

IN THE SHADOWS OF THE WAR. INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN THE WESTERNMOST PART OF UKRAINE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE RUSSIAN INVASION¹

Mariia OLIINYK^{1,2} , Erzsébet D. MOLNÁR³ ,
Katalin PALLAY³ , István D. MOLNÁR³ 

¹ Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University (Ukraine)

² Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce (Poland)

³ Ferenc Rakoczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian University (Ukraine)

E-mails: mariia.olinyk@ujk.edu.pl; molnar.d.erezsabet@kmf.org.ua;
pallay.katalin@kmf.org.ua; molnar.d.istvan@kmf.org.ua

Abstract. The global refugee issue, including internally displaced people (IDPs), is a problem that is widening vertically and affecting an increasing number of communities and social strata, as the number of people forced to leave their homes has risen worldwide over the past decade. One of the main reasons for this growing trend is the Russian-Ukrainian war that broke out in February 2022, which forced millions of Ukrainian residents to leave their homes. A large number of IDPs arrived in Transcarpathia, the most western region of Ukraine. The primary aim of this research was to determine the number of people who have fled the country, the number of IDPs, and the circumstances of internal refugees arriving in

Copyright © 2025 "Codrul Cosminului", XXXI, 2025, No. 2, p. 481-500.

¹ **Acknowledgement:** The research was carried out at the Lehoczky Tivadar Research Centre for Social Sciences of the Ferenc Rakoczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education within the framework of the 2022 Domus institutional operating grant. We would also like to thank the Hungarian Academy of Sciences for its support. A version of this paper, with the title *Stanovys'che vnutrishn'o peremishchenykh osib na ukrayins'ko-uhors'komu prykordonnii* [The situation of internally displaced persons on the Ukrainian-Hungarian border], was published in the "Novitnia Doba" Journal (Contemporary era), 2025, no. 13, pp. 3-17.

Transcarpathia. During the research, we collected data from the UNHCR, the Ukrainian State Statistical Service, and the Transcarpathian Regional Military Administration. We also used a questionnaire-based survey (N=215) conducted between May and August 2022.

Keywords: Ukraine, Russia, War, Transcarpathia, internally displaced persons.

Rezumat. În umbra războiului. Persoane strămutate intern în extremitatea vestică a Ucrainei la începutul invaziei rusești. Problema globală a refugiaților, inclusiv a persoanelor strămutate intern (IDP), este un fenomen care se extinde pe o scară tot mai largă și afectează din ce în ce mai multe comunități și straturi sociale, întrucât numărul persoanelor forțate să își părăsească locuințele a crescut la nivel mondial în ultimul deceniu. Unul dintre principalele motive ale acestei tendințe ascendente este războiul rusu-ucrainean declanșat în februarie 2022, în urma căruia milioane de locuitori ai Ucrainei au fost nevoiți să își părăsească locuințele. Foarte multe persoane strămutate intern au ajuns în Transcarpatia, cea mai vestică regiune a Ucrainei. Scopul principal al acestei cercetări a fost acela de a stabili numărul persoanelor care au părăsit țara, al celor strămutate intern și de a evalua condițiile de viață ale refugiaților interni sosiți în Transcarpatia. În cadrul cercetării s-au folosit date furnizate de UNHCR, Serviciul de Statistică de Stat al Ucrainei și Administrația Militară Regională Transcarpatică. De asemenea, a fost utilizată metoda anchetei pe bază de chestionar (N = 215), realizată în perioada mai – august 2022.

INTRODUCTION

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine on 24 February 2022 not only dealt a cruel blow to Ukraine's political, social and economic situation but also had an unprecedented negative impact on the economic, political and cultural- demographic processes in Europe and even worldwide. With the start of the fighting, a significant number of civilians fled the affected areas to safer areas (mainly to western Ukraine). A considerable number of refugees moved on to Poland, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia, but many internally displaced persons in Transcarpathia do not want to leave Ukraine. They either have a family member engaged in the fighting, have nowhere else to go or want to stay in their country.

These refugees are provided with temporary shelter, food, and social services by local authorities and NGOs in Transcarpathia, with support from foreign aid and international relief agencies. Significant numbers of refugees have also arrived in settlements inhabited by Transcarpathian Hungarians, despite a vigorous anti-Hungarian campaign against the Transcarpathian Hungarian minority in recent years. This study presents findings from research conducted between May and August

2022. One of its primary objectives was to assess the number, gender, and age composition of internally displaced persons arriving in the Hungarian settlements of Transcarpathia. The research also asked people coming in the Hungarian settlements of Transcarpathia about their plans, their positive and negative experiences during their stay, and their perceptions of the region's multi-ethnicity.

In the first part of the study, a summary of Ukraine's population trends over the last three decades is presented, and the distribution of Ukrainian war refugees across Europe and of IDPs within Ukraine's national borders is examined. In the second part of the study, the results of a questionnaire completed by 215 IDPs who arrived at the border settlements in the Berehove district are presented.

POPULATION TRENDS IN UKRAINE OVER THE PAST 30 YEARS

Ukraine declared its independence on 24 August 1991. At that time, the population was nearly 52 million.² The population increased until 1993 when it reached 52.2 million. It was mainly due to the return of the Ukrainian ethnic population and the repatriation of previously deported ethnic groups (e.g. Crimean Tatars and Greeks) (Figure 1).

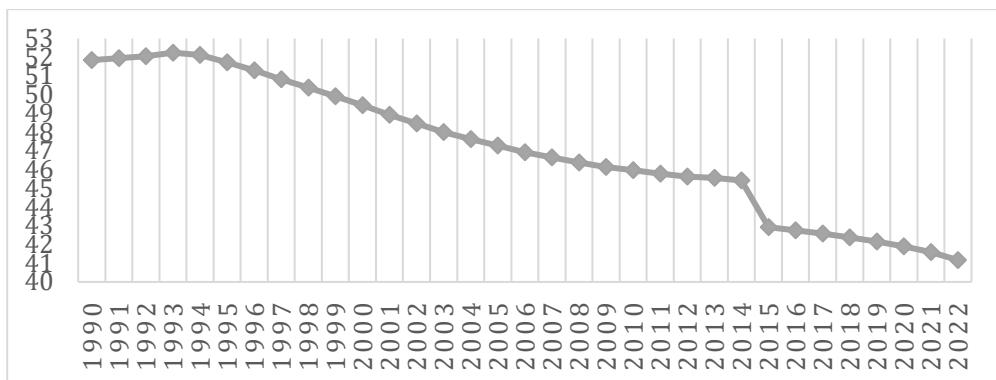


Figure 1, Change in the present population of Ukraine from 1990 to 2022 (million people)

Source: www.ukrstat.gov.ua

Many people also came from the Caucasus region, fleeing the conflicts there. At the same time, the emigration of minorities (Poles, Hungarians, Jews, Russians,

² State Statistics Service of Ukraine, *Population by region (by estimate) as of February 1, 2022*. Average annual populations in January 2022: www.ukrstat.gov.ua (Accessed on 26.11.2022).

etc.) to their countries of origin began, a trend intensified by the country's poor economic situation, resulting in the number of emigrants exceeding the number of immigrants from 1994 onward. This trend persisted until the early 2000s, when, each year, roughly 150,000 more people emigrated than arrived in the country.

The rate of natural reproduction harmed population change, as there has not been a single year since Ukraine's independence in which more people were born in the country than died. In 1990, the balance was still positive (0.5‰), with 629.6 thousand deaths and 657.2 thousand births, resulting in an overall increase of 27.6 thousand people. In 1991, there was a decrease of 39.1 thousand people; in 1992, 100.3 thousand; in 1993, 184.2 thousand; in 1994, 243.1 thousand; and in 1995, almost 300 thousand more people died than were born. As the number of deaths increased, the number of births decreased steadily; as a result, this negative trend continued for almost ten years. The most considerable population loss occurred in 2000, with 758.1 thousand deaths and 385.1 thousand births. The birth rate was 7.8‰, the mortality rate 15.4‰ and the rate of decrease 7.6‰. These figures were among the worst in the world (Figure 2). As a result of the demographic crisis and net migration, Ukraine's population declined by approximately 400,000 per year.³

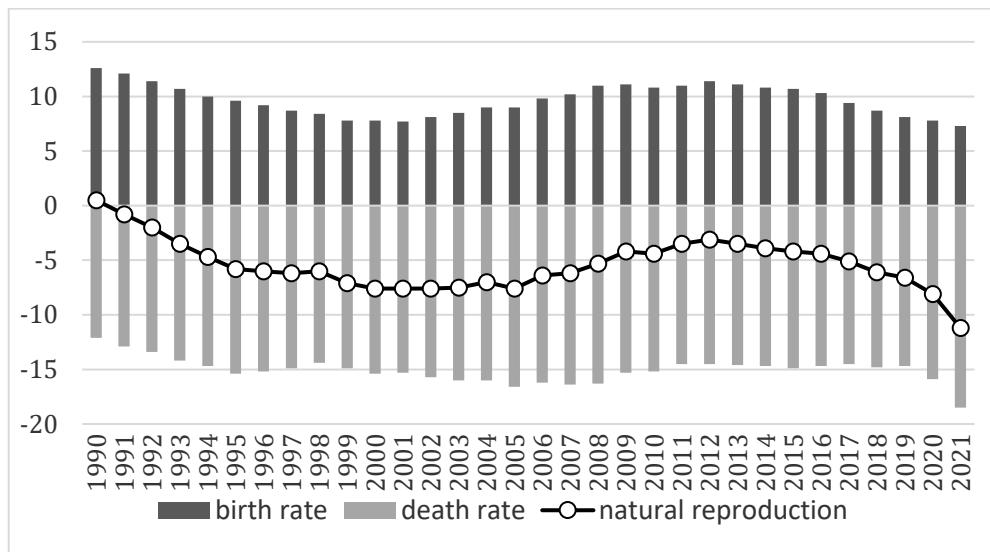


Figure 2, Evolution of the birth and death rates between 1990 and 2021 (‰)

³ István D. Molnár, *Perifériáról perifériára. Kárpátalja népessége 1869-től napjainkig* [From Periphery to Periphery. The Population of Transcarpathia from 1869 to the Present Day], Budapest, Kalligram, 2018, 182 p.

Source: www.ukrstat.gov.ua

At the start of the millennium, emigration decreased as the country's economic situation improved, and the migration balance has been positive since 2005. The number of births increased, but the natural reproduction rate remained negative. Due to improvements in both indicators, the rate of population decline slowed. Between 2012 and 2014, the country's population "only" decreased by about 100 thousand people per year, compared with the previous 300–400 thousand. As of 1 January 2014, the country had a population of 45.4 million.

However, following the outbreak of the conflict in eastern Ukraine, population decline accelerated again. In 2014, Russia annexed the Crimean Peninsula, which at the time had a population of 2.35 million.⁴ Only partial data on the populations of the areas controlled by the breakaway republics of Luhansk and Donetsk are available from the Ukrainian State Statistics Office, and there is no statistical data on population movements for this part of the country. As a result, the country's population fell from 45.4 million in 2014 to 42.9 million in 2015.

Since 2013, the birth rate has gradually declined again, falling from 11.4‰ in 2012 to 7.3‰ in 2021, the lowest rate in the country's history (Figure 2). At the same time, the mortality rate was around 14–15‰, reaching 15.9‰ in 2020 and 18.5‰ in 2021, mainly due to an ageing population, deteriorating social care and an increase in the number of soldiers killed in the war. Thus, the decrease in natural reproduction between 2020 and 2021 was a record-high: 11.2‰ (442.3 thousand people). This was only slightly offset by a positive migration balance (21.3 thousand people).

As of 1 January 2022, Ukraine's population was 41.17 million, according to the Ukrainian State Statistics Office. However, research conducted jointly in 2019 by the Institute of Demographic and Social Research, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Ukrainian State Statistics Office, and other institutions found that the actual population was significantly lower than official statistics indicated. The population count was calculated using data from the Ukrainian State Statistics Office, mobile phone operators, and various registers. Based on these figures, the country's population as of 1 December 2019 was 37.29 million, compared with 42.15 million according to government statistics alone, a difference of 4.86 million. This finding is supported by other research. Palekhova's study indicates that

⁴ Csilla Fedinec, Marta Font, Imre Szakál, Beáta Varga, *Ukrajna története: régiók, identitás, államiság* [The History of Ukraine: Regions, Identity, and Statehood], Budapest, Társadalomtudományi Kutatóközpont, Gondolat Kiadó, 2021, 444 p., State Statistics Service of Ukraine, *Population by region ...* www.ukrstat.gov.ua.

the rate of population decline exceeds that reported by the State Statistics Service. With the last census dating back to 2001 and labour force emigration surveys conducted only every five years, data collection gaps persist. Alternative estimates from institutions such as the Ptoukha Institute for Demography and Social Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Institute for the Future suggest that, in 2017, Ukraine's population, excluding temporarily occupied territories, stood at 36 million.

UKRAINIAN REFUGEES IN EUROPE AND WITHIN NATIONAL BORDERS

On 24 February 2022, Russia attacked Ukraine, triggering the most significant wave of refugees in Europe since the Second World War. Some experts predicted a Ukrainian surrender within a few days; others predicted a war that could last several years. A year after the outbreak of the war, the latter prediction seems to have been correct. Fighting has spread across many areas of the country, and even after the Ukrainian army's successful resistance and the continued retaking of territories occupied by the Russians, the situation is not improving.

While it is true that, owing to the resistance of the Ukrainian army and the recapture of much of the occupied territories, the return of refugees has begun, it is increasingly likely that millions of people will remain permanently in the EU as the war drags on.⁵ As a result of the ballistic missile attacks spreading throughout the country, the country's energy system is deteriorating. Consequently, an increasing number of people have left their homes and flats without electricity, running water, or heating to seek refuge abroad.

According to UNHCR data, between 24 February 2022 and 28 February 2023, 19.5 million people left Ukraine at border crossing points, compared with 11.0 million entries. This means 8.5 million more people left the country than entered. Many have also gone for the breakaway republics of Donetsk and Luhansk. According to UN data, as of 14 March 2023, the number of Ukrainian refugees in European countries was 8.1 million.⁶

⁵ Dobó G., Gönczi R., Kovács B., et al., *Ukrajnai menekültök és helyzetük az Európai Unióban* [Ukrainian refugees and their situation in the European Union], Migrációkutató Intézet, „Horizont 2022/21”, 2022, p. 7. <https://www.migraciokutato.hu/2022/08/09/horizont-2022-21-ukrajnai-menekultek-es-helyzetuk-az-europai-unioban/> (Accessed on 24.11.2022).

⁶ UNHCR, *Ukraine refugee situation*, 2022, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine> (Accessed on 22.11.2022).

The most significant number of refugees (mainly from eastern Ukraine) found shelter in Russia, with 2.85 million (Table 1).

Table 1, The number of Ukrainian refugees in European countries as of 14 March 2023

Country	Number of Ukrainian refugees in European countries (people)
Russia	2 852 395
Poland	1 564 711
Germany	1 055 323
Czech Republic	497 217
Italy	171 739
Spain	170 345
Bulgaria	149 610
France	118 994
Slovakia	111 756
Romania	110 106
Austria	94 551
Other countries	1 216 423
Total	8 113 170

Source: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

However, the majority of refugees left the country in a western direction, with 1.56 million Ukrainian refugees in Poland, more than one million in Germany and nearly half a million in the Czech Republic. Still, many remain in Spain, Bulgaria, France, Slovakia, Romania, and Austria (Figure 3).

The EU also registers the number of applicants for temporary protection and the number of applications accepted. Ukrainian citizens may enter the EU visa-free for 90 days; after that, if they wish to remain in the EU, they must submit an asylum application. The data are available on the UN website.

By 14 March 2023, 4,901,577 Ukrainian refugees applied for refugee status in a European country, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Poland has the highest number of asylum applicants (1.56 million), followed by Germany (881,000) and the Czech Republic (496,000).⁷ According to expert opinions, after the outbreak of the war, Ukrainians who had arrived in Poland

⁷ UNHCR, *Ukraine refugee situation*, 2022, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine> (Accessed on 22.03.2023).

could rely on assistance from both the government and the populace.⁸ More than 100.000 people have also applied in Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, France, Slovakia, Romania and Austria.⁹

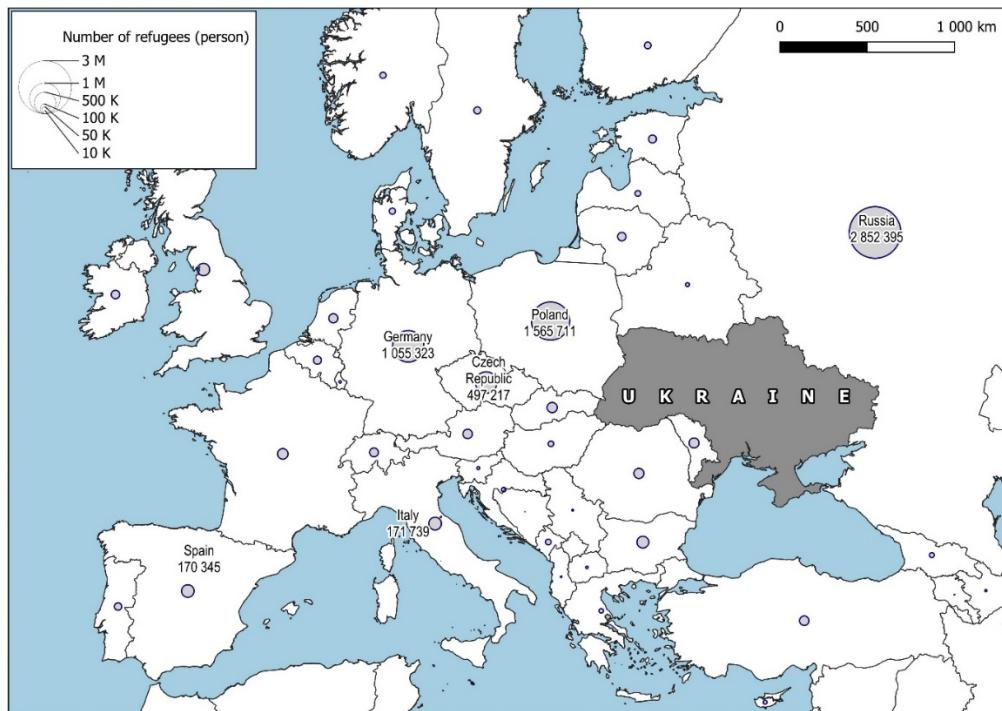


Figure 3, Number of Ukrainian refugees in European countries (2023. 03. 14).

Source: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

Under the mobilisation law, men aged 18-60 were banned from leaving Ukraine from 25 February 2022; consequently, men who had left the eastern regions of Ukraine sought temporary shelter in the country's western regions, including Transcarpathia. However, the vast majority of refugees in the west of the country were women and children. Many believed that the war would soon end and that they would quickly be able to return to their homes; however, they did not leave the country.

⁸ Y. Zhuk, S. Bilan, M. Brycz, H. Brycz, *Economic status, emigration, and life satisfaction: Strategies of acculturation among Belarusian and Ukrainian migrants in Poland before and during the war*, "Economics and Sociology" 2023, 16(4), pp. 321-332.

⁹ UNHCR, *Ukraine refugee situation*, 2022, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine> (Accessed on 22.03.2023).

According to the UNHCR's categorisation, refugees fleeing the war from Eastern Ukraine to Transcarpathia are classified as internally displaced persons, as they have not crossed an international border, i.e., left their country of origin.¹⁰ Although the IDPs have been fleeing because of the war raging in their country, they remain legally bound by their country of origin. They are entitled to the rights and protection provided by human rights and international humanitarian law.¹¹ (UNCHR 2013). Although in their case, the border crossing did not take place, we believe that the Binder – Tošić authors' statement that the phenomena resulting from the flow of IDPs can be interpreted as the result of the cooperation between the individual, the community of origin or the host community and the authorities concerned also applies to them.¹² Another general conclusion, also valid for internally displaced persons, is that the trauma and dislocation experienced by such people affect individuals and their families, both within the immediate host community and across the wider society.¹³

On 16 March 2022, the number of internally displaced persons was estimated at 6.48 million.¹⁴ The number of IDPs (internally displaced persons) increased steadily with the spatial expansion of the fighting, reaching 8 million on 5 May. Subsequently, as the Russian troops were pushed out, many returned to their homes, and the number of IDPs fell to 6.27 million on 23 June. However, the fighting in the southern region of the country led to many people fleeing from Kherson and its surroundings, and by the end of August, the number of people leaving their homes increased again. At the start of the school term, many decided to risk returning home, and by September, their numbers had decreased again. At the beginning of October 2022, the Russians began firing missiles at the country's

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ UNHCR, *Ukraine refugee situation*, 2022, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine> (Accessed on 22.03.2023).

¹² S. Binder, J. Tošić, *Refugees as a Particular Form of Transnational Migrations and Social Transformations: Socioanthropological and Gender Aspects*, "Current Sociology", Vol. 53, 2005, Issue 4, pp. 531–535.

¹³ J. Aroche, M. J. Coello, *Ethnocultural Considerations in the Treatment of Refugees and Asylum Seekers*, in J. P. Wilson, B. Droždek (Eds.), *Broken Spirits. The Treatment of Traumatized Asylum Seekers, Refugees, and War and Torture Victims*, New York, Routledge, 2004, pp. 53–81.

¹⁴ Mizhnarodna orhanizatsiia z mihratsii, *Zvit pro povernennya v Ukrayini. 23 sichnya 2023 roku* [Report on Returns in Ukraine. 23 January 2023] in <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/zvit-pro-povernennya-ukraini-16-23-sichnya-2023-roku> (Accessed on 11.03.2023).

infrastructure, causing many people to flee their homes, especially in the eastern region of the country, fearing a significant attack. After it became clear that the enemy was only attacking critical infrastructure with missiles inside the country and not civilian targets, the population returned home in increasing numbers despite regular power cuts and frequent air strikes. Thus, by 23 January 2023, the number of IDPs fell to 5.352.000. However, not all the IDPs mentioned above were registered with the local municipalities. As a result, the number of officially registered refugees is much lower: 3.621.723 as of 31 January 2023.¹⁵

According to the UN International Organisation for Migration (IOM), as of January 31, 2023, there were 149,786 officially registered IDPs in Transcarpathia. The vast majority came from cities, so they are trying to survive the hardships of the war in the larger towns of Transcarpathia, especially in Uzhhorod and Mukachevo. In the Uzhhorod district, 50.365 IDPs were registered and 40.040 in the Mukachevo district.¹⁶ Their numbers were much lower in the other districts: 19.405 in Tiachiv, 15.923 in Khust, 13.359 in Berehove and 10.694 in Rakhiv (Figure 4). The county government has been working in close cooperation with local authorities and partner organisations to create comfortable conditions for IDPs. The Ukrainian Red Cross Association, the Hungarian Ecumenical Aid Service of Ukraine, "ZOA International", the Czech and Slovak agencies "People in Need", the charity funds "Borzhavska Nadiya", "Vostok SOS" are especially worth noting for their help.¹⁷

Since September 2022, the number of registered IDPs in Transcarpathia has shown a slight downward trend, with 166.316 people registered with local authorities. Their number was 155.464 at the end of October, 153.421 at the end of November and 156.728 at the end of December. At the end of January 2023, there was a further decrease with 149.786 officially registered persons.

It is important to note, however, that not all IDPs are registered with local authorities; many have not approached them and have made their own arrangements for housing and temporary employment. According to Viktor Mikita, the head of the Transcarpathian Regional Military Administration, the number of IDPs as of 28 September 2022 was estimated at 350.000.¹⁸

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Karpats'kyj obyektyv*, in <http://life.ko.net.ua/?p=136971> (Accessed on 08.10.2022).

¹⁸ *Na Zakarpatti zareyestruvalysya blyz'ko 154 tysyachi vymushenykh pereselentsiv* [In Zakarpattia, approximately 154,000 forcibly displaced persons were registered], Zakarpattya online, 28 September 2022, <https://zakarpattya.net.ua/Zmi/223272-Na-Zakarpatti-zareyestruvalysia-blyzko-154-tisyachi-vymushenykh-pereselentsiv> (Accessed on 25.03.2023).

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The target group of our research was Ukrainian IDPs arriving in the Berehove district. The study's target group is novel, as we interviewed a community that had not previously visited Transcarpathia and likely had no plans to stay in the westernmost province of Ukraine for an extended period. Ferenc Rakoczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education (RF II. KMF) played a key role in providing accommodation for them. This institution of higher education hosted a total of 711 refugees from Ukraine, 366 of whom were accommodated in its dormitories in Berehove.¹⁹ We began our questionnaire-based research at the RF II KMF and subsequently employed snowball sampling to recruit refugees in the district. Using the snowball sampling method, the database for our quantitative research comprises 215 responses from IDPs in Ukraine. The sample cannot be considered representative; however, it is important to note that only one person per family completed our questionnaire, yet it provides information on a much larger number of people. The survey was conducted in the spring and summer of 2022 (May-August). Most respondents (38.5%) stayed in the city of Berehove. Schools and kindergartens in the surrounding settlements could accommodate fewer refugees.

CONDUCTING RESEARCH AND RESULTS

The tool used in our research was a questionnaire, as part of the quantitative research group. The self-developed questionnaire, comprising 14 closed- and open-ended questions, collected information on respondents' socioeconomic background, the date of their flight, the number of family members arriving together, their occupation in the temporary place of residence, their plans, and their satisfaction with the host location. In our study, we seek to answer, among other questions, those concerning the socio-demographic characteristics of the IDPs, their satisfaction with their accommodation in Berehove and the Berehove district, their plans, and the factors that influence their future.

The vast majority of respondents (78%) are women. Many of the male members of the family are conscripts, making travel and crossing county borders difficult. When completing the questionnaire, several women indicated to the interviewers that male members of their families were enlisted in the army to defend

¹⁹ K. Pallay, V. Markos, H. Fényes, *Volunteer Activity of Transcarpathian Youth During the 2022 Russo-Ukrainian War*, "Corvinus Journal of Sociology and Social Policy", 2024, 15(1), pp. 49-72.

their country. As a result, only the female members of the family are staying in Transcarpathia. Regarding age distribution, most respondents are aged 35-44, with 21.6% aged 25-34. Presumably, the members of the younger generation have left their homes more easily and are more open to a new start.



Figure 4, Location of those filling out the questionnaire (%) (N=215)

Source: own construction

The Chi-square test was used to examine the correlation of age and gender. Men aged 55-64 and over 65 are overrepresented (Adj. Resid. = 2.1) and over 65 (Adj. Resid. = 2.0). Presumably, this is because they can no longer be conscripted and can move more freely.

Table 2, Correlation between age and gender (N=215)

	Male	Female	Chi-square	Sig
Age distribution	15-24	0,0	4,2	6,836
	25-34	24,1	24,1	
	35-44	9,3	33,0	
	45-54	11,1	43,8	
	55-64	<u>29,6</u>	16,8	
	Over 65	<u>25,9</u>	15,7	

*For underlined values, the absolute value of adjusted residuals is greater than two.

Source: own construction.

Respondents highlighted that their family members' staying at home made it difficult for them to leave their homes. Research shows that geographical mobility harms individuals' social capital.²⁰ This is especially true when one must leave one's previous residence overnight. Smart and Shipman have found that although migration negatively affects relational capital, maintaining family ties is of fundamental importance for those who leave their home country.²¹ This is confirmed by the fact that the vast majority (77.5%) of people fleeing war have left their homes with their families. In some cases, grandparents came to Transcarpathia with their grandchildren. The Chi-square test was used to assess the association between gender and who arrived with whom. In the case of men, those who came alone are overrepresented, while women are most likely to leave their homes with their families. This phenomenon is explained by the fact that, in the sample, a higher proportion of women than men were married, and Gödri also points out that women are more likely to pursue family reunification in the context of migration.²²

Table 3, Correlation between gender and (n=215)

	Male	Female	Chi-square	Sig
Who did you arrive with?	<u>Alone</u> 40,7	19,4	10,515	0,002
	<u>With family</u> 59,3	80,6		

*For underlined values, the absolute value of adjusted residuals is greater than two.

Source: own construction.

34.3% of refugee children studied online at their home schools. Presumably, the parents of these children are considering returning home, hoping that their children will be able to continue their education in the original schools. 3.7% of them have not attended school since the outbreak of the war. Their parents are likely still uncertain about the future, as they have not enrolled their children in school in their temporary residence. 2% of respondents reported having sent

²⁰ X. Briggs, *Moving up Versus Moving out: Neighborhood Effects in Housing Mobility Programs*, in "Housing Policy Debate", Vol. 8, 1997, no.1, pp. 195–234; D. R. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 2000, pp. 415–425.

²¹ C. Smart, B. Shipman, *Visions in monochrome: families, marriage and the individualisation thesis*, in "The British Journal of Sociology", Vol. 55, 2004, no.4, pp. 491-509.

²² I. Gödri, *Nők és férfiak a migrációs folyamat különböző szakaszaiban. A magyarországi bevándorlás a nemek perspektívájából* [Women and Men at Different Stages of the Migration Process. Immigration to Hungary from a Gender Perspective], in Nagy I., Pongrácz T., Tóth I. Gy. (Eds.), *Szerepváltozások. Jelentés a nők és férfiak helyzetéről*, Budapest, Szociális és Esélyegyenlőségi Minisztérium, 2005, p.149-164.

their child to a local school. This suggests that they no longer wish to return to their previous place of residence. 60% of respondents reported having no children or no children of school age.

In our research, we identified the regions of inner Ukraine from which the IDPs came. The majority of respondents accommodated in the Berehove district ($73 = 29.8\%$) were from Kharkiv. Nearly 20% of IDPs came from the capital. 12.2% of respondents came to Transcarpathia from Donetsk. In addition, a significant number of refugees came from Mariupol, Luhansk, Dnipro, Kropyvnytskyi and Mikolayiv (Figure 5).

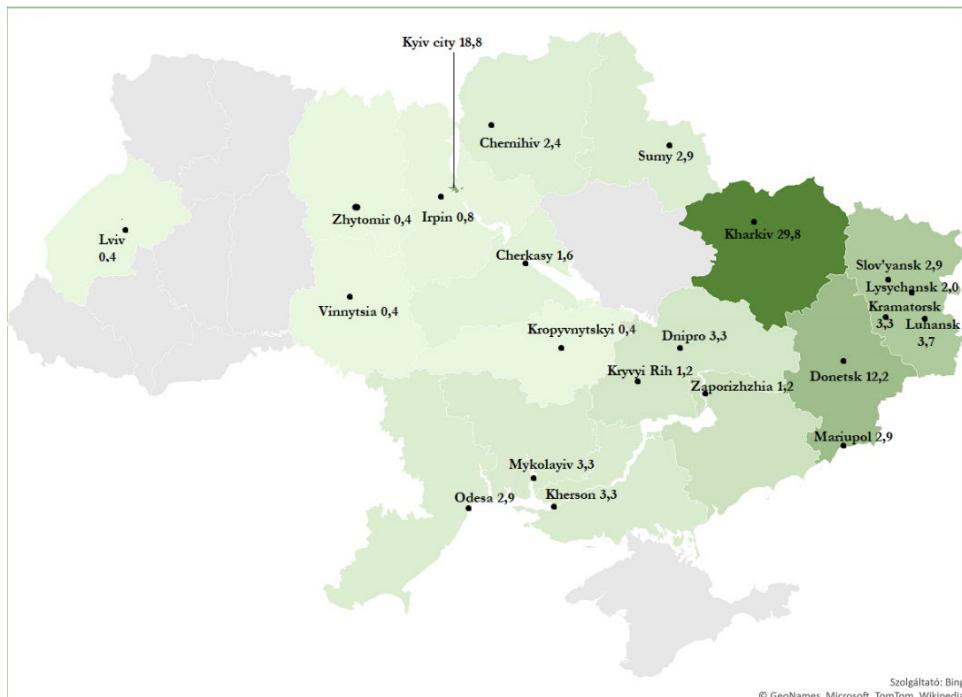


Figure 5. IDPS' place of origin (%)

Source: our own construction based on questionnaire data.

14.5% of respondents already left their homes in February 2022, immediately after the outbreak of the war. Nearly half of the respondents (47.5%) arrived in Transcarpathia in March. 25% of respondents fled in April, and the refugee flow decreased thereafter (Figure 6).

There is a significant correlation between the time of flight and the place of residence. In the case of refugees arriving in February 2022, the IDPs arriving from the capital were overrepresented. Among those arriving in March, IDPs from

Kharkiv, Lysychans'k, Irpin, Kramatorsk, and Mariupol were overrepresented. The first IDPs arrived in Transcarpathia from settlements that were the first to be attacked. The prolonged war affected the IDPs coming from the war zone. In the summer months of 2022, they also arrived from western counties where there was no active fighting. These included Lviv, Zhytomyr, and Vinnytsia.

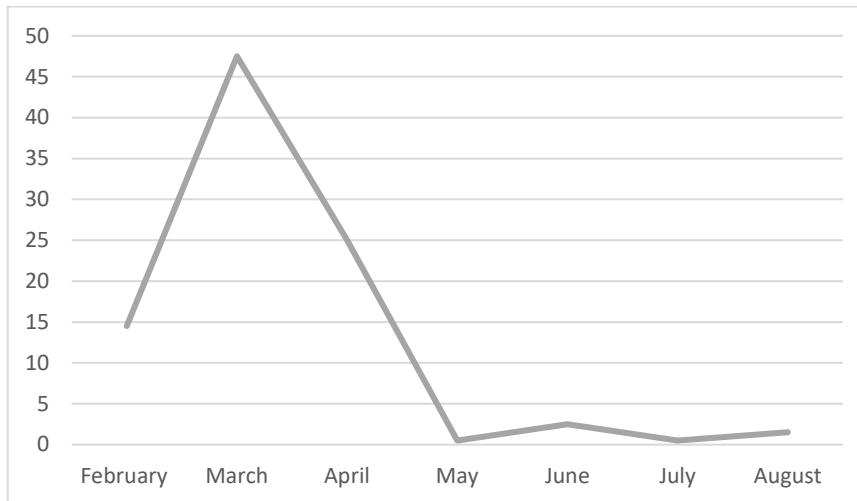


Figure 6, The date of arrival of IDPs

Source: own construction.

Almost half of the respondents (49.8%) travelled by train, 42.4% by car, and 7.8% by bus. The chi-square test was used to assess the association between age and mode of transport. Among IDPs aged 65+, those arriving by train are strongly overrepresented, whereas in the 45-54 age group, the highest proportion arrived in Transcarpathia by car (Table 4).

Table 4. Correlation between age and the mode of transport

	15- 24	25- 34	35- 44	45-54	55-64	over 65 years	Chi- squa- re	Sig.
Mode of transp ort	Train	75,0	49,1	51,9	29,2	54,2	<u>65,7</u>	24,517 0,006
	Bus	0,0	9,4	7,8	6,2	20,8	0,0	
	Car	25,0	41,5	40,3	<u>64,6</u>	25,0	34,3	

*For underlined values, the absolute value of adjusted residuals is greater than two.

Source: own construction.

In terms of education, almost half (48.6%) of the war refugees in the research have completed tertiary education. 6.9% of the IDPs (17 people) also hold

a doctorate (PhD degree), many of them are professors. This is because a significant portion of our research sample consisted of IDPs from the RF KMF II. base. The Berehove College has hosted several teachers and researchers from partner institutions in Ukraine.

We asked about the profession of IDPs in an open question. Respondents named a wide range of occupations, which we grouped into four categories. The vast majority of respondents (78.7%) work in the service sector (a significant proportion of whom are teachers), 13.6% in industry, 5.4% in research and development, and 2.3% in agriculture.

All workers in the agricultural sector have assumed new positions in Transcarpathia. This result is not surprising, as it is not feasible for people in this sector to work online. Nearly half of respondents in the industry (45.2%) found a new job in their current location; 25.8% continued working online at their previous job; and 29% engaged in voluntary work. 43.9% of respondents working in the service sector were employed in Transcarpathia; 36.1% continued working online at their previous job; and 20% engaged in voluntary work. Half of the IDPs working in the research and development sector were employed in Transcarpathia; 30% continued working online at their previous job; and 20% engaged in voluntary work.

In our research, we examined the level of satisfaction with the conditions and circumstances in Transcarpathia. A significant proportion of respondents (91%) were most satisfied with the countryside. 80% of respondents were delighted with the ethnic diversity of the countryside, while 74.3% of them were delighted with the linguistic diversity of the countryside. 71% of them were completely satisfied with the help provided by charities and local people. Respondents were least satisfied with the accommodation and assistance coming from local authorities.

One of the crucial questions for the future of the IDPs in Transcarpathia is where they plan to live. A significant proportion of respondents (70.6%) would have liked to return home, but all emphasised that this would occur only once the fighting had stopped and they could do so safely. 22.9% of them said that they would like to settle in Transcarpathia. Many respondents reported having nowhere to return home because their homes had been destroyed. 6.5% of respondents reported that they were only temporarily residing in Transcarpathia but no longer wanted to, or were unable to, return home. They were planning their future in a foreign country. The distributions are illustrated in Table 5.

Our Chi-square test results indicate that plans are significantly associated with place of origin ($p=0.008$). Residents of Mariupol, Luhansk, Odessa, Kramatorsk, and Donetsk counties do not wish to return home. It can be seen that the

IDPs from areas where fighting was still active, or they were under Russian occupation, were not planning or were unable to return to their homes.

Table 5. Correlation between plans and satisfaction indicators (n=215).

	Returning home	Staying in Transc.	Going abroad	Average	F	Sig	N
Accommodation	4,47	4,53	3,81	4,44	5,002	0,007	215
Assistance of the local authorities	4,15	4,26	3,37	4,12	3,275	0,040	
Assistance of the local population	4,53	4,69	3,87	4,52	5,124	0,007	
Assistance of the charities	4,38	4,64	3,88	4,31	3,010	0,051	
Ethnic diversity of the region	4,70	4,83	4,31	4,71	4,157	0,017	

Source: own construction.

During our research, we mapped out the factors influencing refugees' plans. Regarding satisfaction indicators, there are significant differences across five aspects related to plans. The data show that IDPs who are more than satisfied with the accommodation, assistance from local authorities, the population, and charities, as well as with ethnic diversity, would like to remain in Transcarpathia. The least satisfied wished to stay in Transcarpathia only temporarily and would like to settle abroad permanently as soon as they had the opportunity.

CONCLUSIONS

The primary aim of this research was to examine how many people have fled the country, how many are the IDPs, and who has fled to the Hungarian-Ukrainian border region of Transcarpathia as a result of the Russian-Ukrainian war. Our research was based on data and statements from the UNHCR, the Ukrainian State Statistical Service, the Transcarpathian Regional Military Administration, and our own questionnaire-based research. Based on our research, we conclude that, according to the State Statistics Service, Ukraine's population as of 1 January 2022 was 41.17 million. Still, given that a 2019 survey estimated the resident population at 37.29 million, compared with 42.15 million in the Office of Statistics, there is reason to believe that the resident population in 2022 could not exceed 36.5 million. 8.11 million Ukrainian citizens were staying abroad as of 14 March 2023 because of the Ukrainian-Russian war. Based on the data above, the present population of Ukraine is estimated at 28-30 million as of March 2023. The number of IDPs was 5.35 million. 13.5 million people were still separated from their homes because of the war. There were 350,000 IDPs in Transcarpathia, of

which 150,000 were officially registered with the local authorities. Most of the IDPs in Transcarpathia arrived in Uzhhorod and Mukachevo. The IDPs settling in Transcarpathia came mainly from settlements where active warfare was taking place and which were under Russian occupation. With time, the IDPs from the western counties also began to arrive. The vast majority of IDPs accommodated in the Berehove district were women, and a high proportion were graduates or PhDs. This was because staff from the partner higher education institutions were accommodated in the RF II KMF dormitories. The vast majority of IDPs interviewed in the Berehove district were satisfied with local conditions. Although the vast majority of respondents were accommodated in dormitories, educational institutions, and their gyms, they were satisfied and grateful. A significant number of IDPs planned to return home once the war was over. The results of our research align with other expert opinions: in 2022, Razumkov reported that nearly 80% of Ukrainians crossing the border intended to return home shortly.²³ Their future was shaped by the satisfaction derived from their stay in Transcarpathia, their place of origin, and the positive outcome of the war.

Given that hundreds of thousands of IDPs were registered in Transcarpathia, a database of 215 people cannot be considered representative; however, it provides a realistic picture of how refugees arriving in the Hungarian-speaking region perceive local conditions. It also provides an insight into the identity of IDPs from inner Ukraine who were forced to leave their homes because of the war and found refuge in Transcarpathia.

REFERENCES

1. Aroche J., Coello M. J., *Ethnocultural Considerations in the Treatment of Refugees and Asylum Seekers*, in J. P. Wilson, B. Drožđek, (eds.): *Broken Spirits. The Treatment of Traumatized Asylum Seekers, Refugees, and War and Torture Victims*. New York, Routledge, 2004, pp. 53–81.
2. Binder S., Tošić J., *Refugees as a Particular Form of Transnational Migrations and Social Transformations: Socioanthropological and Gender Aspects*, in “Current Sociology”, Vol. 53, 2005, no. 4, pp. 531–535.

²³ Zhuk Y., Bilan S., Brycz M., Brycz H., *Economic status, emigration, and life satisfaction: Strategies of acculturation among Belarusian and Ukrainian migrants in Poland before and during the war* in “Economics and Sociology”, Vol. 16, 2023, no. 4, pp. 321–332.

3. Briggs X., *Moving up Versus Moving out: Neighborhood Effects in Housing Mobility Programs* in “Housing Policy Debate”, Vol. 8, 1997, no. 1, pp. 195–234.
4. Dobó G., Gönczi R., Kovács B., et al., *Ukrajnai menekültek és helyzetük az Európai Unióban* [Ukrainian refugees and their situation in the European Union], Migrációkutató Intézet, „Horizont 2022/21”, 2022, in <https://www.migraciokutato.hu/2022/08/09/horizont-2022-21-ukrajnai-menekultek-es-helyzetuk-az-europai-unioban/>.
5. Fedinec Cs., Font M., Szakál I., Varga B., *Ukrajna története: régiók, identitás, államiság* [The History of Ukraine: Regions, Identity, and Statehood], Budapest, Társadalomtudományi Kutatóközpont, Gondolat Kiadó, 2021, 444 p.
6. Gödri I., *Nők és férfiak a migrációs folyamat különböző szakaszai*. A magyarországi bevándorlás a nemek perspektívájából [Women and Men at Different Stages of the Migration Process. Immigration to Hungary from a Gender Perspective], in Nagy I., Pongrácz T., Tóth I. Gy. (Eds.), *Szerepváltozások. Jelentés a nők és férfiak helyzetéről*, Budapest, Szociális és Esélyegyenlőségi Minisztérium, 2005, pp. 149–164.
7. *Karpats'kyj obyektyv*, in <http://life.ko.net.ua/?p=136971>
8. Mizhnarodna orhanizatsiia z mihratsii, *Zvit pro povernennya v Ukrayini. 23 sichnya 2023 roku* [Report on Returns in Ukraine. 23 January 2023], in <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/zvit-pro-povernennya-ukraini-16-23-sichnya-2023-roku>.
9. Molnár D. István, *Perifériáról perifériára. Kárpátalja népessége 1869-től napjainkig* [From Periphery to Periphery. The Population of Transcarpathia from 1869 to the Present Day], Budapest, Kalligram, 2018, 182 p.
10. Palekohova V., *Why does the Ukrainian economy grow so slowly?* in “Economics and Sociology”, Vol. 14, 2021, no. 1, pp. 28–45.
11. Pallay K., Markos V., Fényes H., *Volunteer Activity of Transcarpathian Youth During the 2022 Russo-Ukrainian War*, “Corvinus Journal of Sociology and Social Policy”, Vol. 15, 2024, no. 1, pp. 49–72.
12. Putnam D. R., *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 2000, 515 p.
13. Sariohlo V., Dubilet D., Verner I., Patsera K., Daniuk M., Chertov O., Prlikarchuk P., *Otsinka chyselnosti naiavnoho naselennia Ukrayny. Z detalizatsiieiu do rivnia rehioniv* [Estimation of the Actual Population of Ukraine. With Details by This Level of Regional Comparison], Derzhavna sluzhba statystyky Ukrayny, Kyiv, 2020, 135 p.
14. Smart C., Shipman B., *Visions in monochrome: families, marriage and the individualization thesis*, “The British Journal of Sociology”, Vol. 55, 2004,

no. 4, pp. 491–509.

15. State Statistics Service of Ukraine, *Population by region (by estimate) as of February 1, 2022. Average annual population in January 2022*, in www.ukrstat.gov.ua.

16. UNHCR, *Ukraine refugee situation*, 2022, in <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>.

17. *Na Zakarpatti zareyestruvalysya blyz'ko 154 tysyachi vymushenykh pereselentsiv* [In Zakarpattia, approximately 154,000 forcibly displaced persons were registered] Zakarpattya online, 28 September 2022, <https://zakarpattya.net.ua/Zmi/223272-Na-Zakarpatti-zareyestruvalysia-blyzko-154-tysiachi-vymushenykh-pereselentsiv>.

18. Zhuk Y., Bilan S., Brycz M., Brycz H., *Economic status, emigration, and life satisfaction: Strategies of acculturation among Belarusian and Ukrainian migrants in Poland before and during the war*, in "Economics and Sociology", Vol. 16, 2023, no. 4, pp. 321–332.