

Background and Summary

In February 2022 Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Ukraine shares its eastern and northern border with Russia, and close to 200,000 Russian troops poured through the borders. The Russian troops headed for Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, located in the northern part of Ukraine, less than 250 miles from the Russian border. In spring of 2022, close to 8 million Ukrainians - initially mostly women and children - left their country as war refugees. This has been the largest refugee exodus in Europe since World War II.

Ukraine shares a western border with Poland, and millions of refugees sought safety there. Poland, a country of 40 million people, took in as many as 5 million refugees within a short period of time, and it was an admirable story of enthusiastic grassroot-based citizen movement coupled with timely and decisive government support. Polish citizens opened their homes to strangers, and the Polish government acted swiftly to open its services and extend the social safety net. This was surprising to many, as Poland historically was one of the most opposed amongst European nations to helping refugees from foreign countries. What is it that led Poland to support the displaced refugees so wholeheartedly, which was so much unlike any recent Polish response to a movement of displaced people across the borders? What is it that sustained this help and solidarity beyond the initial spurt of support? After two years, has anything changed about the Poles' response? Has Poland benefited from its actions towards the refugees? And lastly, what can other countries, including America, learn about the combination of factors that can help to solicit a positive and helpful response to a problem faced by displaced refugees?

The first year of the conflict - Polish solidarity with Ukrainian refugees

The start of the conflict and the initial response

Jerzy Bednarz is a vice-mayor of a district in Rzeszow, a city with population of 200,000, which lies in the south-eastern part of Poland, about 50 miles from the Ukrainian border. Weeks following the start of the conflict, as many as 100,000 Ukrainian refugees moved across the border and settled in and around the city of Rzeszow. Mr. Bednarz told me "The scale of the problem was so large that the government would not have been able to come up with shelter solutions for the refugees in a short period of time. What happened is that Polish families showed their strength by providing shelter, without any conditions, in their own homes."

Initial help for those seeking refugee did not come from the Polish national government, but instead from its citizens, independent volunteer organizations, and the local government. As refugees poured through the border by tens and hundreds of thousands, Polish citizens acted swiftly, opening their homes to house the refugees. Volunteer organizations provided services such as assistance at the border and help in legal matters, supplied meals, and provided short-term shelter. In addition, the local government organized childcare assistance, employment opportunities, and transport throughout the regions of Poland, so that the towns and cities closer to the Ukrainian border, like Rzeszow, would not be overstretched. The federal government, which at the time was led by the conservative party Law and Justice, or 'Prawo i Sprawiedliwość', waited days, even weeks, to see the reaction of its citizens before enacting aid. As its citizens and local governments acted to spontaneously provide aid and support without really any script in place, the Polish national government soon enacted full blown aid. In short order, the government simplified border-crossing and legalized stay in the country for Ukrainians by authorizing access to a Polish personal identification number. This number, referred to as a PESEL, gave access to medical care, education, social benefits, and provided refugees with legal permission to work. Additionally, the monthly monetary allowance of 500 Polish zloty, equivalent to approximately \$125 per child, provided to all Polish families, was extended to Ukrainian families as well.

Within the first two months, nearly three million people, a substantial number being women, children, and the elderly, crossed the border into Poland. What created the conditions for the universal and strong support for the refugees was the combination of enthusiastic and selfless citizen initiated support that started at the ground level which was met with a decisive and quick response from the local and federal government, which in turn further energized the Polish citizens, supporting the positive Polish response at all levels. Mr. Bednarz commented on the matter, "The role of the federal government, and very important local government, was indispensable and very supportive, however, the fact that the absorption of so many refugees ended with a success really started and was made possible by the role of Polish families."

Cultural context

The Polish government's approach to accepting the Ukrainian refugees was vastly different when compared to the harsh anti-immigration stance over the previous decade with respect to those coming from the Middle East and Africa.

Starting in the 2010s, especially after the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War, millions of refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, and other conflict-riddled countries, crossed into Europe. Even though the European Union encouraged its member nations to open up its borders and for all nations to share the burden of taking refugees, Poland enacted a no-access zone at its border with Belarus, where most of the refugees had been crossing. Poles were universal in their anti-immigration stance, and pointed to friction in Germany, Sweden, and France, countries with higher Middle Eastern immigration rates, as reasons to uphold their strong anti-immigration views. The fear of the Islamification of Poland had been an important driver of its anti-immigrant and even anti-refugee stance.

The situation with Ukrainians presented on a different front. As neighboring countries, Poland and Ukraine have a long, shared history that results in many cultural and ethnic similarities. There are similarities in language, cuisine, and both countries have deep and vibrant folk music traditions with use of intricate and colorful embroidery. Since the land of the two countries has in the past been under the same rule, the two countries share the same historical figures. Several years ago, I visited a region in Poland bordering Ukraine, where families share both Polish and Ukrainian roots, and where Polish Roman Catholic and Ukrainian Eastern Orthodox churches stand not far from each other. Most Poles declare as Roman Catholics, while many Ukrainians are Eastern Orthodox, but both religions are branches of the broader idea of Christianity. Similarly, the Polish and Ukrainian languages, both belonging to the broader Slavic language family, are similar which makes communication much easier. It was easier for Poles to welcome refugees that were like them in so many ways and it was also relatively easy for Ukrainians to assimilate in Poland. Zhenya Pankratieva, a Ukrainian refugee who moved to Warsaw early in the conflict commented “we’ve never been to Warsaw before the war, and were surprised to see that Warsaw looked like Kyiv in some ways: river between the left and right parts of the city, the principle of square planning of the streets, familiar aesthetics, weather”.

Historical context

Besides cultural, ethnic, and linguistic similarities, Poland and Ukraine share a history of Russian domination, and the solidarity that Poles demonstrated stemmed from the sense that both countries face a common threat. It was in Poland’s interest as a country to aid the neighboring country, and a buffer between Russia. “It was in the Polish interest that Russia, the aggressor, be stopped a step short of your country, in this case stopped in Ukraine. Russia is

behaving like an imperial nation, and what would happen if Putin was able to conquer Ukraine and get to the Polish border”, explained Mr. Bednarz. To understand the background, it is important to revisit the history of the continent. Poland did not exist as a nation from 1795 until 1918, as its land was divided and ruled under three neighboring countries, including the Tsars’ Russia. After Poland regained its independence, in 1919 it went to war with Russia, which at that point was a socialist republic. Led by Chief of State Jozef Pilsudski, Polish troops drove the Red Army from the banks of Warsaw, Poland’s capital. Pilsudski, wary of the threat that Soviets posed to Poland’s budding independence, pushed the idea of “prometheism” - an ideology and political project to weaken the Russian Empire and its successor states. This was carried out by supporting nationalist independence movements initiated by neighboring states of Russia. In 1939, while Hitler attacked Poland from the west, Stalin sent his troops through the eastern borders. Lastly, after World War II, Russia installed a friendly communist government in Poland, and effectively controlled Poland within its sphere of influence, until the fall of the Soviet Republic in 1989. When Ukraine was re-born as an independent nation, it served as a territorial buffer between Poland and the much more powerful Russia. To inevitably protect themselves, Poland had an interest in protecting Ukraine from the contemporary and common threat. This is an important part of a recipe that led to this outpour of help as Poles recognized that Ukrainians were fighting a war for their country’s existence but also for the Russian borders not to move close to the Polish one.

Economic context

Prior to the breakout of the Russian invasion, there was considerable immigration of Ukrainians into Poland for economic reasons. Even years before the war commenced, the Polish growing economy needed additional workers, and many of those workers came from Ukraine. Many of those jobs required lower skills, in sectors such as agriculture and elder care, but the jobs offered higher wages than what Ukrainians could earn back home. Economic immigration developed strong social and economic networks. Joanna Dobkowska, a professor at Uniwersytet Warszawski and contributor to a Harvard University commissioned study on the topic, explained, “When Poles were already used to working with Ukrainians who came over to Poland before the war to find work, it did not seem strange for Poles to take refugees - they were already used to coexisting”. Besides cultural similarities and a sense of facing the same threat, the familiarity with each other’s cultures helped to spark the positive response amongst Polish citizens.

Other factors

Polish support of the refugees was also aided by the European Union, receiving about 147 million euros from the European Union in 2022 to aid the influx of refugees. This amount of money was far short of what it cost the Polish citizens to provide shelter and food, as well as what it cost the Polish government in direct financial and social safety net support. Mr. Bednarz suggested that European Union help was marginal; "For example, when Turkey took in Kurdish refugees, the European Union committed 9 billion dollars in order to help Turkey shoulder the burden". However, any feeling of the relative lack of financial help on the account of Ukrainian refugees not being fair is not driven at the refugees themselves, but instead the European Union officials. In spite of not getting financial support from the rest of Europe, Poles were proud that they could engineer such support by themselves.

How it all added up

Over the last two decades, there has been a considerable influx of refugees into Europe. The refugees came from the Middle East and Africa, escaping civil war, political instability, or ongoing violence and fighting from countries like Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, and Nigeria. Germany took charge and implored the rest of the European Union to do the right thing and help the refugees. The former chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel, famously stated "Wir schaffen das", or "We can do this". However, the European reaction was mixed. Countries like Germany, Greece, and Sweden provided substantial support, but others like Hungary and Poland resisted the call for united action. Even in the countries that did aid, early enthusiasm was hard to sustain, and initial effort to help often changed to regret and even opposition. Examples of this abound in recent European history. As refugees from Syria arrived at Italian and Greek southern borders, locals welcomed and helped the refugees, in sympathy to the circumstances the displaced people were escaping. The European Union did not stand united in solidarity with the refugees, and individual countries had mixed responses, in some cases timid support of the humanitarian effort. The lack of clear and decisive government support could not support the initial citizen enthusiasm, which quickly fizzled out, turning into anger, fear, resistance, and even hostility. What made it work for Poland's acceptance of and solidarity with the Ukrainian refugees was the strong, enthusiastic, and nearly universal Polish citizen support which was only strengthened by the timely and decisive support of its government. There was no ambiguity in the minds of the Polish citizens whether the government was

supportive or not. Consequently, the combination of cultural and linguistic commonalities, the presence of a common threat, and the previous presence of economic migration, enhanced solidarity towards Ukrainian refugees,

The second year of the conflict

The conflict drags on with no clear end in sight

Initially, when the conflict broke out, many thought that it could end quickly. However, after a few months, it became clear that the conflict would not have a quick resolution. “Because many Ukrainians found shelter in the Polish homes, after a few months of living together, and this was clear from our interviews, both Ukrainians and Poles became tired of this, sometimes even agitated”, according to Ms. Dobkowska. In the fall of 2022, as winter was approaching, there was concern that many more Ukrainian refugees would cross the border, overwhelming the already stretched Polish response. In Poland, whereas 63% of its citizens expressed interest in helping the refugees in the fall of 2022, the number fell to 41% by spring of 2023. In addition to the fatigue, points of friction have arisen, and it is important to understand the source of those.

Ukraine’s military fight

In the second year the conflict had settled into a standoff in the eastern part of Ukraine, in the regions that Russian claims as its own. However, it still affects all Ukrainians living in various regions, whether close to the ongoing fighting or not. I interviewed Ivan, a 25-year-old Ukrainian who moved to Poland before the outbreak of the war. According to Ivan, “Men and older boys are scared to leave their homes even to go to the stores in fear that they will be snatched from the streets and sent to the army”. At the start of the conflict, the army only took those who had gone through military training, and some even paid money to be able to fight. However, in the words of Ivan “people have realized that this is a stupid war, a war for politics. One that is causing pain, destruction, and affecting millions of lives.” At the beginning of the conflict, only women and children were allowed to leave Ukraine, while men aged 18 to 65 were made to stay to fight. However, as casualties were rising, many men paid at the border to leave into other countries and abandon their requirement to fight. I had witnessed this myself, as I had visited Poland in both the summer and the winter of 2022. In the summer, only a few months after the war broke out, I noticed mostly women and children amongst the Ukrainian refugees. However, in the winter, I could observe many

more Ukrainian men in Poland. This has over time created angst in Poland, as some Poles started to question the Ukrainian resolve in fighting against Russia, the common enemy.

Polish-Ukrainian history comes to the forefront

Poland and Ukraine have a difficult history through their rich history. There are recent episodes, like the massacre of Wolyn (Volhynia, now part of eastern Ukraine), where in the early 1940s, during World War II, between 50,000 to 100,000 ethnic Polish were killed by Ukrainians nationalists. The killings took place while Nazis occupied the region, and the Ukrainian nationalists, driven by desire to eventually bring about their country's independence, sought ethnic cleansing to ensure a homogeneous Ukrainian state after the war. Mr. Bednarz "There are people [Poles] who criticize what the country has done, pointing out the history, and the history, like Wolyn, is pretty difficult, but speaking like a human being, we needed to help the Ukrainians."

Farmer strikes in Poland

Despite the war, the Ukrainian economy has continued to operate albeit with certain limitations. Mr. Bednarz noted a large number of commercial trucks coming from Ukraine, facilitating trade between the two countries. Ukraine has always been an important agricultural exporter, and in the past has shipped large quantities of wheat and other agricultural products to the Middle East and Europe. However, since Russia has a large military presence in the Crimean Peninsula, export of goods by ships through the Black Sea was no longer possible. However, because the goods were still grown and produced in Ukraine, more of the transport had been done by rail and trucks, going through Poland. This created some tension in Poland, starting in late 2023. Since the beginning of the war, Poland has taken Ukrainian agricultural goods into their own market which caused a decrease in the price of the product in the Polish market. Mr. Bednarz said "for example, when the price of corn was 900 zloty, it fell to 300 zloty. The price of wheat fell from 1600 zloty to 600 zloty". This caused outrage in local farmers whose yearly earnings were affected by the sudden increase of product in the markets. Ukrainian farmers are not held under the same European Union agricultural standards as Polish farmers, which was a leading concern for the protesters. For example, European Union limits the use of certain fertilizers and pesticides, while the standards in Ukraine may be different. This put the Polish farmers, who have to abide by European rules, at a disadvantage. In early 2024,

farmers organized country-wide protests and road blockages to oppose continued grain import from Ukraine. The affected countries - Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia - stood together and pressured the European Union to act. Eventually the flow of agricultural goods was monitored, which relieved some of the pressure that had built up. In the end, this did not escalate into a major issue because of the action taken by the European Union, but also because the issue really affected countryside villages and its farmers, and not the city dwellers.

Ukraine's military deters the Russian offensive

By the spring of 2023, Ukraine, with help from western nations, mounted a powerful counterattack, driving the Russian troops back towards the eastern front. "As the Ukrainian army reclaimed much of the territory, many Ukrainians, especially from the western part of the country, decided to head back to their own homes. I have many friends who have gone back to their homes in Ukraine, and it is true that often during the day they hear anti-missile attack alarms go off, from time to time missiles do strike and kill people, but for them the ability to live in their own homes is important and outweighs the downside", Mrs. Dobkowska told me. By the summer of 2023, out of the 5 million refugees that initially came into Poland, about one million still lived in Poland. The Ukrainians who stayed behind were often more educated and wealthy, and were able to find jobs and become independent. In addition, approximately 200,000 of the better educated Ukrainian refugees who initially found shelter in Poland, have over time resettled in Germany where they can find work more adequate for their qualifications. The fact that four fifths of the refugees left Poland within a year, and those that stayed often became independent, both served to decrease some of the pressure that had been building up. Also, the success of the Ukrainian army alleviated fears that more Ukrainian refugees would come through the borders.

Government support persists

In late 2023, a pro-European center-left party (opposition coalition led by Platforma Obywatelska) replaced the right-wing, nationalist leaning government (PIS). This, however, did not materially change the government's involvement in aid and support. According to Mrs. Dobkowska, "PIS, although it had an anti-immigrant platform, consistent with its nationalistic leanings, it has always voiced support for Ukraine and its refugees. Platforma Obywatelska, which replaced PIS, diverted some of the attention away from issues that presented friction with

respect to the ongoing help, by reiterating opposition to the non-Ukrainian refugees at the Belarus border.” The two parties, although fierce competitors on the political stage, presented a bipartisan approach to Ukrainian refugees, not letting any ongoing friction become a political issue. The two parties also appeased the more nationalistic elements by reiterating long-held opposition to Middle Eastern and African immigrants stationed at the border.

As stated previously, the Polish government extended its social safety net, providing Ukrainian families with direct financial assistance. “On 1st of July of 2024, the Polish government extended the ability of Ukrainian refugees to legally live and work in Poland for another year. This bill also extended the financial support, including 800 zloty (\$200) monthly stipend for Ukrainian families, as well as medical insurance”, according to Mrs. Dobkowska. It was not just the continued monetary support from the government that persisted as being beneficial to the refugees. The government continued with the positive rhetoric towards Ukraine and the refugees, and with assistance in employment and other matters. Zhenya told me “I am grateful to the Polish government for many things: they made no difficulties for us. We had time to look around and understand how everything worked, and we had it.” The continued government support has certainly diverted attention away from several points of friction that have built up, and helped to sustain the support for the refugees.

Effect of the Ukrainian migration on the Polish economy

According to Mrs. Dobkowska “at some point, the Ukrainians living in Poland stopped being viewed as a burden, but because they integrated, found jobs and places to live, they started being viewed as neighbors, co-workers.” Poland benefited from the influx of willing Ukrainian workers. Besides filling a need for low-skilled labor, as discussed earlier, many of the Ukrainians that remained in Poland were highly educated and worked in higher-skilled jobs. Zhenya told me “We are that type of Ukrainians who bring business to Poland and pay taxes here. I know that we are very welcome in Warsaw with this approach. My daughter goes to private school, we use a private hospital – we do not create a burden for the public sector ... And I have seen statistics in Polish media that Polish institutes and universities are full mostly with Ukrainian students.”

Since the early 1990s, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, many Poles, in many cases highly educated ones, left their country to pursue better lives in Europe and America. That is how my parents found their way to America. In that situation, immigration benefited America, but Poland lost out since millions of its

citizens left and worked elsewhere. The influx of Ukrainians into Poland, in many cases ones with higher education, may be a loss to Ukraine, but is a large benefit to Poland. This was universally understood in Poland, and it certainly was a large factor in the support of the Ukrainian refugees.

Role of social media

Social media has become a powerful platform for spreading opinions and viral content, as well as mobilizing and coordinating action with respect to political and social issues. In July of this year, anti-immigration protests spread through much of the United Kingdom. The protests, many of which have turned violent, have been organized via social media, where much of the anti-immigration rhetoric is spread and amplified.

It is easy to imagine that in Poland the pushback against the costly help for the refugees, as well as the points of friction that could be a fuel for the solidarity with Ukrainians turning into opposition, could easily have been picked up and made viral by social media. Some of the nationalist and far-right groups in Poland started to spread online rhetoric, reminding Poles of the Wolyn Massacre, for which Ukraine has still not issued a formal state-level apology. Social media also highlighted the financial help that Ukrainians received from the Polish government, questioning whether Poland was not better off using the same fund to help its own citizens. Farmer strikes were heavily publicized on social media, with blame for the fall in agricultural prices attributed to Ukraine's exports. However, in Poland, social media was also used to spread counter-narrative of the need for solidarity with Ukrainians, the importance of Poles and Ukrainians needing to be united in a stand against a common enemy, and reminder of the shared values between the two nations. Social media focus was not one-sided, nor did it lead to widespread break from the solidarity with the Ukrainians. It certainly did not lead to violent, social-media driven protests as has been the case recently in the UK.

From Ukrainian's point of view

I asked Zhenya whether she had noticed a change in Poles' attitude towards the Ukrainians as the war dragged on. Zhenya told me "My family does not notice the change in attitude. Maybe the reason is that we live in the city center where we meet a lot of educated and well-behaved people. I have met a lot of new friends walking my dog. Most of the people are former ambassadors, academicians, showbiz people, public servants – I guess my communication circle is quite exceptional. I do not see any difference on the main roads too: I drive cars

both with Polish and Ukrainian plates – no change in attitude, everyone is busy with their lives.”

The effect of the war on Ukrainians

Solidarity and brotherhood amongst Ukrainians overall continued to persist, however, cracks arose, between those who had left, and those who stayed behind. As suggested by Jerzy Bednarz, movement across the borders could create social tension in the country between those who were not able to leave and those who fled and have returned. He suggests that even after the war on Ukraine ends, there could be an “internal” war because of who stood in support of their country. This is especially true of draft-age males who left the country, despite the directive for able males to be ready for combat. As noted by Mr. Bednarz, the distinction between those who had left and those who stayed behind was also related to their wealth. The refugees who left Ukraine and settled in Rzeszow very often came from the wealthier, resource rich eastern part of Russia, where the fighting had eventually concentrated. “You can see this based on the license plates of the cars they drive,” according to Mr. Bednarz. When asked about the possibility of an internal conflict brewing over time, Ivan replied “there will always be jealousy, even in Poland you look at your neighbor’s car, their house whatever it is and there will always be jealousy.” From this perspective it is not as much a matter of solidarity and devotion towards one's country, but instead a simple human emotion of jealousy and envy which is only amplified in a situation of safety. There is no doubt that this war will have effects on Ukraine and its society for generations to come, but a question for the future arises: will Ukrainian citizens turn against each other or offer support post a universally traumatic event.

Takeaways for anti-immigration in today’s world

Immigration may be one of the main topics in the American elections, especially after nearly 3 million migrants crossed the US-Mexico border in 2023. The migrants seeking to cross the American border are not escaping a war, however, they are coming from poor and often conflict-riddled territories with unstable governments. Immigration is also recently turning into a contentious issue in Europe, with violent clashes becoming top news in the United Kingdom.

The riots in Britain are an example of how Europeans’ point of view on migrants seeking asylum has changed over the years. As migrants seeking asylum in Europe started to come in large numbers in 2015, countries like Germany and

Sweden called for European governments to take in the migrants. “My Europe does not build walls,” said the head of the Swedish government. After about two election cycles, as European voters voice their displeasure about the migration policy, the political leaders have taken notice. The same head of the Swedish government now says, “The Swedish people can feel safe in the knowledge that Social Democrats will stand up for a strict migration policy”. David Goodhart, a British thinker on the left, argues that “high levels of migration undermine support of the welfare state in Europe. The solidarity required to enforce redistribution rests on the belief that those in need are ‘people like us’ that have merely fallen on hard times. Carsten is happy to bail out Torsten, whose values he shares. But what about Ahmed?” (7, *The Economist*). As has been the case in Poland, because of the cultural, linguistic, and historical similarities between the two nations, along with the fact that Ukrainians and Poles look similar, this has made it easier for Poles to unite in the belief that helping Ukrainians is the right thing to do. The apparent lack of such similarities makes it harder to create a sustainable and universal support for support of immigration into Europe.

One commonly heard criticism of immigration is that it takes away jobs from the natives. However, by large, this is not true. Immigrants usually take unglamorous, lower paying, or labor-intensive jobs, often in industries that are vital, such as agriculture, health care, and construction. These are often jobs that the natives are not interested in taking on. It is also not true that migrants or refugees are less likely to want to work. “The employment rate of migrants in Europe is the same [for immigrants] as that for natives. Immigrants in America have long been more likely to work than the people born in the country, and [recently] the gap has widened.” (6, *The Economist*). Poland has benefitted from Ukrainian migrants moving across the border, and this has been largely recognized and publicized by the many small business owners who employ Ukrainian labor. As birth rates in Poland have collapsed, like in much of the rest of the developed world, Poland faces a shortage of workers, and immigration is the main way to fill this gap. The same point is true about immigration into America or the rest of Europe. There needs to be a better understanding of how migrants benefit the country they move into, settling down, getting jobs, and soon contributing much like the natives.

There are certain things that are different about the circumstances of Poland accepting Ukrainian refugees, and Europe accepting migrants from the Middle East and Africa. The refugees from Ukraine escaped an ongoing war that is fought openly on Europe’s doorstep. The European migrants from Middle East and

Africa often escaped regional conflicts and violence, however, those conflicts are not as widely publicized in the media, nor do they have a similar geographical proximity to Europe. As a result, the effect of humanitarian response was felt stronger in case of the Ukrainian migrants. The fate of refugees or migrants, and the circumstances they are often escaping, need to be better understood, especially if those migrants are coming from a place further away than just a neighboring country.

References

1. Interview with Maciej Olchawa, Kosciuszko Foundation scholar at Loyola University in Chicago. Mr. Olchawa is an author of several books on Ukraine, contributor to academic journals as subject matter expert, and in the past has served as policy advisor on Ukraine in the European Parliament's Committee of Foreign Affairs.
2. Interview with Joanna Dobkowska, University of Warsaw, co-author of a study done on behalf of Pershing Square Foundation and Harvard FXB Center "Building Inclusion, Sustaining Solidarity Towards Migrants in Frontline Local Communities" <https://fxb.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2464/2024/01/Poland-Building-Inclusion-Sustaining-Solidarity-Report.pdf>
3. Interview with Jerzy Bednarz, elected official, vice-mayor of a Rzeszow district with a population of 170,000 people.
4. Interview with Zhenya Pankratieva, emigrated from Kyiv, Ukraine to Warsaw, Poland in March 2024.
5. Interview with Ivan, moved from Western Ukraine to Warsaw, Poland in 2021.
6. Digidiki, V., Bhabha, J. Markowska-Manista, U. & Dobkowska, J. (2024). *Building Inclusion, Sustaining Solidarity towards migrants in frontline local communities: The case of Poland during the Ukrainian Refugee Crisis*. Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights, Boston, USA. <https://fxb.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2464/2024/01/Poland-Building-Inclusion-Sustaining-Solidarity-Report.pdf>.
7. Fusiek, D. (8 November 2022) *The needs of refugees*. European Investment Bank. <https://www.eib.org/en/stories/ukrainian-poland-infrastructure-refugees>.
8. Lesinska, M. (29 March 2024). *Poland: Financial aid ends for private hosts of people displaced from Ukraine*. European Commission. https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/news/poland-financial-support-ends-private-hosts-people-displaced-ukraine_en.
9. Sologoub, I. (2024). *Return or stay? What factors impact the decisions of Ukrainian refugees*. VoxUkraine.
10. *The anti-immigration revolt*. The Economist. 27 July 2024. 61-62.
11. *The other xenophobes*. The Economist. 31 August 2024. Page 42.