

**INTELLIGENCE, SECURITY
AND INTERDISCIPLINARITY**

WELCOMING UKRAINIAN WAR REFUGEES IN ROMANIA: ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF HUMAN SECURITY

Oana Raluca TUDOR (TRIFAN)*

Abstract:

Following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, Romanian authorities had to manage the large influx of Ukrainian war refugees and ensure timely and effective measures for their integration. This paper aims to identify the way in which Romanian authorities addressed the risks that the Ukrainian refugees had, from a human security perspective, in the integration process. On answering the research question whether a high degree of positive social identity determines a high level of human security, the paper focuses on exploring the Ukrainian war refugees' access to the labour market, healthcare and educational systems in Romania between the 24th of February 2022 and the 31st of December 2023. The study examines the interaction of Ukrainian war refugees with the public and private entities in Romania as well as that between the Romanian authorities and the Romanian non-governmental organizations in managing the crisis caused by the inflow of the Ukrainian war refugees, from their arrival at the Romanian borders and during their stay in Romania. To answer the research question, Eurobarometer surveys and statistical data, provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Romanian National Authority for Citizenship and the Romanian National Institute of Statistics, have been used. Empirical research conducted by three Romanian NGOs are also explored. Findings indicate that, despite the rather weak measures for their integration on the labour market, medical care and educational systems and some populist denigrating narratives, the human security of Ukrainian war refugees in Romania was provided.

Keywords *Ukrainian refugees, social identity theory, vulnerable groups, human security.*

Introduction

Since the 1960s, international migration has had an enormous impact on the politics, economy and culture of European states, with immigration increasingly becoming a subject of public concern. Migration

* PhD candidate, University of Bucharest, Doctoral School for Political Sciences, email: oana.trifan@fspub.unibuc.ro

policies have influenced immigration patterns in Europe. While in the 1950s and 1960s, migration was considered an additional source of labour in most Western European countries within the framework of national temporary work programs for immigrants – “guest workers” (gastarbeiter in Germany, gastarbeider in Belgium and the Netherlands, arbetskraftsinvandring in Finland, Norway and Sweden), between the 1960s and 1970s migrants were seen as factors destabilizing public order (Huysmans, 2000). The restrictive migration policies of this period were motivated by changes in the labour market and by the desire to protect the social and economic rights of citizens (Huysmans, 2000).

Studies conducted in Sweden have shown that the adaptation of migrants from Croatia and Serbia in the 1950s or 1960s, who came for profit, was not similar to the integration of Croatian and Serbian refugees in the 1990s (Tonry, 1997). The latter presented, in the context of wars and interethnic conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, a high crime rate, both as victims and as perpetrators, high unemployment rate, separation from the family environment and psychological problems (Tonry, 1997).

Research in the field of migration provides essential information when drafting public policies on the management of migration, both in terms of economic, demographic and cultural benefits and challenges, both for European and national authorities (central and local).

Previous studies in this field have reported both temporal and geographical limitations in the analysis of the data collected. Furthermore, in some EU Member States it was not possible to collect data on the integration of immigrants by race and ethnicity, as these categories are not included, for political or ethical reasons, in national records.

In recent decades, the concept of identity has experienced an exponential growth in both the humanities and social sciences, especially in studies of political behaviour in relation to migrant integration. According to the theory formulated by Tajfel and Turner (1979), social identity is an individual's representation of himself or herself in terms of his or her membership in a social group, a community.

International scientific literature offers many answers regarding the impact of large refugee flows on society. However, few studies address the impact of refugee integration on Romanian migration and asylum policies in Romania. Until now, the immigration phenomenon in Romania has known fragmented and ineffective sectorial approaches. The update of the main public policy instrument in the field of migration

and asylum – the National Strategy on Immigration – required a period of 3 years of public consultation, elaboration and approval (Romanian Government, 2021).

The Romanian migration and asylum policy has mainly aimed at selecting qualified migrants who can be easily integrated, if not assimilated, into Romanian society, while Romania's acceptance of mandatory migrant quotas imposed by the European Commission has generated anti-European attitudes in the national media.

The extraordinary mobilization of Romanian civil society and authorities to welcome refugees from Ukraine – mostly women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities – has led to a rapid change in migration and asylum policy at the national level and at the European Union level.

The research question addressed by this study is whether a high degree of positive social identity determines a high level of human security. Therefore, the research study will analyse the interrelationship between human security and social identity. At the same time, the study will explore how the public-private partnership in ensuring the human security of Ukrainian refugees has crystallized.

Human security was analysed by observing how Ukrainian war refugees were granted access to the Romanian labour market, medical care and education. Compared to immigrants from the first massive wave of immigrants registered in Romania in 2015, Romanians' perceptions on welcoming war refugees from Ukraine in the community and integrating them into society were much more favourable to the second group, given the cultural similarities and geographical proximity, as well as fear of the threat of war at Romania's borders.

Methodology

The paper focused on exploring the Ukrainian war refugees' access to the labour market and access to healthcare and access to education. Thus, the aim was to identify the way in which central and local authorities responded to the crisis caused by the influx of refugees after the outbreak of the war in Ukraine and the obstacles encountered by Ukrainian refugees in the integration process, from a human security perspective.

In addition, the interaction of refugees with public and private entities in Romania was explored, as well as that between authorities and

non-governmental organizations in managing the crisis of Ukrainian refugees, from their arrival in Romania and during their integration in Romania.

To answer the research question, Eurobarometer surveys and statistical data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Romanian National Authority for Citizenship and the Romanian National Institute of Statistics were used. Empirical research conducted by NOVAPOLIS Association, the Expert Forum and the Coalition for Migrant and Refugee Rights, such as semi-structured interviews with immigrants, unions, employers and public authorities were also examined. Through this approach, I aimed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data regarding the analysed indicators. However, the findings cannot be generalized to the larger population of Ukrainian war refugees in Romania and to a broader period of time.

Discussion and results

Special Eurobarometer 519 on Romanians' perceptions of immigrant integration in Romania: language skills, contribution to the social security system, acceptance of the values and norms of Romanian society, educational or vocational skills and a sense of belonging to society are among the most important elements of successful integration. Only 20% of Romanian citizens included in the survey responded that they have immigrant friends, colleagues, neighbours, or partners, which shows that the integration rate of migrants in Romania is quite low, or that migrants from previous migration waves have already become Romanian citizens (European Commission, 2022).

Romanians' attitudes towards immigration and integration of migrants in Romania, prior to the flow of refugees from Ukraine, highlighted three types of perceptions: intolerance, indifference and tolerance, the indifference being mainly determined by the lack of information regarding the presence of immigrants in Romania. Among the factors that determined tolerant or intolerant attitudes towards the reception and integration of migrants from Africa and the Middle East in Romania, according to the survey, were age, gender, residential environment, level of education, own migration experiences and cultural contact (Pogan & Birou, 2021).

Although there were also discriminatory attitudes of Romanian citizens towards migrants from the Middle East and North Africa, mainly from locals in less urbanized areas of Romania, the 2015 migrant crisis did not have significant effects in Romania, being perceived more as a European crisis, and immigration policies in Romania generally favoured the acceptance of migrants into the community (Guțoiu, 2021).

There were notable differences in the integration of migrants depending on the country of origin and the cultural and linguistic similarities between the origin and host societies and the time spent in Romania alongside natives. Therefore, citizens of the Republic of Moldova and those from other states who had lived in Romania for more than 5 years had a much higher integration rate (Guțoiu, 2021).

Citizenship is an essential element in ensuring the political participation of migrants in the host society, in its absence, citizenship rights are exercised only through organizations active in the field of immigration. According to the study, less than half of the respondents attended free Romanian language courses offered by public educational institutions and 10% attended those organized by NGOs, with the intention of integrating into Romanian society and obtaining a job and a stable income (Radu, 2019).

According to data reported by the Romanian National Authority for Citizenship in its annual activity reports (National Citizenship Authority, 2020), most applications for Romanian citizenship were registered in 2016 and 2019.

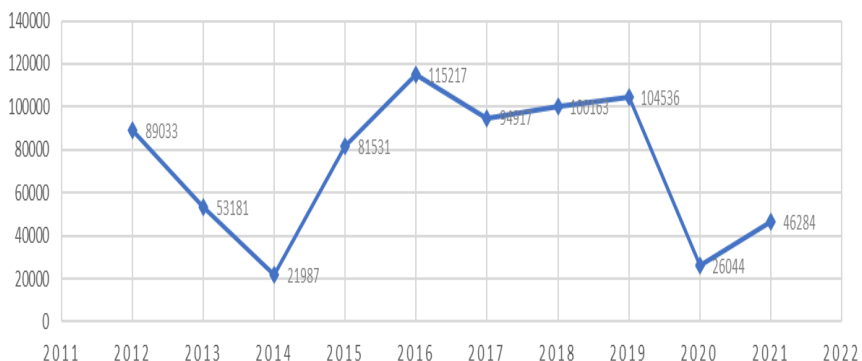


Figure 1: Total number of citizenship requests registered between 2011 and 2022
(Source: National Citizenship Authority, 2020)

The emigration of Ukrainian citizens to the Member States of the European Union did not begin with the Russian aggression in Ukraine launched in February 2024, but much earlier. Although in the period 2022-2023 most refugees from Ukraine were registered in the Member States of the European Union, the data provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the years 2018-2020 indicate a considerable number of refugees from Ukraine in some Member States (mainly Italy, France and Spain) (UNHCR, n.d.).

Romania is a state of multilingualism and multiculturalism, with 18 minority languages spoken, compared to 17 in Poland and 16 in Croatia (Katsarova, 2022). In 2011, statistical data on the population by ethnicity and mother tongue available at the National Institute of Statistics shows that Hungarian, Romani and Ukrainian are among the top five most spoken languages in Romania. During the reference period, 50,920 Ukrainian citizens were registered in Romania (National Institute of Statistics, n.d.). In the following periods, no statistical data on ethnicity were identified.

POPULATION ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY AND NATIVE LANGUAGE																									
ETHNICITY	TOTAL STABLE POPULATION	NATIVE LANGUAGE																						ETHNICITY	
		Romanian	Hungarian	Romani	Ukrainian	German	Turkish	Russian	Tatar	Serbian	Slovak	Bulgarian	Croatian	Italian	Greek	Czech	Polish	Chinese	Armenian	Macedonian	Idis	Other native language	NA		
A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	A	
ROMANIA	2012341	1712544	1259914	246077	49831	26557	25302	18846	17677	16895	12802	6518	5187	2948	2561	2174	2079	2039	739	799	643	18841	1230129	ROMANIA	
Ethnicity																								Ethnicity	
Romanian	16792869	16772897	141281	897	1504	1399	105	402	66	343	176	143	101	87	59	39	42	3	25	62	21	799	510	Romanian	
Hungarian	1227923	10709	1256264	207	12	248	*	9	-	15	32	20	*	3	*	1	*	*	*	*	*	29	69	Hungarian	
Roma	621570	943674	32777	144533	-	10	1127	6	86	56	*	*	*	4	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	81	245	Roma	
Ukrainian	59920	5997	24		47357	4		166		4	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	18	6	Ukrainian	
German	39342	6075	5279	9	9	24548	5	*		17	3	5	*	*	*	*	1	24	*	*	*	39	13	German	
Turkish	27699	3819	3	25	-	-	23710	6	26	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	9	8	Turkish	
Russian Lipovans	23487	5340	9	3	7	-	-	18221	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	4	*		Russian Lipovans	
Tatars	20382	2564	*	*	-	-	215	5	17495	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	Tatars	
Serbians	10076	1069	46	*	*	16	*	-	10329	*	*	*	*	3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	5	4	Serbians	
Slovak	13854	944	156	*	10	-	-	*	12574	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3	*	*	*	*	*	*	Slovak	
Bulgarians	7336	944	36	3	-	6	*	3	*	*	6335	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	Bulgarians	
Croatians	5408	324	9	*	-	-	10	-	-	7	-	-	5056	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	Croatians	
Greeks	5969	1173	12	-	*	3	-	*	-	-	-	-	-	4	2462	*	*	*	5	4	-	4	*	Greeks	
Italians	3333	346	20	*	-	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	2812	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	12	3	Italians	
Jews	3371	2280	379	*	*	48	-	29	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	572	49	9	Jews	
Czech	2477	299	20	-	-	22	-	6	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	2122	*	*	*	*	*	3		Czech	
Polish	2543	495	20	*	-	5	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2007	*	*	*	*	*	*	Polish	
Chinese	2017	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2007	*	*	*	*	6		Chinese
Armenians	1361	579	57	*	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	705	*	*	*	5		Armenians
Czango	1536	709	390	21	*	8	-	4	3	3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	330	55	Czango	
Macedonians	1264	555	3	*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	697	*	*		Macedonians	
Other ethnicity	18524	1653	48	7	4	170	32	112	*	15	7	3	3	14	32	*	*	5	*	*	29	14534	48	Other ethnicity	
NA	1236910	6993	277	*	4	39	22	25	-	6	*	*	*	18	*	*	*	21	*	*	6	615	1236910	NA	

Figure 2: Total population according to ethnicity and native language in 2011
(Source: National Institute of Statistics, n.d.)

In 2014, 14,040 Ukrainians applied for asylum in the European Union, a 13-fold increase compared to 2013, especially Germany (2,705), followed by Poland (2,275), Italy (2,080), France (1,415), and Sweden (1,320). In 2014, Ukrainians were the fifth largest group of third-country nationals holding a residence permit in the European Union (608,193). In 2013, Ukrainians were among the top recipients of residence permits (237,000 residence permits granted), compared to 150,000 granted in 2011, and the second largest nationality to apply for Schengen visas, after Russian citizens (Lapshyna, 2015).

Data provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees shows that, on 01.01.2025 in Romania, a state included in the UN Regional Refugee Response Plan, there were 179,820 registered war refugees from Ukraine and a number of 192,560 applications for asylum or national protection (UNHCR, 2025).

Group membership defines individuals and determines how they relate to others, from the same group or from a distinct group, favouring the adherence of individuals to common norms, determining collective actions and sometimes generating conflicts between groups. Social identity theory, as reflected in the studies of Tajfel & Turner (1979), suggests that every individual behaviour can be changed if they modify their self-identity or part of their self-concept due to emotional attachment to the group.

Fukuyama (2018) argues that the nature of modern identity must be changed, despite individual beliefs that identity is biologically determined, and thus cannot be changed. In modern society, citizens acquire multiple identities, depending on their social interactions – race, gender, profession, education, affinities and nation. The creation of more comprehensive identities is possible, despite the tendency of identity politics to create small and individualistic groups. The context of the emergence of the new tribalism is the emergence of individualistic identity politics in most Western states and the redefinition of multiculturalism as “a vision of a society fragmented into many small groups with distinct experiences” (Fukuyama, 2018).

Thus, the author observes that the experiences lived by the individual help him to share values and aspirations with peers from wider circles, with people different from him. And this finding appears in

the context of the need for recognition, or for more recognition, increasingly expressed by national, religious, ethnic, sexual, or gender groups. Identity politics is no longer just a phenomenon of minimal importance, but a concept that describes the reality in international affairs (Fukuyama, 2018).

Belonging is not conditional on cultural identity, nationalism or the capacity of states to secure borders, considers Huysmans (2000), but on the access to benefits and social security. In terms of establishing the legitimacy of the right to social benefits, immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees represent an often-contested category, whose legal rights are not automatically considered legitimate rights. In the context of a radical form of welfare chauvinism, immigrants suffer a socio-economic stigmatization. They are represented as foreigners who take advantage of the kindness of a state that hosts them and obtain undeserved, illegitimate benefits from the welfare system of a community to which they do not belong and which they burden (Huysmans, 2000).

Meidert & Rapp (2019) have noted differences in the attitudes of the native population of Germany towards refugees, depending on the factors that determined their decision to emigrate (war, political regime or economic aspects). Female respondents and male respondents who had previous contact with refugees showed positive attitudes towards refugees, these differences being significant only in the case of war refugees and political asylum seekers.

The study highlighted the fact that national pride and unemployment are factors that negatively influence the perception of German citizens towards immigrants for economic reasons, except for war refugees and political asylum seekers. The authors argue that national pride may have a negative impact generated by the perception of a threat related to ethnic diversity and a stronger tendency to consider immigrants for economic reasons as profiteers and to try to protect the state against fraud (Meidert & Rapp, 2019).

It has also been observed that income also has a negative impact on attitudes towards refugees for economic reasons, arguing that the higher the income the more negative the feelings (Meidert & Rapp, 2019).

Andreouli & Howarth (2013) claim that identities are built on a foundation of a type of recognition determined by the social context,

depending on dominant representations and power groups. According to the authors, social recognition refers, on the one hand, to the institutional arrangements of society, such as, for example, public funding of schools for religious minorities, and on the other hand, to social representations that establish which groups have symbolic power in defining norms. The participation of a person or a group in activities in society is permitted or restricted by institutional regulations and practices, being an institutionalized positioning similar to a filtering mechanism of skilled and unskilled immigrants from developing countries (Andreouli & Howarth, 2013).

The victims of the 2022 war in Ukraine have been heavily represented in global mass events, music festivals, and sports competitions, which has contributed to the formation of a collective consciousness for media audiences and participants in these events. The representation of Ukraine at such events is not trivial, nor are the consequences of this representation. Such mass events, with “moments of collective effervescence, in which the act of coming together to carry out actions generates a special energy among participants” have a potential similar to religious rituals in building collective consciousness (De Coninck, 2023). Participation in rituals, even by simple presence, contributes to building social capital by strengthening social cohesion, cooperation, trust and the perception of social support in the community (Putnam, 2000).

On the day the war in Ukraine started, the Romanian Supreme Council of National Defence was urgently convened in Bucharest. At the end of the meeting, President Klaus Iohannis delivered a press statement condemning the Kremlin’s armed violence against Ukraine and assuring the population that Romania, a member state of the EU and NATO, would remain a safe state and that it could manage the possible humanitarian and economic consequences of the war in Ukraine (Romanian President, 2022). The first Ukrainian refugees arrived in Romania on the 24th of February 2022. Civil society, NGOs and Romanian authorities showed solidarity and humanity, helping Ukrainian refugees with transportation, clothing and food.

From an identity perspective, Romanian volunteers have shown greater participation in solving the problems caused by the large influx

of Ukrainian refugees in Romania, positioning themselves on the front lines at the Romanian borders alongside representatives of non-governmental organizations and public authorities. The shock of an armed conflict after a long period of peace in the neighbouring state and empathy for a people similar in religious and cultural terms have strengthened cooperation between public and private institutions and civil society.

In the second phase of the crisis, the authorities created several support platforms for refugees, with *dopomoha.ro* being the platform with the most updated information. However, few Ukrainians had access to the platform or did not know any language other than Ukrainian or Russian, choosing to get information from unofficial sources, such as Facebook groups or from other fellow citizens.

An important role in the integration process was played by over 15 virtual communities where Ukrainian refugees request and receive information, search for or offer properties for rent, promote their professional services or express their dissatisfaction with some of the problems they face, especially regarding the delayed receipt of financial facilities from the Romanian state.

The 50/20 program (Code for Romania, n.d.) was launched, through which Romanians who rented real estate to Ukrainians received 50 lei/person/day for rent, an amount that went to the owner, and 20 lei/person/day for food, which the owner had to give, based on a receipt, to the Ukrainians, but there were cases in which the Ukrainian beneficiaries did not receive this money from the Romanian owner. In addition, several images of Ukrainian citizens in luxury clothes and cars appeared on Romanian social networks, generating discriminatory attitudes towards Ukrainian citizens who fled to Romania from the war.

The third phase began in May 2023, when the Romanian authorities decided to change the conditions for applying the 50/20 program and limit the granting of financial benefits until the end of 2023 (Code for Romania, n.d.). Thus, the money for accommodation and meals was paid directly to Ukrainian citizens if they were registered as beneficiaries of temporary protection and if they proved, in writing, that they had taken steps to integrate into the labour market or the educational environment in Romania. However, there were several months delay in payments to beneficiaries caused by bureaucratic procedures for the

settlement by the Romanian authorities of the necessary funds from the European Commission.

Regarding the access of Ukrainian refugees to the Romanian labour market, the study conducted by the NOVAPOLIS Association within ROUA project in August 2023, over 70% of the respondents, Ukrainian citizens, had university degrees, but the main impediment to accessing the labour market was the language barrier, although many of the Romanian language courses are organized at the level of territorial AJOFM and NGOs such as AIDRom, JRS Romania and the International Organization for Migration. Another impediment was the need to care for children under 6 years of age, who could not be enrolled in kindergarten or school due to linguistic reasons or the lack of information on the methods of recognizing diplomas. However, the study authors argue, the integration of Ukrainian refugees into the labour market was faster and easier compared to other refugee groups (Novapolis, 2023).

Their access to health services has not been any easier either, although, according to the General Secretariat of the Government, Ukrainian refugees have been provided with a free and permanent telephone line for medical services, 0040 373787805, where they have access to medical consultations by phone, in the Ukrainian language, for both general medicine and paediatrics services. The telephone line was opened by the Zi de Bine Association in partnership with Telios Care, a company that provides telemedicine medical services (General Secretariat of the Government, n.d.).

Analysts from the Expert Forum (EFOR) policy institute have made a diagnosis of how the Romanian authorities have ensured access to healthcare services for Ukrainian refugees. The results, however, were not surprising, anticipating the inefficiency of the Romanian healthcare system and the resignation of medical professionals in the uncertain relationship with the National Health House and towards complicated and unclear national procedures. In a social experiment, out of the approximately 700 family doctors contacted by EFOR to take Ukrainian refugee patients on their lists, only one accepted. However, it was not possible to take Ukrainian refugees on the family doctor's lists because the national digitalized system did not allow adding Ukrainian citizens as patients.

Many of the family doctors contacted by EFOR, however, offered their services free of charge to Ukrainian citizens in need of consultations, thus avoiding the problems caused by the procedures, or registering a Romanian patient who came to the doctor with the Ukrainian refugee. The recorded practice shows that the obstacles encountered in primary medicine for Ukrainian refugees generate pressure on the emergency medical system, with most Ukrainian patients preferring to go to emergency units to receive medical care that, as a rule, can be provided by the family doctor (Expert Forum, 2023).

From the perspective of access for war refugees from Ukraine, the Ukrainian refugee crisis has highlighted major problems in the education system, especially in schools and kindergartens in large cities. First, regarding access to a place in state kindergartens. Not infrequently, Romanian parents preferred to leave their homes and rent housing to be assigned to preschool educational institutions that still had free places. Despite the solidarity demonstrated by the Romanian authorities to ensure free access to the education system for refugee children from Ukraine, single mothers in Ukraine have encountered difficulties in finding a place to enrol their child in kindergarten and, at the same time, have a stable job. Second, regarding communication with children, the development of teaching methodologies in the Ukrainian language and the provision of Ukrainian-speaking teachers to support these courses (Expert Forum, 2023).

In a survey conducted between 9 and 20 March 2022 on a national sample, representative of the adult population of Romania, a substantial majority of 74% said they agree that Romania should receive Ukrainian refugees. The most favourable attitude is found among young people, people with higher education, residing in large cities, employers and employees in the private sector (CDMIR, 2023).

The “anti-refugee” language has often been used in simplistic and manipulative but at the same time impressive narratives, appealing, without referring to rational elements, to national pathos. With arguments that are understandable to everyone, extremely simple, avoiding abstract or complex mental images, the discursive logic is one belonging to common sense (CDMIR, 2023).

One of the discursive themes frequently present, especially on social networks, was the presentation of images of Ukrainian refugees in overcrowded parking lots, with luxury cars, to legitimize an *us vs them* anti-refugee discourse, the latter receiving negative connotations. Gradually, in the public space and on social networks in Romania, the anti-refugee discourse began to become more and more present and stronger, dividing society into two antagonistic groups – arrogant and profiteering rich Ukrainian refugees and, on the other hand, honest Romanian citizens with financial problems, who are trying their best to ensure a better life for their children. Although present in the public space since the beginning of the war, these emotional, divisive narratives support the idea that the Romanian authorities must take measures to support their own citizens first and then foreigners, refugees (CDMIR, 2023).

Conclusions

Research conducted until now on the Ukrainian refugee crisis suggests the emergence of a new European identity inspired by Ukrainian nationalism, solidarity and heroic spirit, despite differences over responsibility for receiving and integrating migrants and anti-migration attitudes manifested in the context of the 2015 refugee crisis.

Russia's aggression was not only against Ukraine, but against the whole of Europe. As part of a hybrid war, strong anti-Western propaganda and disinformation campaigns were recorded in Romania, with anti-European narratives in which Romania was presented as a weak state, without decision-making power, its solidarity with the rest of the member states being harshly criticized.

The study analysed the social policies for the integration of Ukrainian refugees into Romanian society between the 24th of February 2022 and the 31st of December 2023. The study attempted to capture the way in which the human security of Ukrainian refugees in Romania is ensured, especially access to the labour market, healthcare, social assistance, education and the housing market.

Despite governmental efforts to establish a free and permanent telephone line for medical services, where refugees can access medical consultations by phone, in the Ukrainian language, for both general medicine and paediatric services, recorded experiences show that this

tool was not really used. The lack of effective measures and procedures for Ukrainian refugees leads to overcrowding in emergency reception units.

The Ukrainian refugee crisis has highlighted major problems in the education system, especially in schools and kindergartens in big cities. The main factors that have negatively influenced refugees' access to education include the lack of places in schools and kindergartens, the lack of teaching methodologies in the Ukrainian language and Ukrainian-speaking teachers to support these courses.

Regarding the image of Ukrainian refugees in the media, the study noted the main populist trends in the denigration of Ukrainian refugees and national authorities and the construction of narratives in which the us versus them dichotomy is predominant, implicitly in the context of hybrid attacks.

No one can estimate the duration of the war in Ukraine, but the support measures for Ukraine from the international community must reach two converging directions: the first, regarding the development of effective mechanisms for the integration of refugees for an indefinite period of time; the second, helping reconstruct Ukraine and consolidate the rule of law, in the happiest case as a member state of the Union, consolidating a culture of national integrity.

References:

1. Andreouli, E., & Howarth, C. (2013). "National Identity, Citizenship and Immigration: Putting Identity in Context." *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 43(3), 361–382. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5914.2012.00501.x>
2. Antifake. (2023). *Un an de război împotriva Ucrainei: Bătălia pentru opinia publică*. https://www.antifake.ro/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Raport_Un-an-de-ra%CC%86zboi-i%CC%82mpotriva-Ucrainei.pdf
3. National Citizenship Authority [Autoritatea națională pentru cetățenie.] (2020). *Reports and studies [Raportare și studii]*. <http://cetatenie.just.ro/rapoarte/>
4. CDMIR (Coaliția pentru Drepturile Migranților și Refugiaților). (2023). *Discursul public privind refugiații ucrainieni și influența lui asupra opiniei publice din România (A11)*. <https://cdmir.ro/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/>

A11-Discursul-public-despre-refugiati-ucrainieni-si-influenta-asupra-opinii-publice.pdf

5. Code for Romania. (n.d.). Programme 50/20. Retrieved January 15, 2024, din <https://dopomoha.ro/ro/programul-5020>

6. De Coninck, D. (2023). "The Refugee Paradox during Wartime in Europe: How Ukrainian and Afghan Refugees are (not) alike." *International Migration Review*, 57(2), 578–586. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01979183221116874>

7. European Commission. (2022). Integration of Immigrants in the European Union – June 2022, *Eurobarometer survey* [Dataset]. <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2276>

8. Expert Forum. (2023, July 18). *Problemele refugiaților ucraineni*. <https://expertforum.ro/probleme-refugiati-ucraineni>

9. Guțoiu, G. (2021). *Perspectivile imigranților asupra integrării în România. În Migrație și integrare într-o țară de emigrare* (pp. 67–101). Presa Universitară Clujeană. <http://www.editura.ubbcluj.ro/bd/ebooks/pdf/3014.pdf>

10. Huysmans, J. (2000). "The European Union and the Securitization of Migration." *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 38(5), 751–777. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5965.00263>

11. National Institute of Statistics [Institutul Național de Statistică]. (n.d.). *TEMPO Online*. Retrieved June 7, 2022. <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online/#/pages/tables/insse-table>

12. Katsarova, I. (2022, April). *Multilingualism: The language of the European Union*. PE 642.207, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/642207/EPRS_BRI\(2019\)642207_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/642207/EPRS_BRI(2019)642207_EN.pdf)

13. Lapshyna, F. D. and I. (2015, July 14). *The EuroMaidan Protests, Corruption, and War in Ukraine: Migration Trends and Ambitions*. Migrationpolicy.Org. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/euromaidan-protests-corruption-and-war-ukraine-migration-trends-and-ambitions>

14. Novapolis. (2023, July 27). "Insertia cetățenilor ucrainieni proveniți din zona de conflict armat din Ucraina pe piața muncii din România". Asociația Novapolis. <https://novapolis.ro/studiul-insertia-cetatenilor-ucrainieni-proveniti-din-zona-de-conflict-armat-din-ucraina-pe-piata-muncii-din-romania/>

15. Pogan, L., & Birou, M. (2021). "Perspectivile cetățenilor români asupra imigrației și integrării în România", in *Migrație și integrare într-o țară de emigrare* (pp. 30–66). Presa Universitară Clujeană. <http://www.editura.ubbcluj.ro/bd/ebooks/pdf/3014.pdf>

16. Romanian President [Președintele României]. (2022, February 24). *Declarația de presă susținută de Președintele României, Klaus Iohannis, la finalul ședinței Consiliului Suprem de Apărare a Țării*. <https://www.presidency.ro/ro/>

media/declaratia-de-presa-sustinuta-de-presedintele-romaniei-klaus-iohannis-la-finalul-sedintei-consiliului-suprem-de-aparare-a-tarii1645698579/declaratia-de-presa-sustinuta-de-presedintele-romaniei-klaus-iohannis-la-finalul-sedintei-consiliului-suprem-de-aparare-a-tarii1645698579

17. Putnam, R. D. (2000). "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital", in L. Crothers & C. Lockhart (Ed.), *Culture and Politics: A Reader* (pp. 223–234). Palgrave Macmillan US. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-62965-7_12

18. Radu, B. (2019). *Identitate și cetățenie activă (Indexul integrării imigranților în România)*. http://migrationcenter.ro/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/IIIR-2019.pdf?fbclid=IwAR09WNimgTxHGYeslBc0oGNqjCIBEa_5tZgUehMN_e0HHu4LlFgf-lwovhg

19. General Secretariat of the Government [Secretariatul General al Guvernului]. (n.d.). *Resurse din partea societății civile în gestionarea situației generate de fluxul de refugiați din Ucraina în România*. Direcția Generală Guvernare Deschisă, Relații Publice și Cooperare Serviciul Politici de Cooperare cu Mediul Asociativ. <https://sgg.gov.ro/1/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Raport-Resurse-refugiati-Ucraina.pdf>

20. Soare, S. (2023, March 4). *Romanian populism and transnational political mobilization*. <https://doi.org/10.55271/rp0027>

21. Tonry, M. (1997). "Ethnicity, Crime, and Immigration." *Crime and Justice*, 21, 1–29. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1147629>

22. UNHCR. (n. d.). *Data on Ukrainian refugees and asylum seekers, 2018-2023* [Dataset]. Retrieved December 7, 2023. <https://www.unhcr.org/external/component/header>

23. UNHCR. (2025, January 3). *Situation Ukraine Refugee Situation*. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>