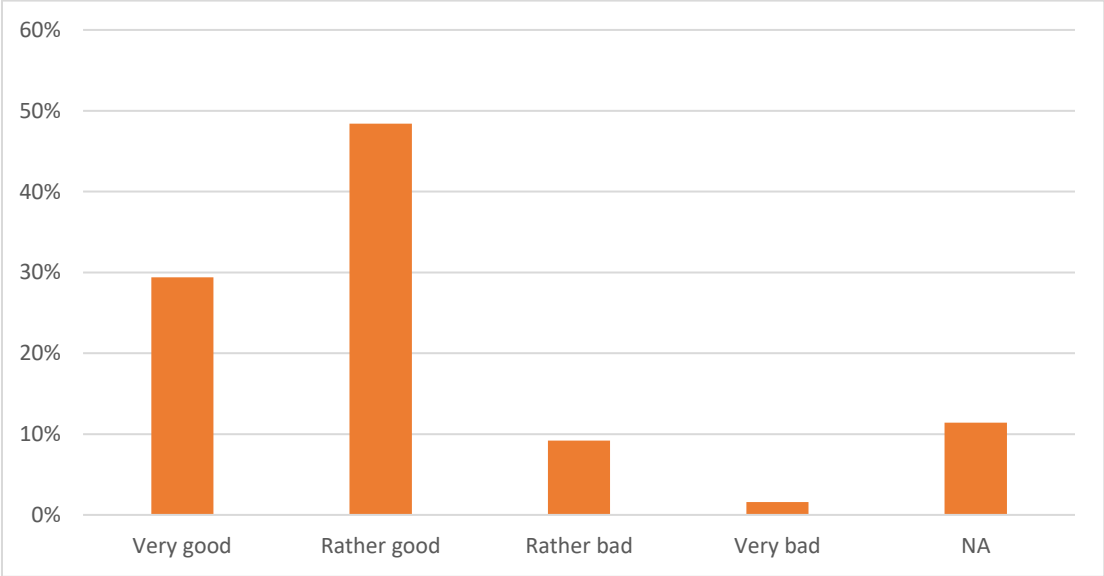
Figure 20. Are you feeling safe in Poland as a NATO member?



Assessment of Political Situation

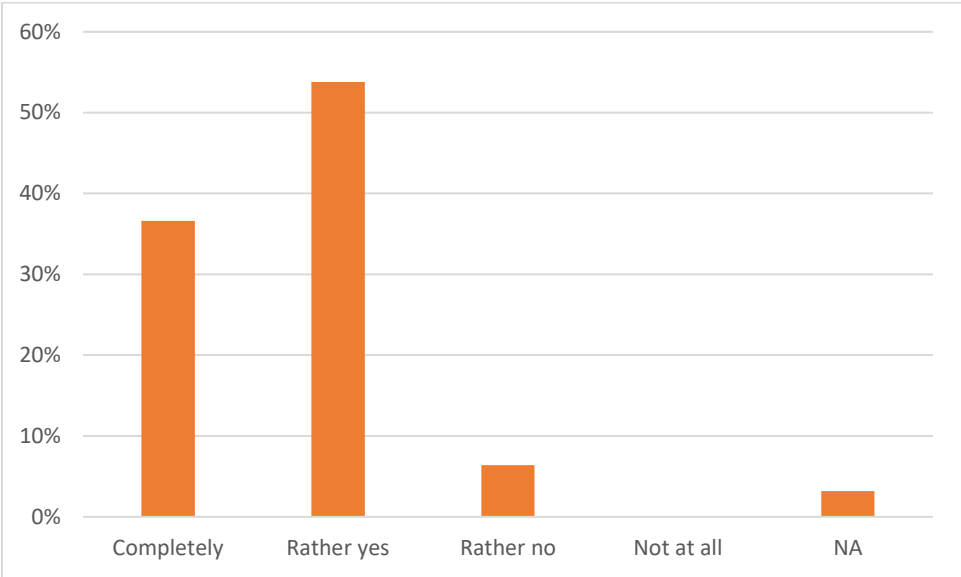
The latest Freedom House assessment of the Ukrainian democracy in 2021 is that it cannot be described as a stable, consolidated democracy. Above all, it points out that the corruption remains endemic in the country and that initiatives attempting to combat this phenomenon have been only partially implemented. It also notes that attacks against journalists, civil society activists, and members of minority groups are frequent, and the response of the law-enforcement agencies are often inadequate. At the same time it notices that Ukraine has enacted a number of positive reforms since the protest-driven ouster of President Viktor Yanukovich in 2014, and that the country demonstrates dynamism in making active moves backward and forward in its democratic development (Freedom House, 2022). Although refugees see the weaknesses of the Ukrainian democracy (11% perceives it in rather negative or negative terms), the vast majority appreciates the way how contemporary Ukraine has been governed. Our study shows that almost 50% of refugees saw it as “rather good” and almost 30% as “very good”.

Figure 21. Assessment of democracy as a way of governing Ukraine



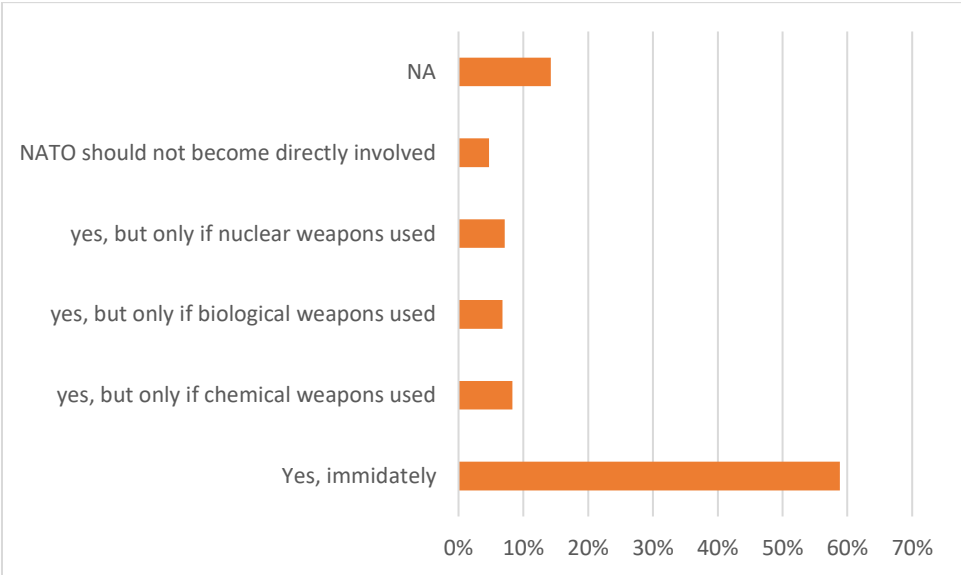
Our research has also revealed very high trust in the European Union amongst the refugees. Nine out of ten of them trusted the EU. Amongst them majority trusted the EU with some reservations and almost 40% completely.

Figure 22. How much do you trust the EU?



When we asked if NATO should intervene in Ukraine, almost 6 out of ten persons answered that it should do so immediately. A minority of refugees believed that NATO should get involved in the conflict only when chemical weapons are used (8% of respondents). An even smaller percentage wanted to see the forces of NATO in the country only when nuclear or biological weapons are used (both for 7%). Perhaps fearing the world scale military conflict, 5% of respondents believed that NATO should not become directly involved in the war.

Figure 23. Should NATO intervene in the war in Ukraine?

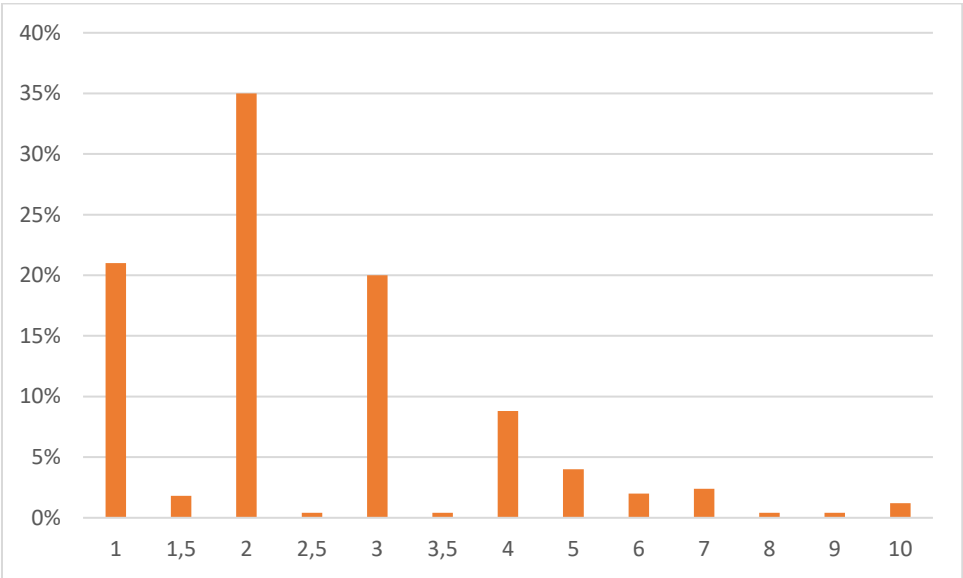


Context of Arrival, Stay and Possible Return

We investigated also how long it took our respondents to reach Poland, and what where their plans concerning their potential return to Ukraine. While analysing the prospective return migration we shall also refer to the data collected during the same time by our Austrian partners in Vienna to show our findings in comparative dimension.

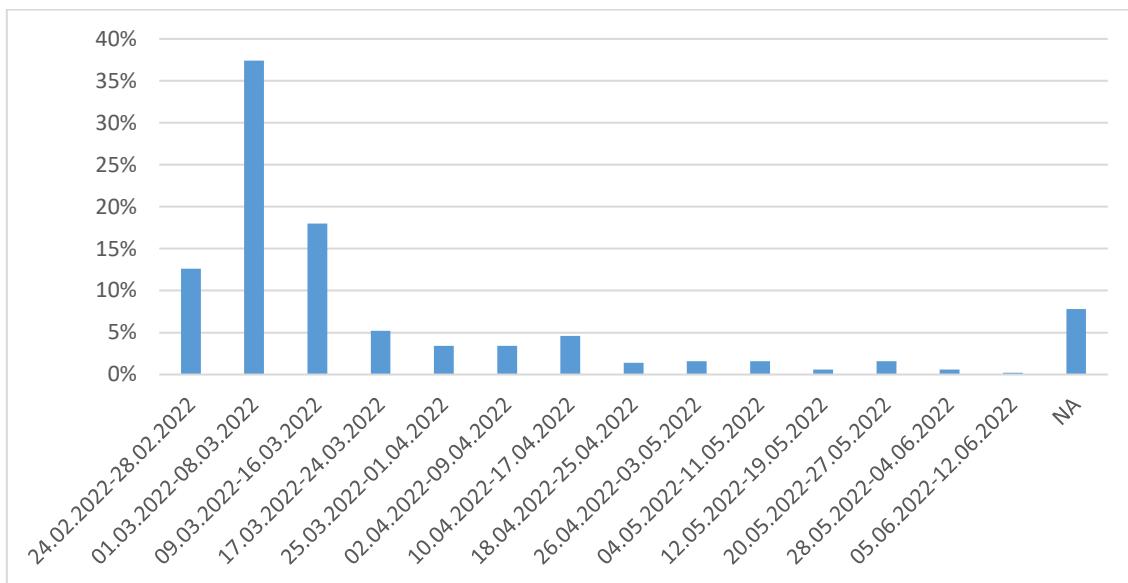
As shown earlier (see map 1 in the sample description chapter) the refugee population in Krakow in large part comes from the capital city region, and from the Eastern part of Ukraine which have been most strongly affected by the military operations. One-third of refugees were traveling 2 days to reach safety in Poland. Slightly over 20% of them it took 1 day to arrive in Poland. For every fifth person the journey to Poland took 3 days. Our sample, however included also people who took 4 days or more to arrive in Poland. Some of them came to Poland through other countries.

Figure 24. Number of days to reach Poland



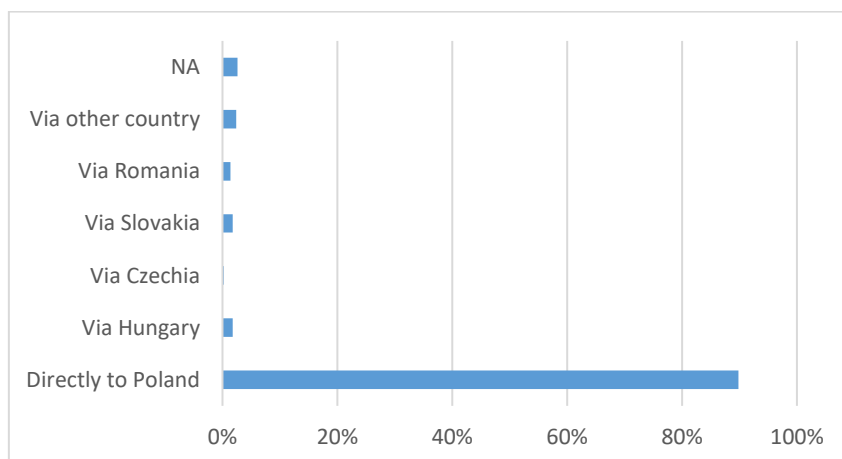
The Russian aggression on Ukraine started early morning on 24th February, and the refugee flows from Ukraine to neighbouring countries started in the very same day. As for our survey, most of the respondents (58%) indicated that they had arrived in Poland in the first three weeks of the war (Figure 25).

Figure 25. Date of arrival to Poland



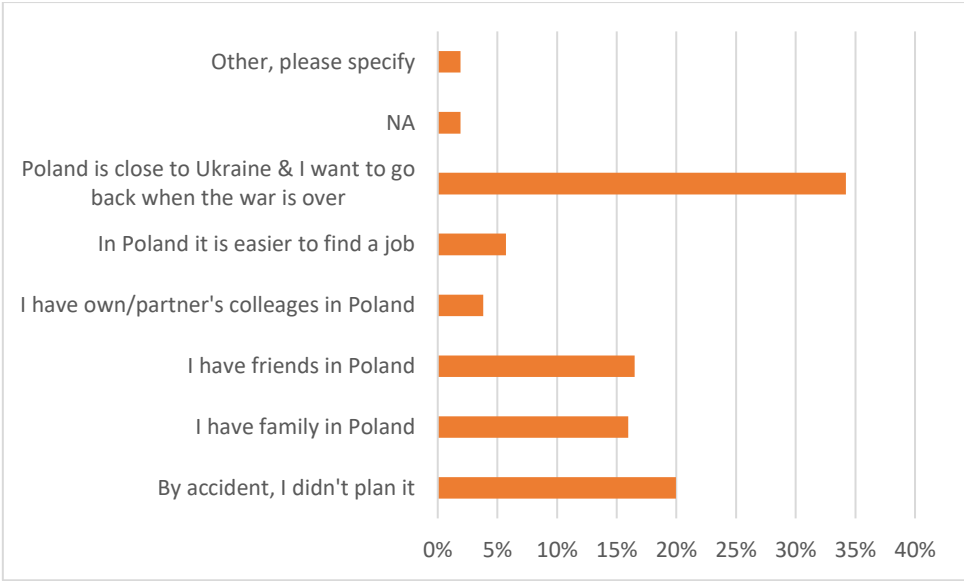
A vast majority of refugees (90%) have arrived in Poland directly from Ukraine (Figure 26). The direct route to our country was most widespread among Ukrainians from Central and Western Ukraine, for instance 89% of persons from Kyiv and Kyiv oblast did so, and 92% of persons from Lviv oblast. This can be explained by good railway transport – there is a direct train connection from Lviv to Przemyśl and further to Kraków (capital of Małopolska voivodeship), but also by relatively good road linkage – from Polish border there is a highway to Rzeszów, Kraków, Katowice and Wrocław – major cities which host currently Ukrainian refugees. For some refugees, the road to Poland was much more troubled: this is rather obvious for Ukrainians coming from Mykolaiv, Kherson or Odessa oblasts. Many of them moved through southern route via Moldova, Romania, Slovakia and Czechia – either due to geographical proximity of these countries, or by simple fact that Russian troops have cut their way to Central and Western Ukraine.

Figure 26. How refugees arrived in Poland (through which countries)



The reasons for choosing Poland as (temporary?) destination is quite intuitive: for many respondents (34%) the geographical proximity played an important factor. Poland is a neighbouring country and within a few hours' drive it is possible to travel from Lviv to Kraków. Therefore, Poland may have seemed a safe haven to wait until the military conflict is over and return to Ukraine when it becomes a viable possibility. Another important factor may have been a previous, mostly economic immigration from Ukraine to Poland. Ukrainian diaspora in pre-invasion period was estimated at ca. 1.3 million persons, including 70-80 thousand persons in Kraków alone (Pędziwiatr et al., 2021). Many of our respondents had exploited personal networks with family (16%), friends (16%) and more distant colleagues (4%) that already resided in Poland. Such persons could often rely on hospitality of other Ukrainians, staying in their houses and apartments, at least in the early phase of stay in Poland. Yet, it is important to stress that 1/5 of respondents came to Poland accidentally, without planning it in advance and “following the crowd”. Potentially these 20% of refugees could be at risk of marginalization and should require special assistance in accommodation process in our country.

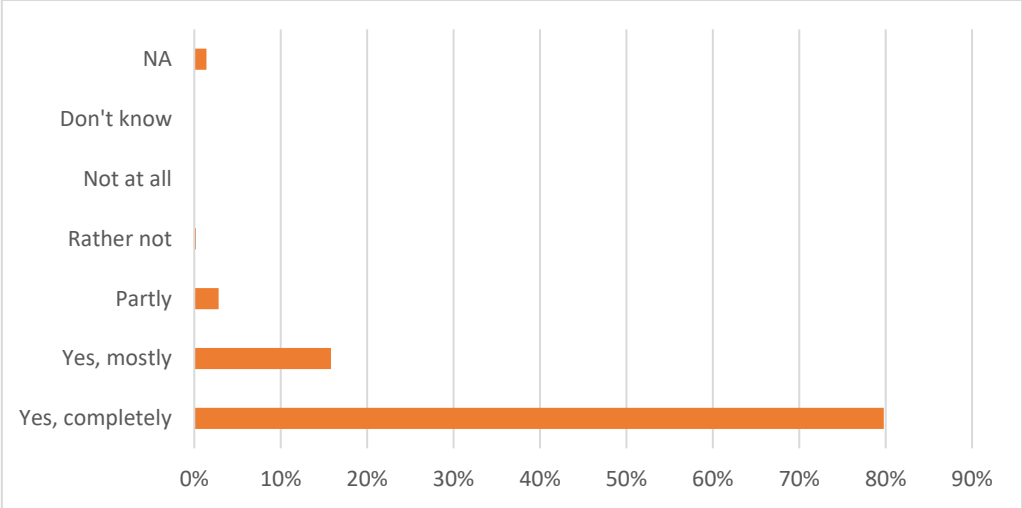
Figure 27. Why respondents have fled to Poland (multiple answers possible)



The initial phase of refugee crisis was marked by extremely favourable reception of forced migrants by Polish society. The sense of solidarity with Ukraine was demonstrated in high levels of hospitality: many Poles travelled voluntarily to Polish-Ukrainian border to offer free transportation to major cities, also a considerable share of inhabitants of major Polish cities (Warsaw, Poznań, Gdańsk, Wrocław, Katowice, Kraków, Rzeszów, Lublin just to name few) offered free accommodation in private apartments and homes. Polish NGOs actively supported refugees from the first day of war, establishing mobile support points at the Polish border, but also welcoming posts at the major train stations and providing free clothes and food for persons in need. Also, Polish local (municipal) governments were very active in this regard, for instance in the first week of the war Kraków municipality has created several refugee shelters in partnership with private sponsors and NGOs. This optimistic narrative, even praised in the

Western media (e.g., Waldie 2022, Jacoby 2022), has been confirmed by our respondents: 80% felt very welcome in Poland upon arrival, while only 4% expressed some reservations in this regard (Figure 28).

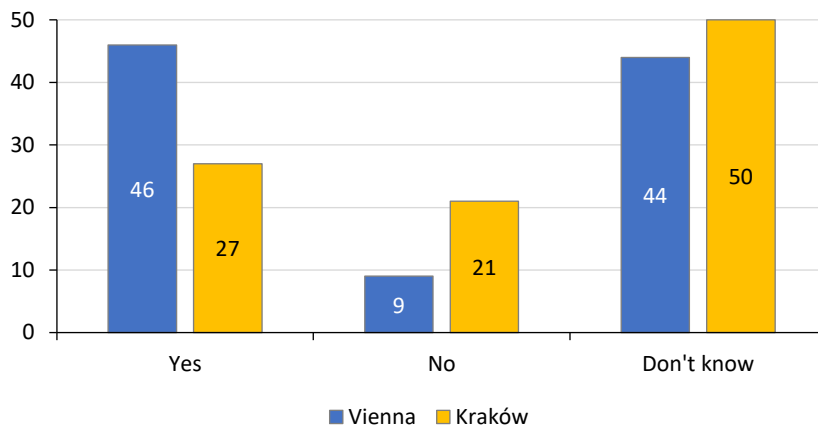
Figure 28. Feeling welcome after the arrival to Poland (%)



As far as the return intentions are concerned, we analysed them by asking refugees if they plan to stay in Poland/Austria, and also about their opinions on their prospects of returning to Ukraine. In the case of the first question, we found that the almost half of the respondents in Krakow and 44% in Vienna answered that they don't know. Indecisiveness in this matter was higher in Poland than in Austria. Interestingly, in Austria 46% of refugees said that they would stay in their new host country. In Poland, only 27% of respondents answered in this way. The efforts of reaching each of the countries as well as the reception and integration mechanisms put in place in two host countries may explain some of these differences. Furthermore, every fifth person responded in Poland that they would not stay in the country. In Austria only 9% answered in such a way.

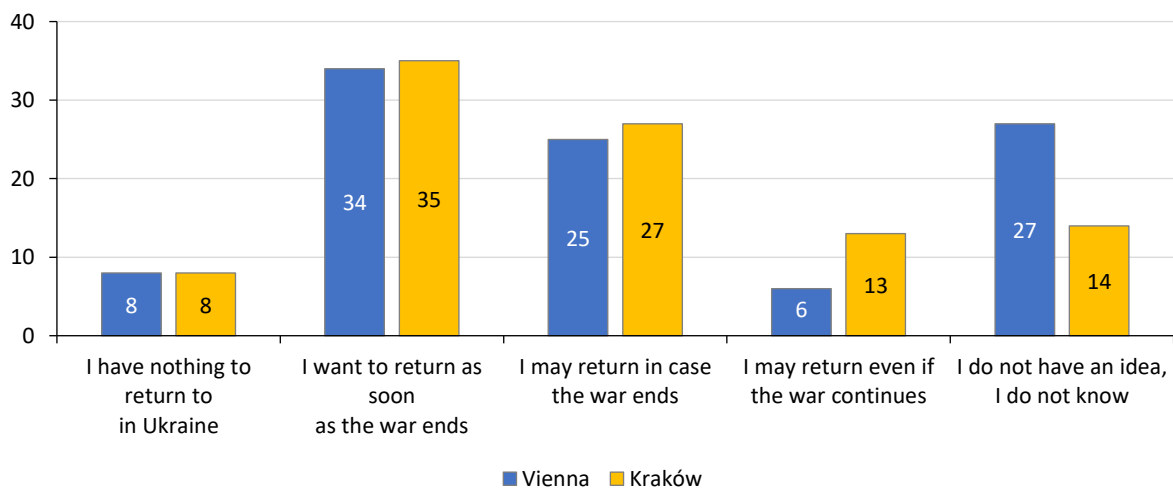
More thorough analysis of the comparative Polish and Austrian data showed that the further refugees moved from Ukraine, the higher their socio-economic status and educational attainment and the less pronounced their return intentions (Kohlenberger et al., 2022).

Figure 29. Do you plan to stay in Poland / Austria?



Interestingly, though when asked more precisely about their plans to return to Ukraine the responses of Ukrainian refugees in Krakow and Vienna were more alike. Over one-third of refugees in Austria and Poland want to return to Ukraine as soon as the war is over, and every fourth refugee in Vienna and 27% in Poland may return in the case the war ends. A higher percentage of Ukrainian refugees in Vienna expressed indecisiveness than in Krakow. If in Austria 27% of persons said they did not know, in Poland the share was only 14%. Exactly similar percentage of refugees (8%) said that they had nothing to return to in Ukraine. Only 6% of refugees in Austria were contemplating the possibility of return before the end of the war. In Poland there were over twice as many of such persons. The geographic proximity of Ukraine was probably one of the important factors in such answers of 13% of respondents.

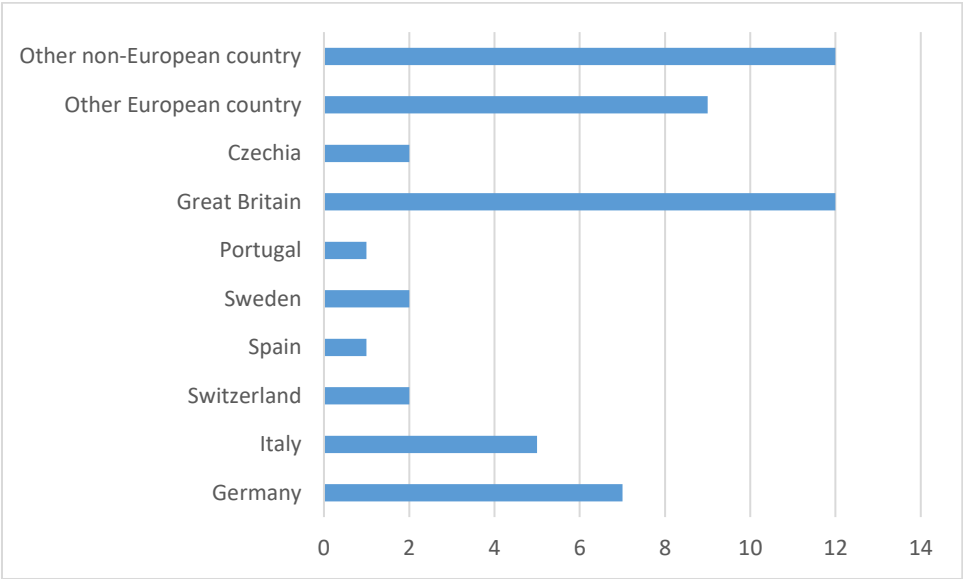
Figure 30. Opinions about return to Ukraine



As mentioned earlier, 21% of our respondents in May/June answered that they did not plan to stay in Poland. We asked also our respondents about plans of further migration. Half of them replied that they want to return to Ukraine while 40% that they did not yet make their decision with this regard. Most probably these were the people who were at the stage of weighing various options. Some of most frequently recorded answers to question about further

migrations suggested that non-European countries were viewed as prospective migration destinations. Within them probably the USA and Canada, which had offered specially developed programs for accelerated entry of Ukrainians (CUAET³, Canada) and temporary stay in case of finding sponsorship (U4U⁴, USA) – stood out. The same number of respondents also considered migration to Great Britain. Significant number of individuals were also considering migrating to Germany. Some of the important factors in choosing these countries were knowledge of English and German (the most widespread foreign languages in educational institutions of Ukraine) and perception of policies regarding the provision of temporary protection as most comprehensive ones. In the case of the aforementioned countries as well as Italy, Switzerland, Sweden and Czechia who were also suggested by some interviewees the diasporic links also played important role. Here it is important to note that in the case of Czechia the number of registered Ukrainian refugees at the beginning of October 2022 (442 thousand persons) makes around 4% of the total population of the country compared to Poland where registered refugees make up 3,7% of the population of the country (UNHCR, 2022). Yet, other countries considered our respondents as prospective future migration destinations were Portugal and Spain.

Figure 31. Further migrations of Ukrainians who do not plan to stay in Poland (multiply answer question – number of respondents)



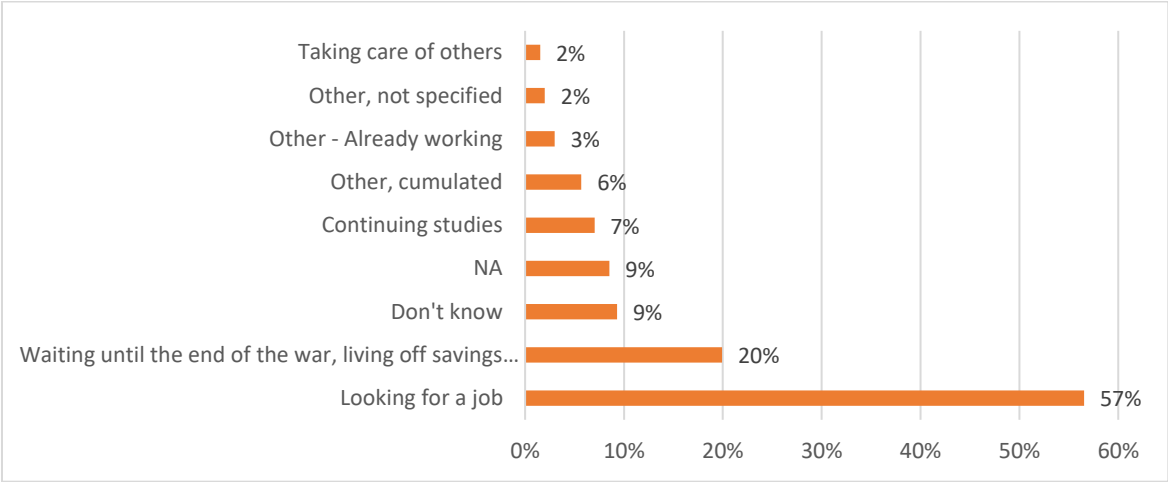
We also asked our respondents who want to stay in Poland about their future plans. The largest number of them (57%) pointed out that finding a job in Poland is the most important task for them. Only 3% of respondents had already found work while participating in the survey. Every fifth person wanted to use his or her saving to wait till the end of the war. Almost every

³ CUAET – Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel. The CUAET is for Ukrainians and their family members who want to come to Canada temporarily due to the crisis resulting from President Putin’s invasion of Ukraine, and then return home when it is safe to do so.

⁴ U4U – Uniting for Ukraine, a streamlined process to provide Ukrainian citizens who have fled Russia’s unprovoked war of aggression opportunities to come to the U.S.

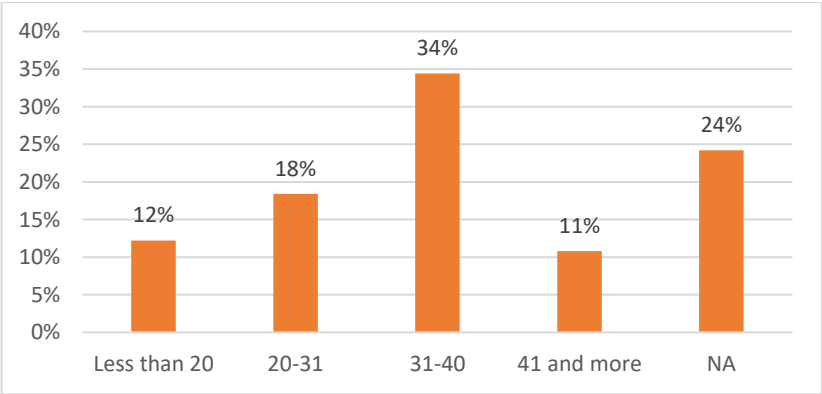
tenth did not have clear plans for the near future. As many refugees interrupted their higher education, their plan was to continue studies. Some pointed out that their main task in the future is to take care of others (children and elderly parents) or to volunteer and help others.

Figure 32. Plans for the further stay



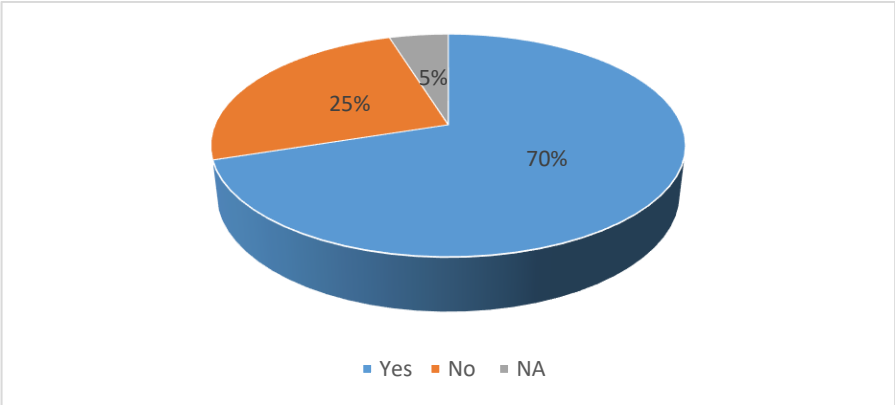
As noted above, significant part of the Ukrainians (20%) answered that their plan was to wait for the end of the war and live off the savings and social benefits. This result may change further down the line as the number of housing offered for free at the beginning of the war decreases, free public transport benefits cease to operate, certain volunteer programs close or reduce their activities, and the cost of renting housing increases due to increased demand. This would affect the growth of the number of people who will be forced to look for work or return to Ukraine. In the case of making a decision regarding employment in Poland, 34% of Ukrainians plan to devote 31-40 hours a week to work, 11% are ready to work more than 41 hours, 24% have not yet decided on the working day regime or could not give an answer to this question (Figure 33).

Figure 33. The amount of time refugees plan to devote to work



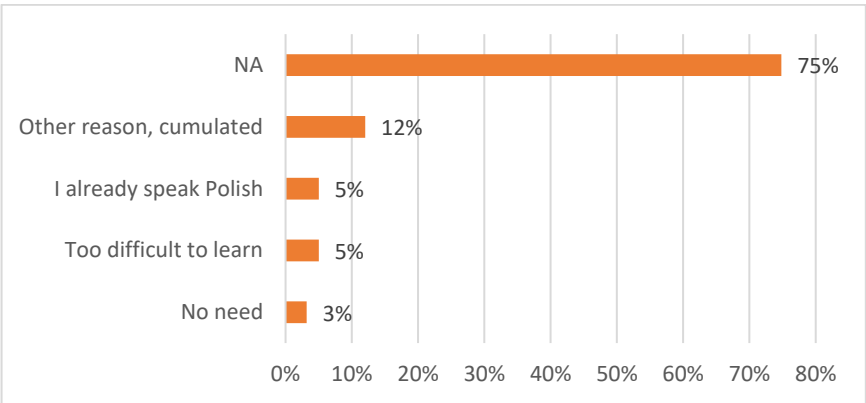
The following three charts are related to the intentions of Ukrainian refugees to stay in Poland for a long time and illustrate plans to learn the Polish language. 70% of Ukrainians indicated in their answers that they are already studying the Polish language (Figure 34), 25% were not studying the Polish language at the time of the survey, and 5% of respondents did not give an answer.

Figure 34. Involvement in learning Polish language



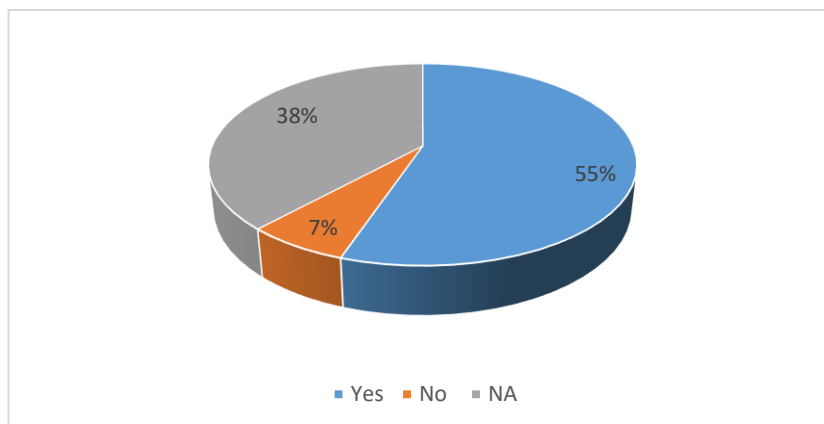
Among the 25% of refugees who were not involved in learning Polish language at the time of the survey, 5% already spoke Polish, so they did not need such training (Figure 35), 5% of respondents consider the Polish language too difficult and estimate their chances of learning it close to zero, for 3% of respondents there is no such need to study Polish language (primarily those persons who planned to leave Poland in the near future). 12% of respondents noted that there are other reasons, the first of which was mainly the impossibility of devoting time to it due to the presence of small children, the second - the lack of free courses. However, a significant number of respondents (75%) did not provide an explanation as to why they do not study Polish.

Figure 35. Reasons for which Ukrainians are not learning Polish



When asked whether Ukrainians want to learn the Polish language, 55% of respondents gave a positive answer, 33% were undecided, but 7% said that they did not want to learn.

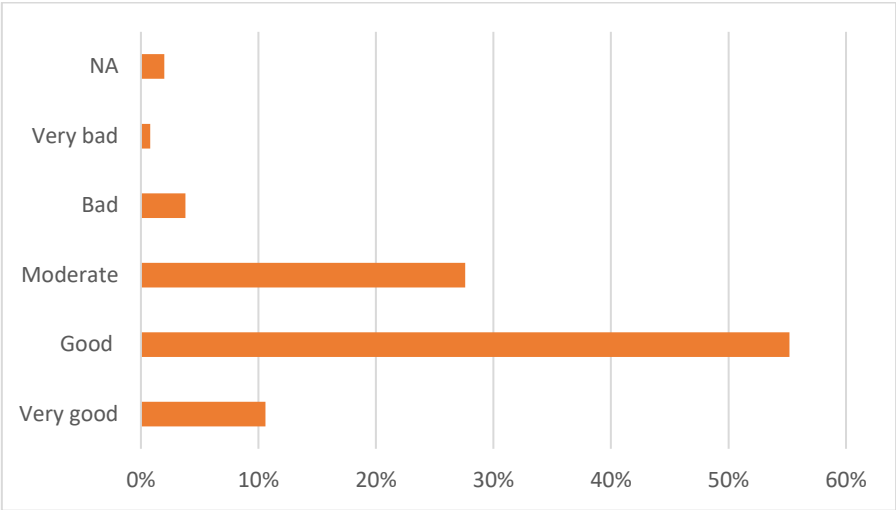
Figure 36. Intentions of Ukrainian refugees regarding learning Polish



Health Condition of Refugees

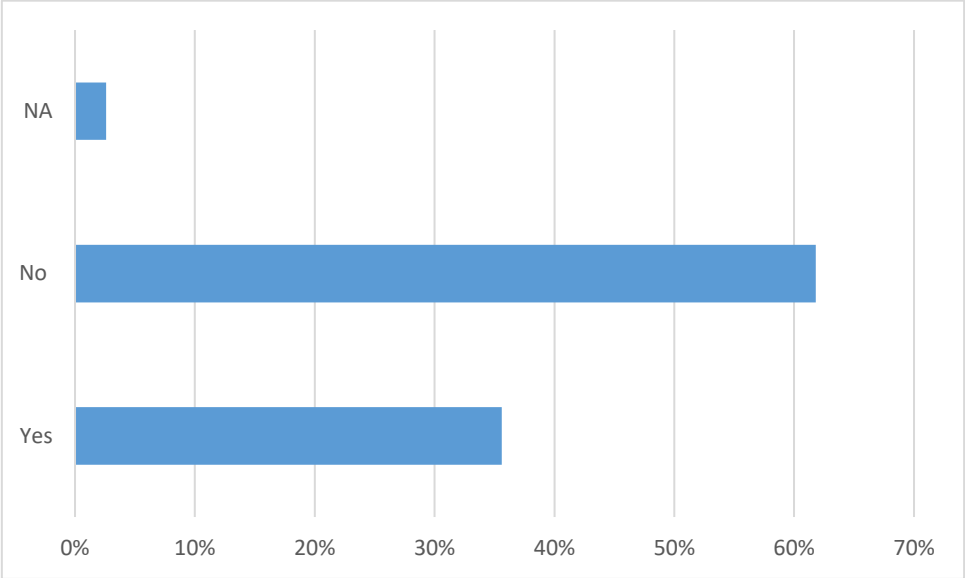
A recent literature review has demonstrated that refugees exhibit much lower health condition levels than non-movers in most of European countries. This is due to lack of proper access to healthcare during the conflict, not to mention the health of civilians which deteriorated due to bombings or other military activities. Another important dimension is refugees mental health: they are disproportionately exposed to a risk of post-traumatic stress disorder or depression (Lebano et al., 2020). Yet, the results of our survey show a rather positive picture of the self-assessed health condition of refugees in Małopolska region: 66% of respondents have declared very good or good health condition, while only 5% indicated that their health is in bad or very bad condition. Here it is important to mention that in the light of “The Act on Support for the Nationals of Ukraine” (12.03.22) (with the further amendments - 23.03.22), which constitutes the legal basis for the reception and integration of Ukrainian refugees in Poland, all persons fleeing war in Ukraine have full access to free healthcare on equal terms to Polish citizens.

Figure 37. Health condition of refugees (self-assessment)



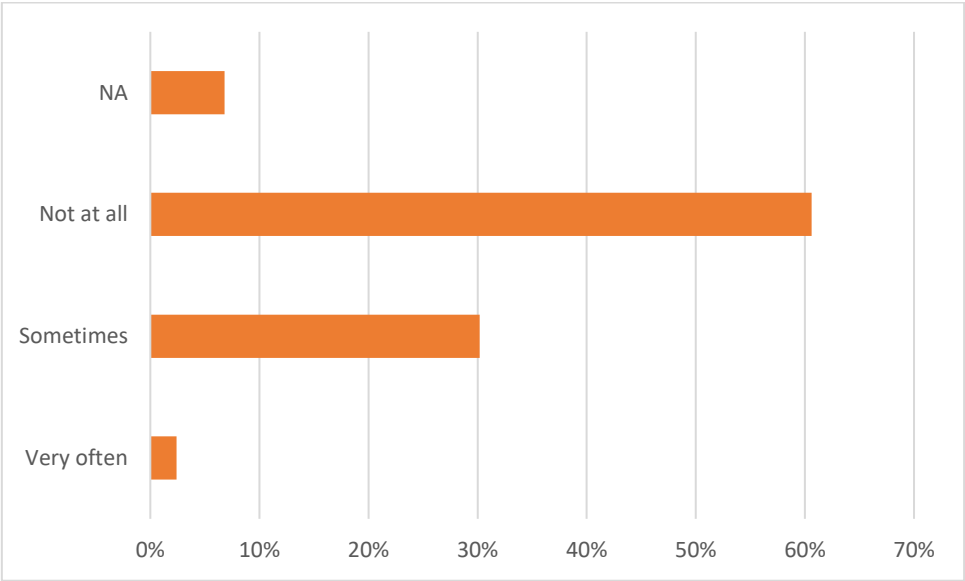
Yet, this positive picture of refugees’ health is less optimistic when looking on other dimensions of health, including the question on chronic diseases or permanent health problems. Actually, 36% of respondents have declared to suffer from permanent health problems, which is a considerable amount.

Figure 38. Do you have any chronic diseases or permanent health problems?



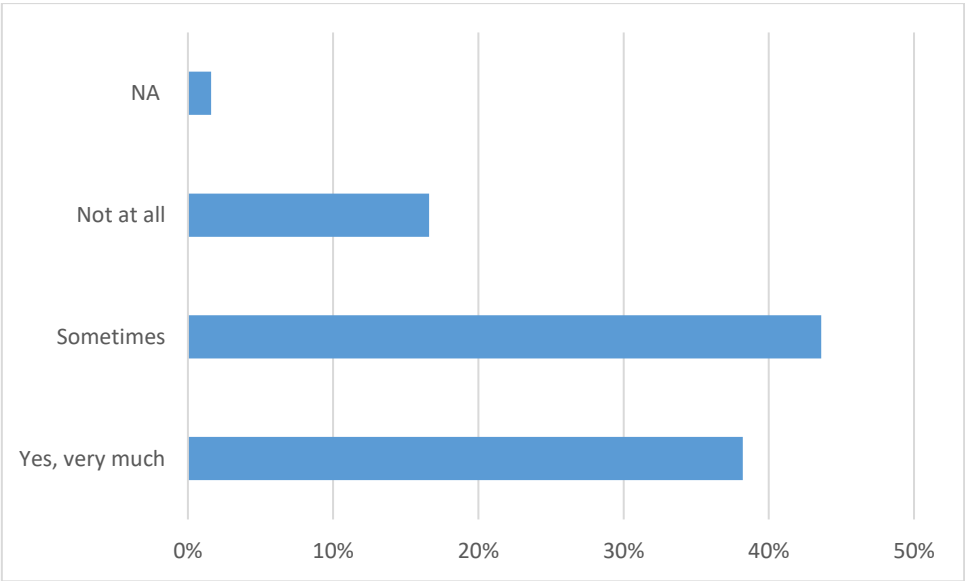
Additionally, 32% of refugees have declared at least partial limitation of daily activities due to poor health during the last 6 months (Figure 39).

Figure 39. Limitations of daily activity during the last 6 months due to health



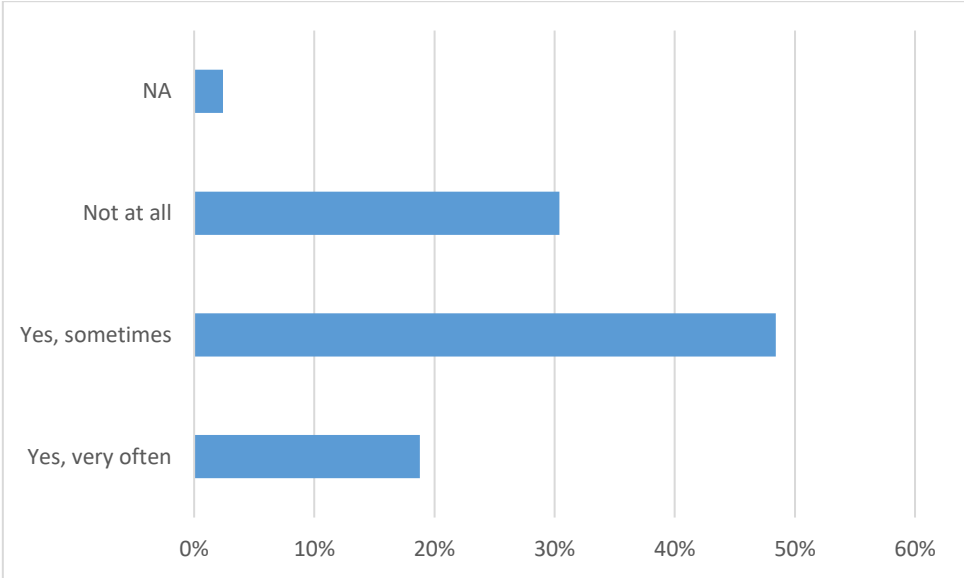
Consequently, as our study was carried out in the early phase of the refugee crises, the picture shown above might be biased. The issue of refugees’ health condition as well their access to medical services require further quantitative and qualitative analyses in the future as some problems might become more evident only in the course of the extended residence in Poland. Additionally, our respondents present rather mixed declarations on the emotional support from the closest persons: family and friends. Only 38% of them could strongly rely on such support, while 44% of refugees indicated the answer “sometimes” and 17% asserted that they cannot recur to such assistance. On one hand, this can be explained by the current separation from close friends and some family members due to military conflict and forced migration (see above), but on the other hand – this could indicate weak social capital, a problem signaled in the literature on the post-communist countries of Eastern Europe. For instance, the membership in civil society organizations in these countries is much lower than in the Western Europe (Huber and Mikula, 2019).

Figure 40. Support from family and friends during hard times



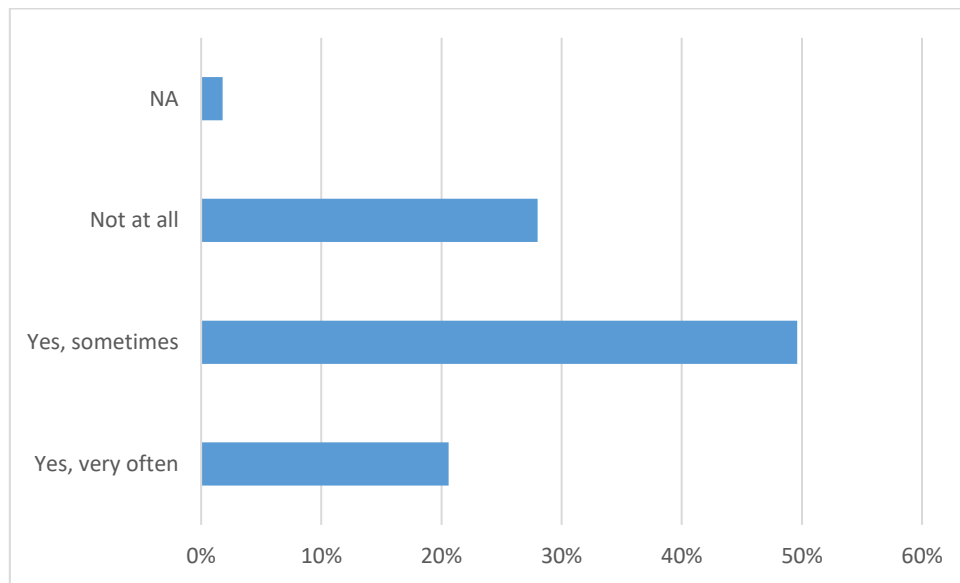
Another interesting dimension of support during the hard times is the spiritual support. As shown above three fourths of our respondents declared affinity with Orthodox Christianity and further 9% with Greek-Catholic church. Our results are fairly consistent with the literature on these issues, and other self-declarations on this topic in our survey. In spite of the fact that 67% of refugees receive some spiritual consolation through prayers, only 19% does so on a regular basis, while for 30% the question of worship is completely irrelevant.

Figure 41. Spiritual support in the form of worship and prayers to God



Interestingly, the incidence of respondents who rely on social media communities is almost as high as the share of religious refugees who seek support from God. 71% of refugees are seeking support in online communities, while 21% do it quite often (Figure 42). It is worth to stress that such media as Telegram and Facebook has become a very effective tool for support Ukrainian diaspora already during the difficult times of covid-19 pandemic (Pędziwiatr, Brzozowski, et al., 2022), and the inflow of refugees to Poland has only expanded the potential of social media in this regard.

Figure 42. Seeking support in online communities, e.g. Telegram, FB



Economic Activity in Poland

One has to be careful in assessing the socio-economic progress of refugees in the host society. First, refugees are forced to move and their migration process is often marked by unexpected circumstances (shocks), psychological trauma and overall unpreparedness or lack of long-term planning (Brell et al., 2020). Consequently, refugees usually face numerous difficulties upon arrival (OECD, 2022b), including qualification mismatch, poor health condition (see discussion above) and even after a long period of residence in host country their economic performance is poorer than in the case of economic immigrants (Brzozowski & Lasek, 2019). Second, refugees are usually willing to return. Therefore, debating on their socio-economic integration is problematic, as the main source of concern of major host countries – including contemporary Poland – is to host forced migrants and enable their successful return to home country as soon as this return is secure. In this section we will assess the economic activity of Ukrainian refugees in Krakow and partially also in larger Małopolska voivodeship, taking into account their socio-economic adaptation, which is defined as “the degree to which work is obtained, is satisfying and is effective in the new culture” (Berry, 1997, pp. 13-14) and which includes livelihood strategies of refugees at destination (Kibria, 1994).

There is no doubt that such a large number of refugees arriving in Poland after 24th February 2022 will have an impact on the Polish economy. Yet, drawing implications for the labour market is a challenging task. Indeed, in the case of Polish government the *laissez faire* approach means that Ukrainians receive temporary protection status, which gives them immediate access to labour market and relatively limited social benefits. This approach suggests that Polish government expects most of refugees to enter the local labour market. But the current situation on labour market in Poland is marked by a growing demand mostly for typical “male”

professions in construction (for instance carpenter or bricklayer) or transportation services (truck and bus drivers). In the case of typical female-dominated professions the demand for jobs is less pronounced: this is the case of beauticians, preschool teachers, kitchen helpers, social workers, and babysitters (WUP, 2022), while in some professions in high demand such as nursery the administrative regulations (including the recognition of diplomas) might constitute a serious barrier to fast job placement. In fact, there might be a mismatch between the skills of refugees and the labour demand in Poland. Therefore, it is important to understand in which sectors of the economy and in which types of labour activity the supply of labour resources will increase. It is also important to understand in what areas the professional development of specialists should be organized.

According to our survey, 53% of Ukrainians said they actively participated in the labour market before arriving in Poland, 38% said that they did not, and 9% did not answer this question (Figure 43). Such a low percentage of people involved in the labour market can be explained by a relatively low retirement age in Ukraine, that is 60 years and a more traditional society, in which significant percentage of women are not expected to have gainful employment. Consequently, persons who combined retirement pensions with some forms of (even part-time) economics activity in Ukraine answered that they are “not active”. Yet, another possibility is that survey respondents misunderstood the term “economic activity”. In fact, the share of economically active persons may be significantly greater. When one analyses the economic status in Ukraine before the war (Figure 43), one finds that 45% of respondents were employed, an additional 14% were entrepreneurs, 2.6% were working in family firm or farm, and only 4.2% were unemployed. This suggests that the percentage of individuals who were economically active before the war was much greater – 68.2%, while additionally 2% were studying, 9.4% took care of the house and children, 5.8% indicated “other” activity and 17% did not provide an answer to this question.

Figure 43. Taking part in a labour market

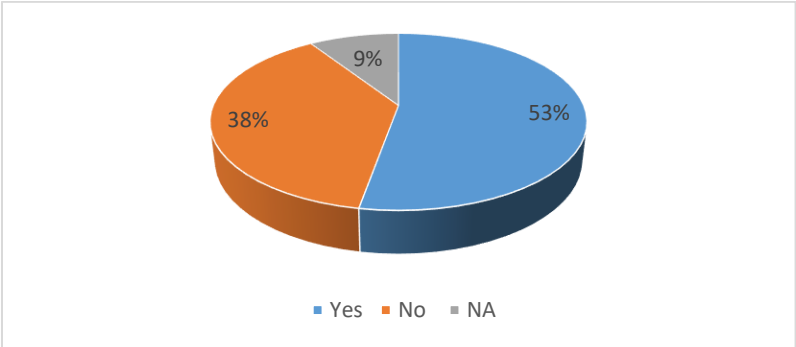
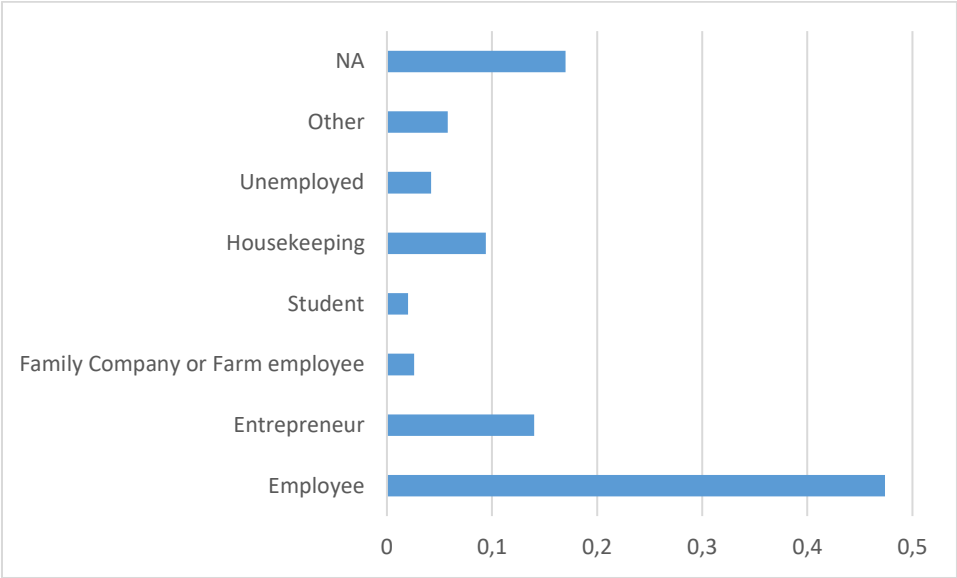
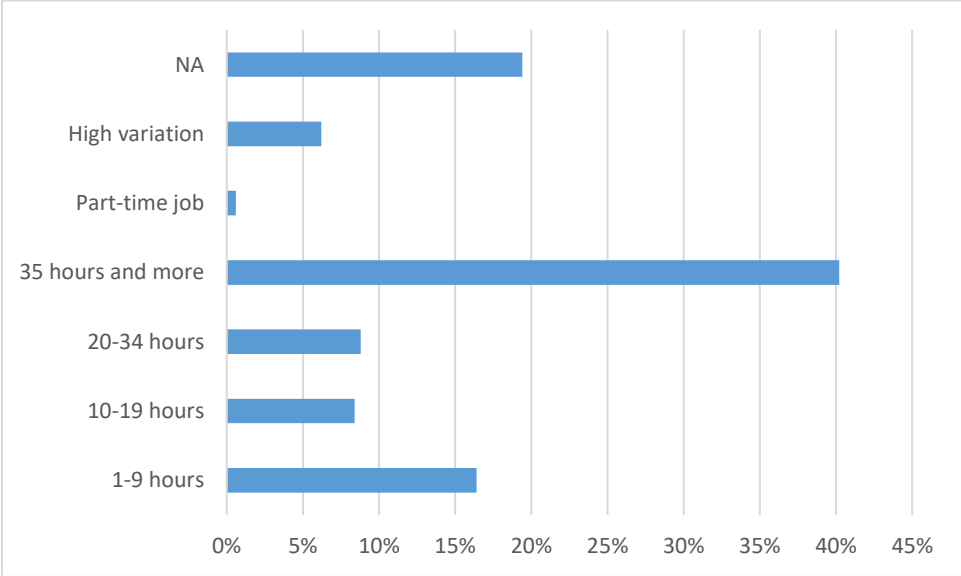


Figure 44. Economic status in Ukraine (multiple options allowed)



This interpretation is supported by the declarations on hours worked per week in Ukraine. According to our respondents, 81% of them worked at least 1 hour per week, which shows a high incidence of part-time occupations (Figure 45). There is a clear relationship between the full-time employment and number of children, which takes an inverted u-shape: 35% of females without children work 35+ hours per week, while for those with one child the incidence is greater (42%) and then it falls with every additional child – up to females with 4 children and more, for which the percentage of full-time employed is the smallest (25%).

Figure 45. Hours per week worked in Ukraine



Another interesting finding is the relatively high incidence of refugees who were self-employed in Ukraine (14%). The recent study on economic immigrants in Małopolska voivodeship has shown extremely low levels of self-employment among Ukrainian immigrants (3.6%) even compared with the level of self-employment among other foreigners in the region (10.4% self-employed, cf. Pędziwiatr et al., 2021). Even if some part of this entrepreneurship activity conducted in Ukraine is necessity-based, there is a great entrepreneurial potential among refugees, which can be supported both for the benefit of newcomers and Polish economy.

When analysing the data on the sector of the economy in which Ukrainian refugees worked (NACE codes, see figure 46), the most popular were Other services activities (10%), Wholesale and retail trade (9%) and Education (8%). Yet, 37% did not provide an answer regarding the area of the economy in which they worked. When it comes to main occupations (Figure 47), there is a much greater heterogeneity and no dominant job. Still, the most popular occupations were: merchants (7%), accountants (5%), teachers (6%), managers (4%), hairdressers and cooks (3% each). It is worth mentioning that in our sample there were also highly-skilled specialists, including doctors (7 individuals), nurses (10 individuals), pharmacists (7 individuals), university professors (6 individuals) and psychologists (6 individuals).

Figure 46. Main sectors of economy in Ukraine (by NACE)

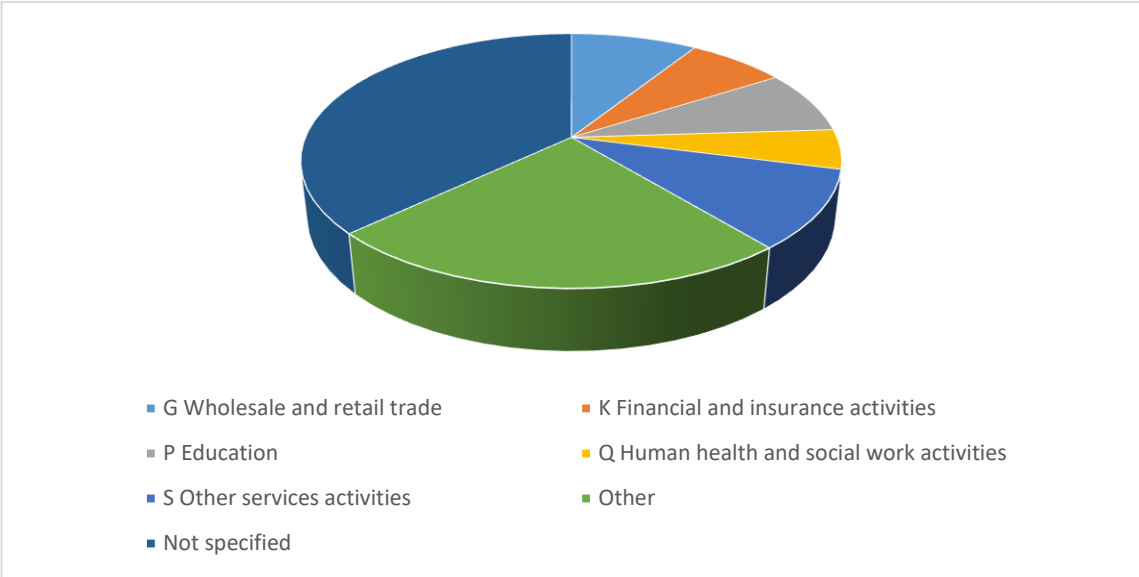
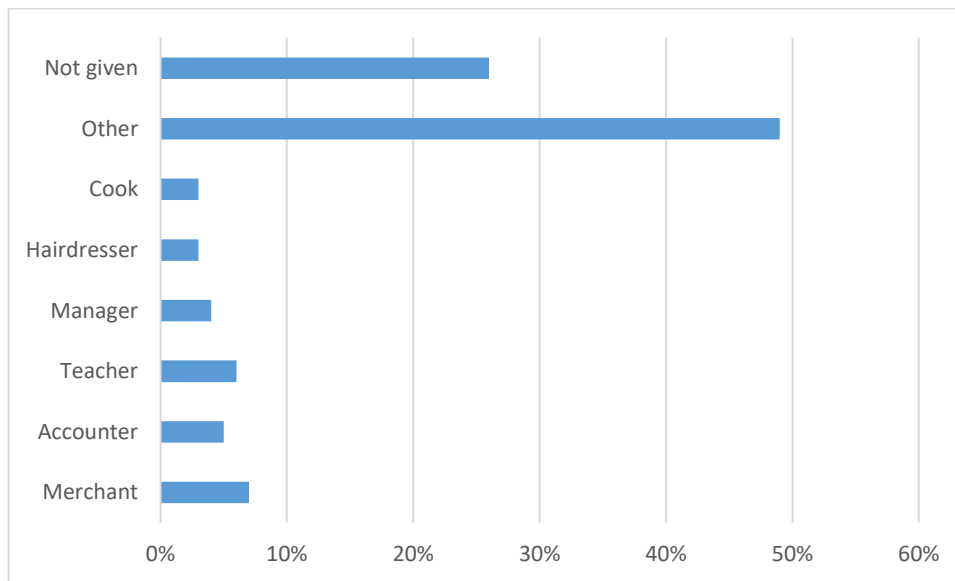


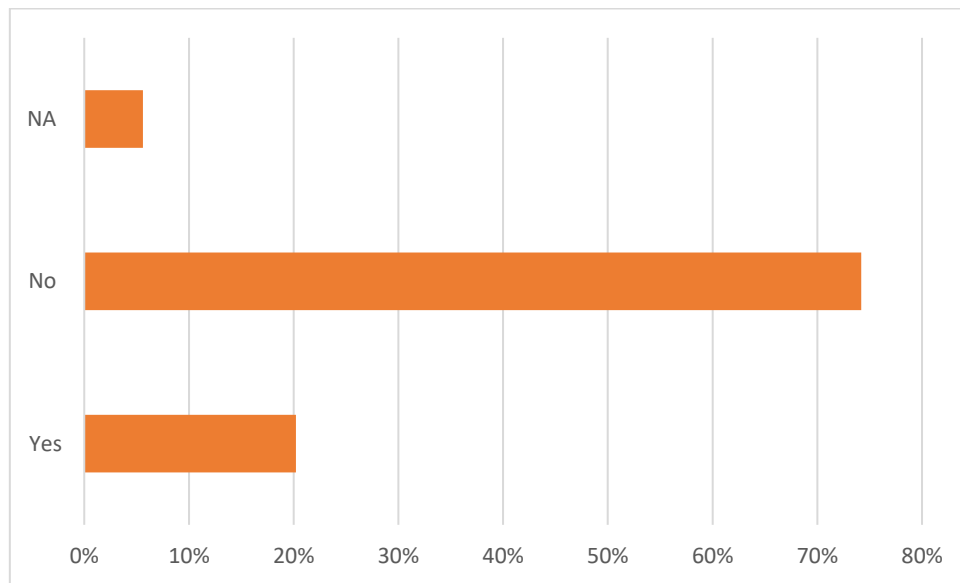
Figure 47. Main occupations in Ukraine (ISCO codes)



In order to predict the consequences of the arrival of refugees from Ukraine on the Polish labour market, it is also necessary to take into account the description of the main type of activity. The transferability of human capital (or skills) might be problematic in some of the professions (Duleep et al., 2020). For instance, the foreign health care workers are subject to special rules in Poland. In the case of refugee nurses, they might get a conditional work permit in the learned profession, but with the supervision of the Polish nurse at hospital. In the long run, the situation might become more complicated as in Poland nurses are required to have university diploma, while many nurses in Ukraine received only post-secondary training. As for the refugee doctors, the transitional laws are more friendly: a doctor trained in Ukraine who arrived in Poland after 24th February can receive a conditional work permit in Poland for a period of 18 months. As for other refugees, many of those with high qualifications in Ukraine will, either have to learn a new profession, or adapt their knowledge and skills to the peculiarities of Poland. Moreover, the majority of professions require advanced communication skills, and there is an urgent need to create opportunities for learning the Polish language for most of refugees.

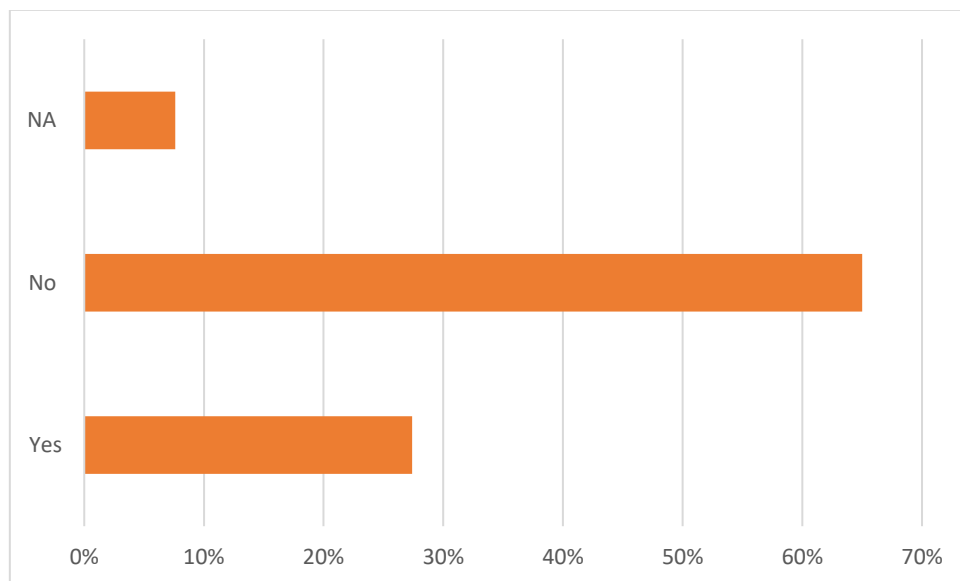
As mentioned before, around 2/3 of respondents were economically active in Ukraine before the war, either pursuing waged occupations or being engaged in entrepreneurship. The former entrepreneurial experience of refugees (indicated by 14% of respondents) is of a particular importance, as the pre-war Ukrainian diaspora in Poland –in Małopolska region in particular – was relatively averse to entrepreneurial activity (Brzozowski, 2019). It is possible that the entrepreneurial experience of refugees could enhance the entrepreneurial potential among the entire Ukrainian community. Additionally, it is worth noting that 51% of respondents in our sample had a higher education diploma, while in Ukraine such percentage is much lower (ca. 30%). Thus, the refugee population in Poland is favourably self-selected in terms of educational attainment – a finding consistent with the all-national study of the National Bank of Poland, who found 50% of respondents tertiary educated across the country (NBP, 2022).

Figure 48. Has respondent found a job in Poland by oneself?



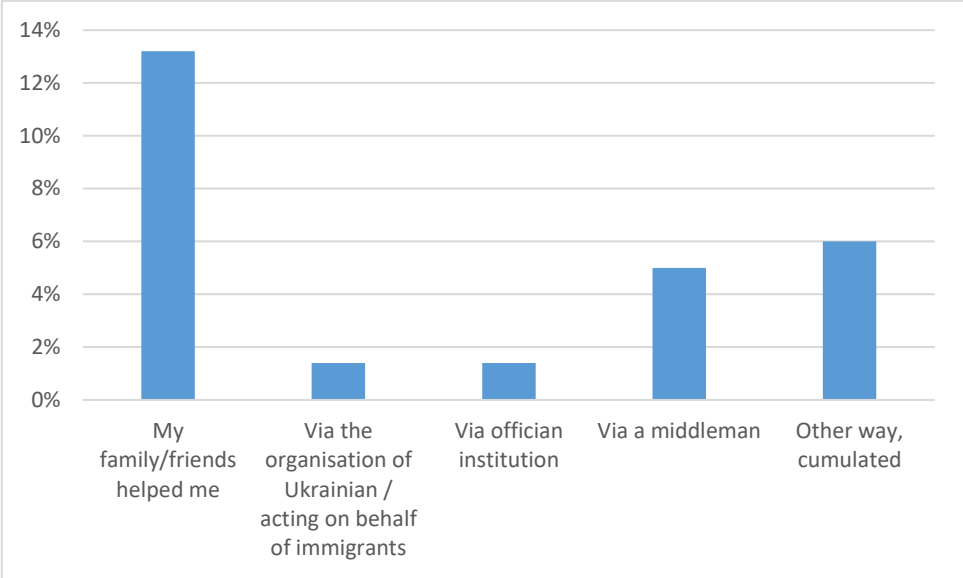
The current scope of refugee economic activity was limited due to high uncertainty, family situation and short time of arrival. As our survey shows only 1/5 of respondents found till June 2022 employment in Poland by themselves (Figure 48). The share of employed individuals is higher (27% - Figure 58). This is due to the fact that a majority of respondents were offered a job by family members or friends (13% - Figure 50) and started working almost immediately upon arrival. Just two respondents indicated that they kept working remotely to Ukrainian employer while leaving for Poland.

Figure 49. Currently employed respondents (%)



Another important finding is –taking into the consideration the very short migration spell of individuals – a very limited contribution of NGOs serving refugee community and official institutions (f.i. labour market offices) in job search process of refugees. Hopefully the role of this actors will be strengthened in the upcoming months.

Figure 50. How refugees have found job in Poland



Most of those refugees who did work, reported to started working quite shortly upon arrival to Poland (Figure 51). This implies that either there was high demand for their skills in Poland, or they decided to take any job which was available.

Figure 51. Time (in days) passed from arrival to employment

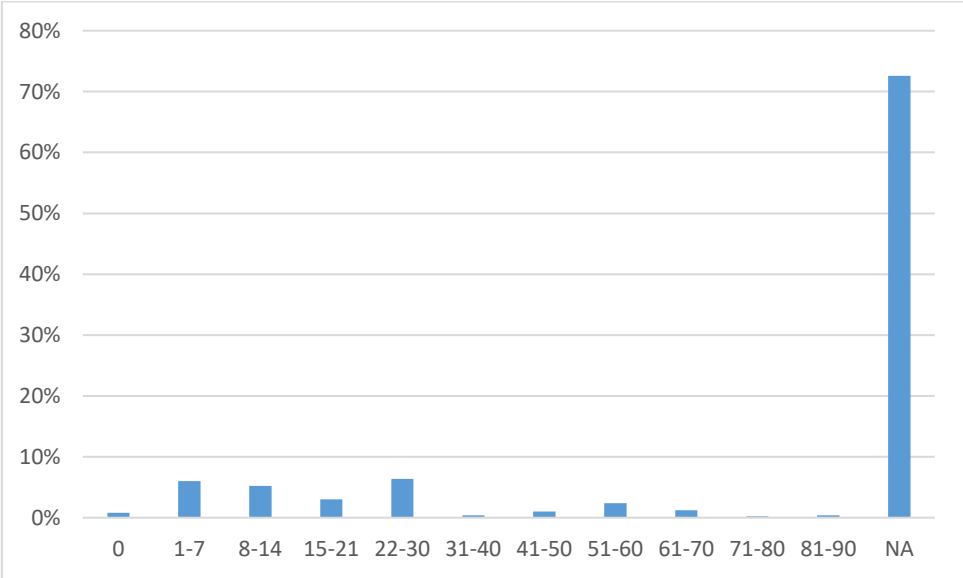
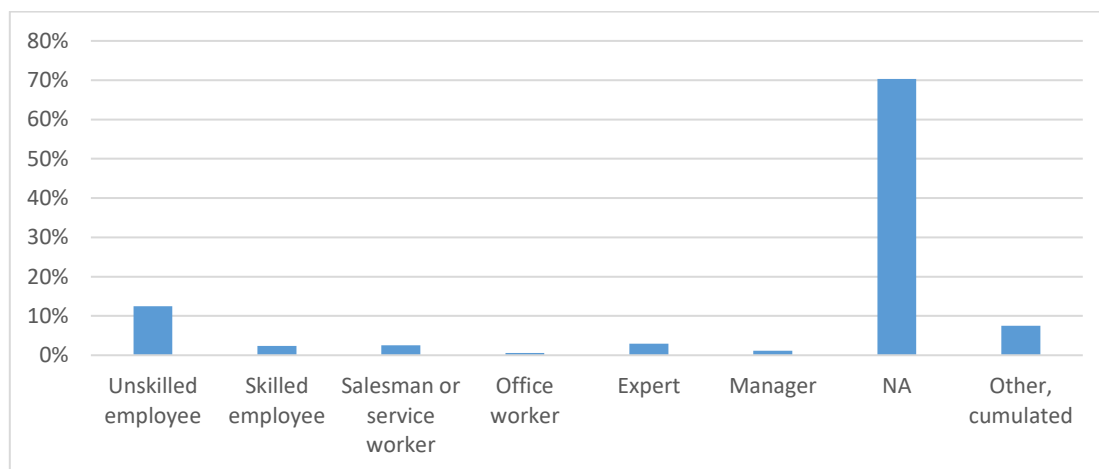


Figure 52. Type of occupation in Poland



Survey responses on the type of occupation held in Ukraine suggests that in most cases the second of the explanations provided above is more accurate. The dominant category is unskilled worker (12%). The positions on which refugees leverage higher order skills are less numerous. These are: skilled employees (2%), experts (3%) and managers (1%). Additionally 1% of respondents work online for Ukrainian employer. There are also some – rather limited in numbers – skilled workers in the “other category”, for instance three designers, one entrepreneur, two academics, one translator of poetry and one tattoo master. In the case of academic staff, the Polish government reacted to Russian aggression in a very moderate way: the National Science Centre has offered only 51 scholarships in the special program “NSC for Ukraine” (with 213 submitted applications) which was announced in late March 2022. Consequently, most of refugee academics from Ukraine have been hosted by universities and research centers in Western European countries, as those were more generous in offering them special financing opportunities. Thus, this window of opportunity to expand Polish-Ukrainian research collaboration seems closed.

As in many other cases with intensive refugee inflow the threat of brain waste and work below the formal competences of a refugee increases. This is the case of Syrians living in Turkey (Ünlütürk-Ulutaş, Ç., & Akbaş, 2020), but also in more developed and richer countries of Western Europe such as Austria (Buber-Ennsner et al., 2020). In the case of our study, the refugees were surveyed at a very early stage of the settlement process, but still the threat of overqualification and skills misuse is very pronounced. Out of 27% employed refugees, a vast majority (17%) has declared to be working below their competences. Bearing in mind that 51% of our respondents are tertiary educated, in upcoming months or years the overqualification problem is likely to become one of the key challenges in successful integration of this group. Among our respondents, there are six university professors, seven pharmacists, twelve lawyers and twelve engineers, ten nurses, seven doctors and twenty-nine teachers, just to name some of the professions learned in Ukraine. Consequently, Polish authorities will have to find some mechanisms of training and qualification recognition to exploit at least some of the potential embodied in those specialists.

Figure 53. Self-assessment of current occupation match with the competences of an individual

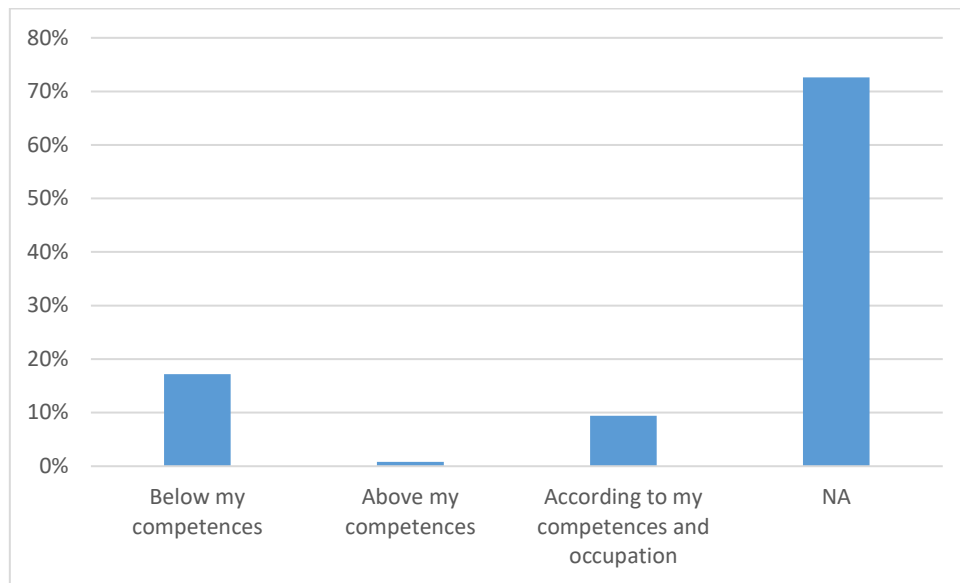
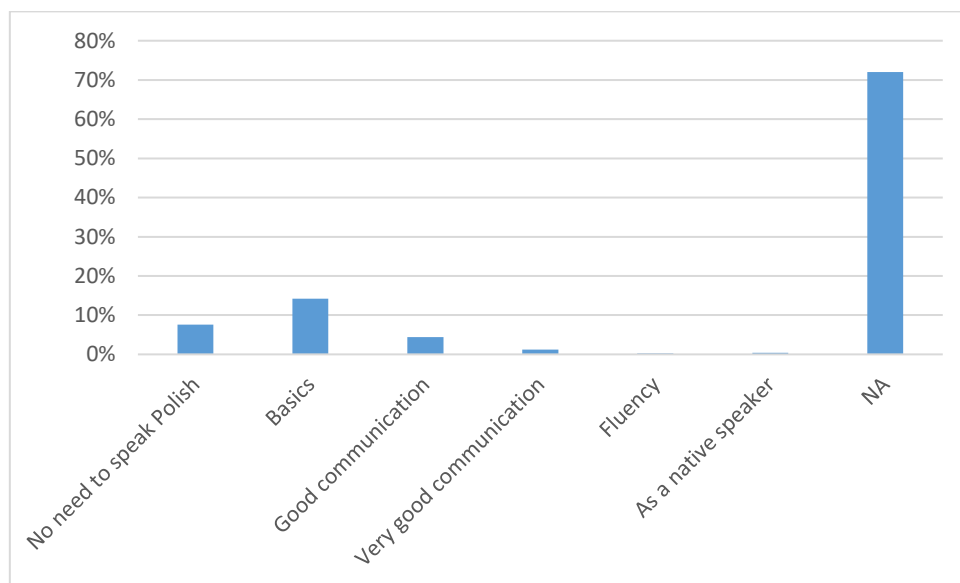


Figure 54. Level of Polish language proficiency needed at work

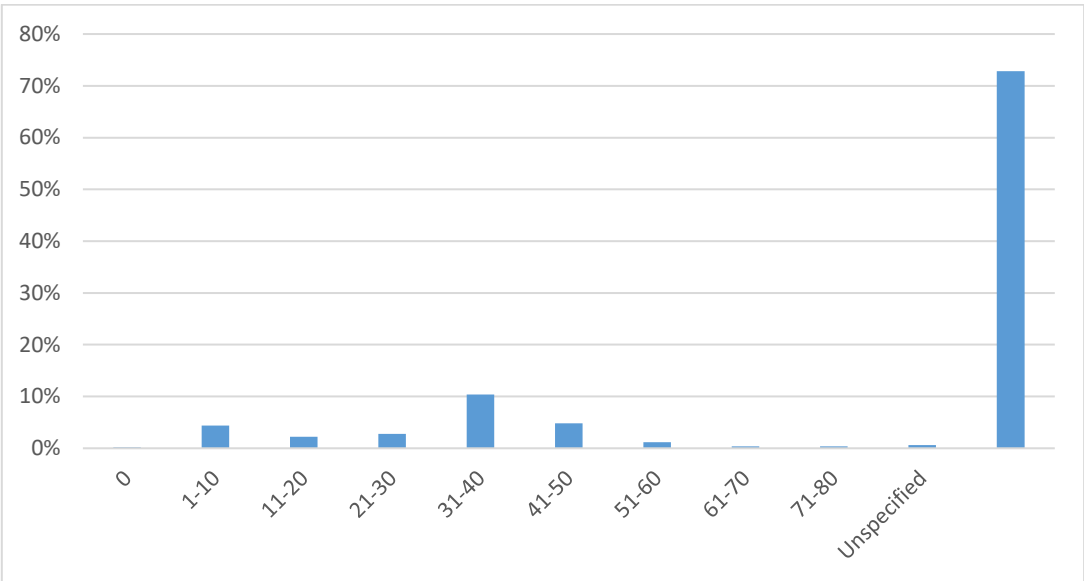


The key obstacle in labour market integration of refugees is command of the host country language. Refugees differ substantially from economic migrants in their willingness to move and ability to choose the destination, thus they often come with lower human capital endowment, and this in turn negatively affects their employability prospects (Brell et al., 2020). This is also the case of Ukrainian forced migrants in Poland. Currently among the individuals who work, their occupations – albeit not matching their qualifications – are also not very demanding when it comes to language competences, as in the case of 8% of jobs there is not even a need to speak Polish at all, while in 14% just basic Polish is sufficient. In our sample, 21% of respondents claimed at least some Polish proficiency – which corresponds with the finding that individuals use basic, good (4%) and very good (1%) communication skills in Polish at their workplace. Even taking into the account the fact that Polish and Ukrainian

language are quite similar and it is relatively easy for Ukrainians to learn host country language, without proper language skills many refugees are exposed to a risk of marginalization, competing for limited and mostly poorly-paid jobs in which no language proficiency is needed.

Among working individuals, most refugees work full time, between 31 and 40 hours per week (10%). Another 6% of refugees work more than 40 hours a week, while 9% work less than 30 hours. Taking into the account their likely family situation – most of the respondents are mothers with children (see former sections) – the access to kindergartens and nurseries (in case of children below 4 years) is of the key importance for labour inclusion of adult refugees in upcoming months.

Figure 55. Hours per week worked

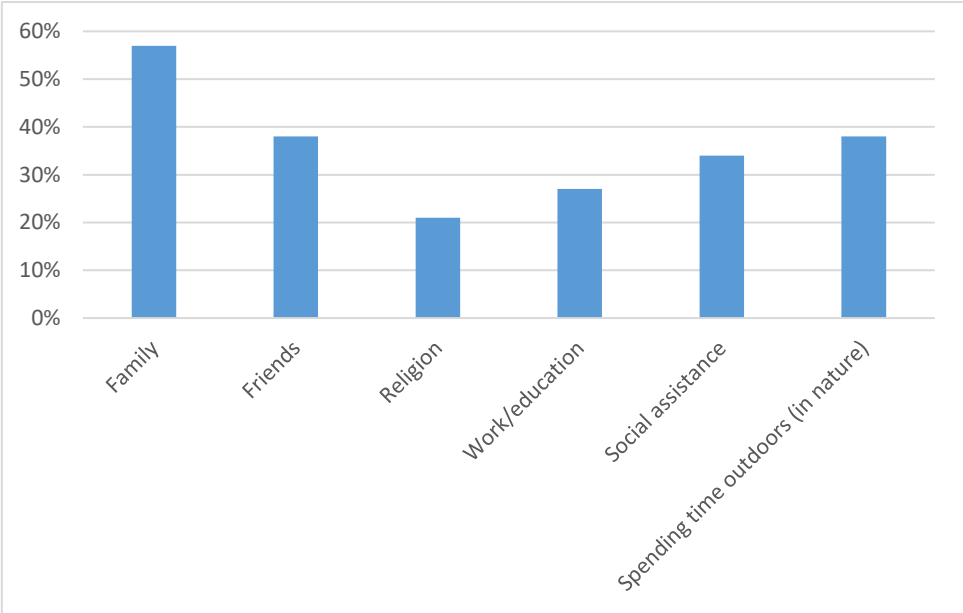


Among the reasons why we pay so much attention to employment of refugees are the findings from numerous studies, who have shown that working activities are a good way to cope with stress and trauma (i.e. active coping strategy, cf. Khawaja et al., 2008; Alzoubi et al., 2019). Consequently, for refugees employability can help not only in socio-economic but also in psychological adaptation in host country. This finding is also evident in our survey: among our respondents, 27 percent told us that the ability to work is one of the important ways they overcome a hard situation. Indeed, employment is even more important than religion (21%) in this regard. This might be partially explained by decades of forced secularization during the communist rule (Ziuzina & Kyselov, 2020) in spite of signs of religious revival from 1990s onwards (Titarenko, 2008).

When dealing with hardships, our respondents recur also to such traditional sources of support as family (almost 60%) and friends (almost 40%). Social assistance is also appreciated, and in this category we should probably include both the public institutions and mostly the NGOs, whose role in supporting refugees is crucial, not only in Kraków, but in Poland overall. Finally, it is worth noting that refugees find some relief and consolation when spending time outdoors, for instance in public parks and other recreation and green areas. Especially during the

summertime, the municipality of Kraków has organized several events in public parks directed to Ukrainian refugees – the results of our survey show that such forms of support are appreciated by newcomers.

Figure 56. Support in difficult situation



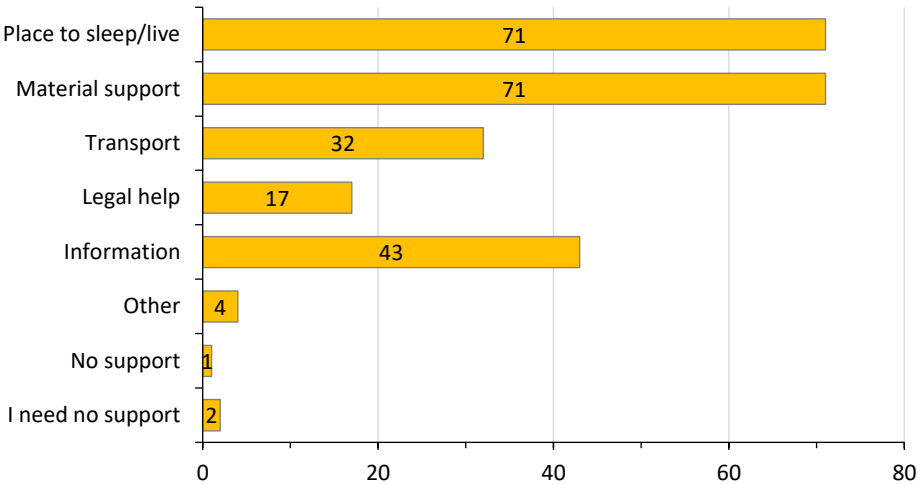
Assessment of the Support Received by the Ukrainian Refugees

One of the important dimensions of our study was to analyse how Ukrainian refugees perceived the support they received, and the entities that provided them with various forms of help. The most highly appreciated was material support and help in obtaining accommodation. Almost three fourths of our respondents said that these were the most important forms of support received. Here it is worth mentioning that both categories should be understood quite broadly. As far as accommodation is concerned it may mean a place of temporary stay, from a few days or weeks (e.g. places in the hostels provided by the UNHCR within the project of cooperation with Marriott and Airbnb) up to several months (living in families, dormitories, with church communities). Material assistance may consist of financial assistance programs, as well as free food, free hygiene products, which are provided at specially equipped distribution points.

A significant number of refugees indicated also that important forms of support received was information, transportation and legal help. Respectively 43%, 32% and 17% of refugees pointed out at these three forms of support. As for informational assistance, the range of necessary information can be so wide and it is so broad category that it affects the scale of satisfaction with this type of assistance received. Information, however is the main source and vehicle of all other kinds of support such as: housing, financial aid, legal aid, medical support, employment, etc. Transportation was particularly important at the very beginning of the

invasion when the largest number of refugees were arriving to Poland from Ukraine (CPP, 2022: 9). Many Poles (including members of the CASPAR - MMO team) were traveling to the border with their private cars to pick up refugees from the frontier check-point. Legal aid was also particularly important in the first weeks of the humanitarian crisis when it was not fully clear if refugees should apply for international protection or wait for the temporary protection scheme. Only a small group of respondents (all together 3 %) pointed out that they did not need any support or that they did not obtain in.

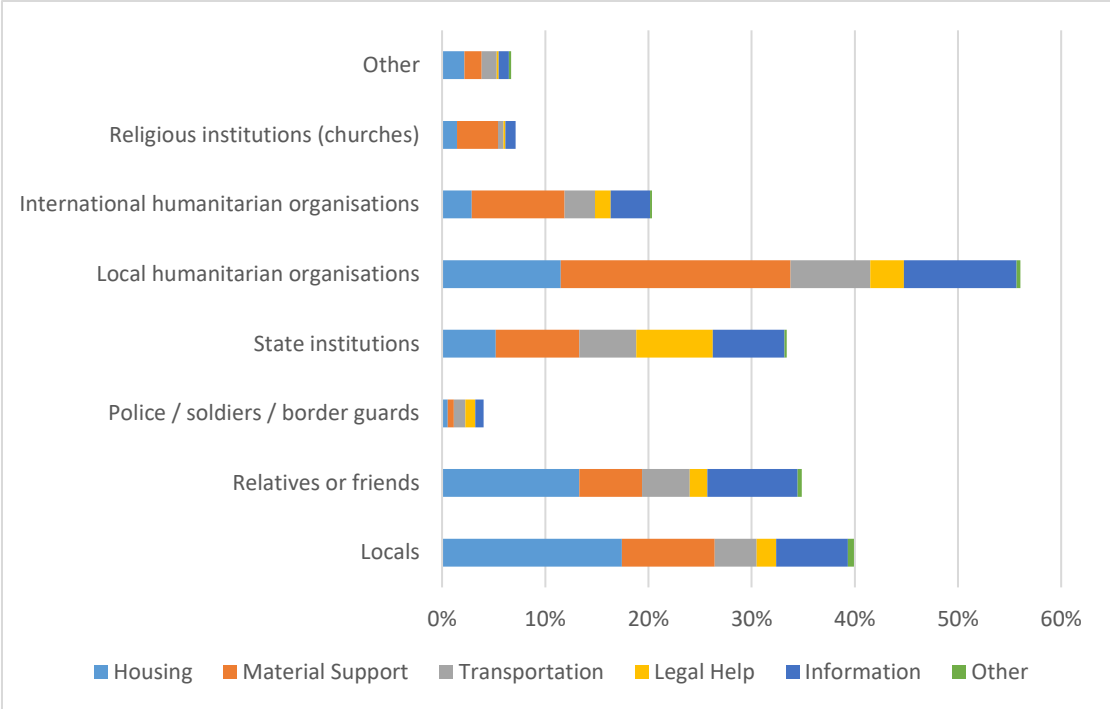
Figure 57. Forms of support received



According to our survey, Ukrainians received the most significant help from local humanitarian organizations. Krakow's network of NGOs self-coordinated their assistance and worked in close collaboration since 24th February 2022. Some of these organisations (e.g. Multicultural Centre in Krakow and Zustricz Foundation) have been working also in close cooperation with the Krakow City Hall. Their support has been particularly appreciated by the refugees in the areas of material aid (22%), support in finding temporary or more permanent housing (11%), and information (11%). Less frequently the respondents pointed out at transportation or legal help (respectively 8% and 3%) provided by these institutions.

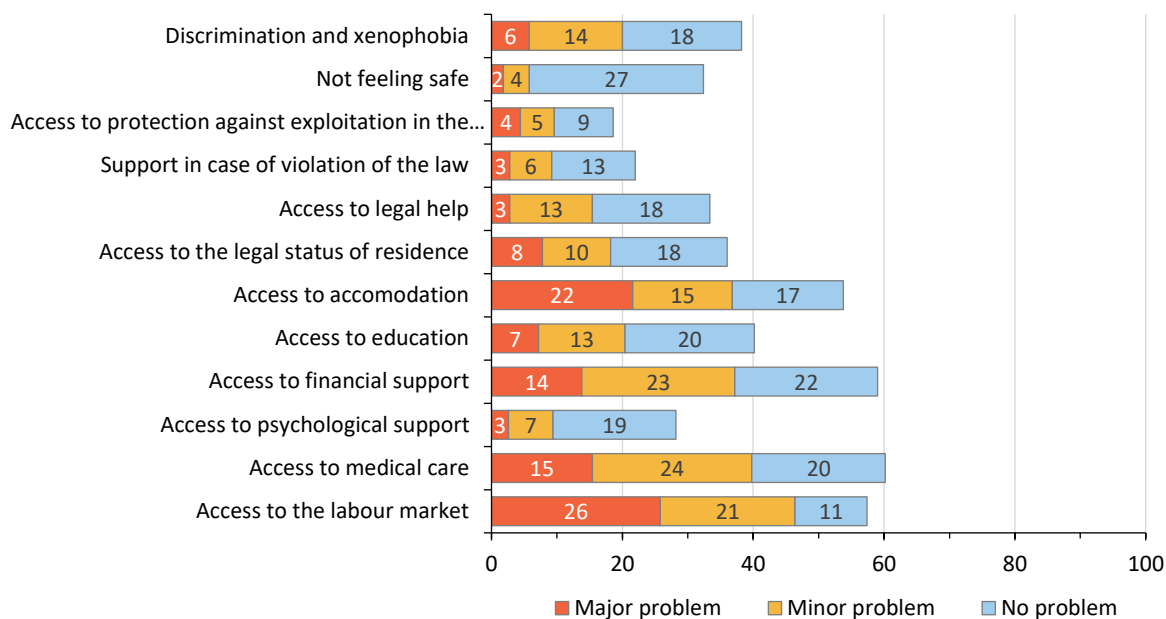
Second most important group of actors who were pointed out by refugees were local residents. Their help in the form of provision of some kind of accommodation (17%), material help (9%) and information (7%) was most frequently mentioned. Relatives and friends were the third group whose help was strongly felt by the refugees. In the case of this group housing (13%) and information (9%). Interestingly the support provided by the state institutions in different forms was marked less frequently than the help coming from the aforementioned actors. This in line with some voices pointing out at lack of proper crisis management especially in the first phases of the humanitarian crisis and at times chaotic engagement of key institutions of the state (KPP 2022). The international humanitarian organisations feature as the actor that above all provides material support. 9% of respondents linked this actor with this form of aid. According to our research only a small percentage of refugees were supported by the religious institutions (Figure 58).

Figure 58. Who offered what kind of help



In order to identify the scale of the problems faced by refugees from Ukraine, respondents were offered 12 types of possible problems, and their scale was ranked on a scale from serious to irrelevant. Access to the labour market and access to housing were identified as the most significant problems. Respectively 26% and 22% of the respondents characterized them as major problems and a further 21% and 15% called them minor problems. Access to medical care were also pointed out by a significant part of the refugees: 15% of whom saw them as major and further 24% as minor issue. In the future, access to medical care may become increasingly problematic, as chronic diseases and diseases caused by long-term stress may manifest themselves over time. Access to financial support was yet another area signalled by numerous refugees as problematic. Almost every fourth responded pointed out at it as a minor problem and 14% as major problem. Regarding access to education, 20% of Ukrainians did not experience difficulties with this, and 7% it constituted a major issue. A further 13% said this problem was not significant. It is noteworthy that only 2% of Ukrainians did not feel safe while staying in Poland, while 27% stated that such a problem does not exist for them and for 22% it is irrelevant. The majority of those who agreed to answer this question noted that issues such as access to legal residency status, access to legal aid, support in the event of a breach of the law, access to protection in the event of exploitation in the workplace, discrimination and xenophobia, and access to psychological support are not urgent problems for them. A significant share of those who noted that such forms of support are not a problem should also be added to them.

Figure 59. Type and extent of problems faced



Conclusions and Recommendations

The inflow of forced migrants from Ukraine to Poland and Kraków in particular is of course one of the major humanitarian challenges in our history. Poland never before hosted such large numbers of refugees, and in spite of a very positive feelings among Poles towards newcomers, the initial enthusiasm can evaporate over time. Thus, some actions should be taken as soon as possible in order to improve the conditions of Ukrainian refugees in Poland, but also to maintain social cohesion and limit the incidence of social conflicts which might take place as a consequence of intensive immigration.

The public authorities at a local, regional and national level are in a very delicate position when it comes to designing policies aimed at integrating refugees. Ukrainian struggle for independence is connected with an obvious increase of patriotic attitudes among the Ukrainian diaspora – both economic migrants who arrived prior to 2022 and refugees. In such aspect, even the usage of a term “integration” is problematic, as the official Ukrainian paradigm in diaspora policy is the expectation that all of refugees will return back to Ukraine once the war is over. Thus, the focus of Polish authorities should be placed on promoting *adaptation* of refugees in social, cultural and economic dimensions, understood as a situation in which forced migrants feel welcomed, happy and accepted in a new socio-cultural environment and one’s experience and human capital are put at use in a satisfactory way in a new economic system. Such approach would enable to manage possible tensions between the contradictory expectations of refugees’

integration from some sectors of the Polish society, and the hopes of retaining Ukrainian identity from the perspectives of Ukrainian *raison d'état*.

The main focus should be therefore a careful assistance to refugees in social, economic and cultural aspects which would prevent their marginalization in Polish society.

One of key challenges in this regard is the education of Ukrainian children. While many young Ukrainians were sent to primary and secondary schools in Kraków by their parents, a considerable part of them continues with remote education studying online in Ukrainian schools. Of course, there is nothing wrong in the second approach, but surely it is also desirable that the Ukrainian children have a possibility to interact with their Polish peers and the parents could take advantage of the fact their children are under a custody of school, so they can spend this time at work, making up for living. Consequently, Kraków authorities should promote the idea of hosting Ukrainian pupils who continue online education within the public schools – in such way, the Ukrainian children enhance the interaction with their Polish peers, learn the Polish language, while their parents are able to work during the school classes.

Our research clearly shows that one of the major challenges is housing. In spite of great solidarity shown by Poles and Ukrainian immigrants living in Kraków – many of them hosting refugees in their apartments – such forms of accommodation cannot be sustained over a long period of time. Moreover, many of refugees still live in hostels and refugee accommodation centers: such precarious conditions and lack of privacy negatively impact on the subjective well-being and the health condition of migrants. Additionally, the municipal authorities have carried the significant financial burden for the accommodation of refugees – most of whom settled in largest cities, where the rent prices are the highest. These costs of accommodation are now mounting for all residents of Poland, due to dramatic increase of heating costs and electricity. Consequently, some form of intervention from the side of national government is urgently needed. This intervention should go at least in three directions: first, to extend financial support for Poles who host refugees as in the first months of the war. Second, to provide special financing support for municipalities that host most of the refugees – much of this could be delivered through the EU – to cover the additional heating and electricity expenses during the winter. Third, to reconsider the idea of voluntary relocation of (at least some) refugees from the largest cities such as Kraków to smaller cities within a range of 20-30 kilometres from the capital. Such distance could allow daily commuting to jobs in Kraków, while enabling better housing conditions for refugees, both provided by local municipality governments but also the ones which are available on a free market.

Another vital issue is the labour market and economic activity of refugees. Our research was conducted in early phases of the war and of the stay of forced immigrants in Poland, but we expect that the share of Ukrainians who adopt a passive strategy of living from savings until the war ends would gradually decrease. Therefore, there is a need to assist Ukrainians in labour market entry – through publicly subsidized language courses, trainings aimed at enhancing qualifications, but also job placement services with dedicated personal assistance. Such personal assistance should include consultancy in finding not only a job, but tailored help that would enable a refugee to exploit fully one's qualifications, competences and experience in a workplace. Such services are already – at least partially - available at Migrant Infopoint in Kraków and through many other NGOs and public organizations – but the main challenge is to reach the potential beneficiaries with a relevant information. Our survey clearly shows that

refugees are often unaware on the complexity and richness of support opportunities which are available for them. In this respect, a more extensive usage of social media used by Ukrainian diaspora is needed, to effectively promote city-related information.

Photo 5. Temporary mural on the building on Rakowicka Street by the Cracow University of Economics (15.04.2022)



(Photo: Konrad Pędziwiatr)

Finally, in spite of publicly advertised temporality of a refugee crisis, we have to assume that many refugees are here to stay. In migration studies, there is a saying that “nothing is more permanent than a temporary migration”, and this could also be true for Polish situation. Consequently, the municipal authorities should expect that a considerable group of newcomers who arrived to our city after 24th February will stay in Kraków longer than for few months, and maybe even will settle permanently. In this aspect, the capital of Małopolska region has a considerable competitive advantage: contrary to many cities in Western Europe that had hosted refugee populations before, Ukrainian forced migrants can rely on a very well-integrated Ukrainian diaspora who had arrived to Poland before 2022 and particularly in 2014-2021 period. The formal (i.e. religious and social organizations) and informal (mostly social network groups) institutions created by Ukrainian diaspora are now the vital source of information and

support for the refugees and should remain crucial partners in the process of designing new adaptation policies for newcomers.

Acknowledgments

This report is based on the large survey carried out in May and June 2022 and wide range of other types of data collected and analysed by the authors thanks to support of numerous individuals.

Some of the persons whom we would like to thank in particular for their invaluable help are: Oksana Ovsyuk, Inna Voznyuk, Marta Yarosh, Sviatlana Luchik, Maria Yarosh, Judith Kohlenbergr, Isabella Buber-Ennsner, Ingrid Setz, Bernhard Rengs, Mateusz Płoskonka i Magdalena Furdzik, Adam Spyra, Irmina Czysnok, Joanna Paździo, Aneta Krzyworzeka, Maria Wojtacha and Ludmiła Dymitrow.

We would like to also thank Tamar Jacoby, Agnieszka Legut, Dobrosława Wiktor-Mach and Patrycja Trzeszczyńska for all the very important comments and suggestions on the early draft of the report.

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