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INTEGRATION OF UKRAINE INTO THE EU AND THE PROBLEMS OF SELF-IDENTIFICATION OF UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

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Summary

The section discusses the types of strategies for refugees' stay in the country of temporary resettlement and substantiates the phenomenon of transitivity of Ukrainian refugees' identities. The study used individual and group interviews. Twenty-four women aged 30 to 60 years took part in two stages of the study. The principles and methods of the so-called "grounded theory" were used to analyze the data.

We identified and described four strategies for choosing a place of temporary resettlement: rational choice taking into account circumstances and opportunities, random or intuitive choice, largely rational choice, but under the influence of random factors, and largely random, intuitive choice, but with rational consideration of individual factors. We also identified two main categories of migrant identities - Ukrainian citizenship and gender identity. In addition, we described two groups of criteria for the personal self-categorization of refugees: resource criteria, such as material opportunities, linguistic and legal competence, and personal criteria, such as activity, independence and emotionality.

We also considered the resource-personal basis of the transit self-categorization of Ukrainian refugees. Future research may provide a broader sample of the influence of social and autobiographical context on attitudes towards temporary resettlement to another country, as well as the direction and intensity of attitudes towards the integration of Ukrainian refugees into Latvian society.

Keywords: *identity, transitivity, self-categorization Ukrainian refugees, migration, EU.*

Ukraine's desire to integrate into the European Union became one of the reasons for Russian aggression back in 2014, and in 2022, the Russian-Ukrainian war and, at the same time, a source of support for the peoples of many countries in its confrontation with the aggressor. European countries and other countries have provided and continue to provide military and humanitarian support to Ukraine. In the summer of 2022, Ukraine received the official status of a candidate country for joining the European Union, despite the war on its territory.

The consolidation of society and the resilience of Ukrainians in repelling aggression have become an important factor on the path to Ukraine's European integration. Europe has accepted and supported millions of Ukrainian refugees. This is a sign of mutual trust and support for the aspirations of Ukrainians to preserve their identity and their country. At the same time, the Russian-Ukrainian war has revealed potential threats to Europe itself from the aggressor, which has become an additional motive for helping Ukraine. More relevant than ever are the words of U. Beck that in recent decades, “danger goes beyond the borders of a single country, and we become members of a “global danger team” [3]. For Ukraine not only the security of the national sovereignty has acquired particular importance, but also the preservation of the identity and ability of people to preserve their culture and way of life.

As of early 2024, there are almost four and a half million Ukrainian refugees living in Europe. Latvia provided active assistance to forced migrants from Ukraine and accepted more than 54 thousand forced Ukrainian migrants

The problem of forced migrants is a problem of both the country that the migrants represent and the country that receives them. This circumstance is of fundamental importance for the further European integration of Ukraine.

The process of making a decision to migrate is a poorly rationalized process since rapidly changing contexts and the weight of the factors being analysed are accompanied by a high emotional overtone of events and do not allow a fully reflexive approach to solving the problem. Many details of the life context determine survival strategies. The details are different: explosions, the smell of gunpowder, broken tanks and spent cartridges, a fire for cooking once a day, cold basements, overnight stays in the subway, and checkpoints.

Extreme conditions associated with threats to life, for people of non-extreme activities, actualize hidden reserves of knowledge and skills. In other words, the practices of involuntary resettlement in the face of military threats are largely determined by the ability to quickly, the little-realized process of transdisciplinary learning as the basis for their successful adaptation.

Forced migrants from the country that has been attacked, first of all, are women with children and elderly parents due to restrictions on the departure of men. The gender aspect of this problem gives particular relevance to the study of the practice of temporary resettlement of residents of areas subjected to aggression from other countries. However, migrants to different countries, including European countries, can be considered not only as an object of care but also as a population resource for the host. Hence, the study of the specifics of forced migrant strategies is of particular importance for society as a whole and for the governments of both countries: both the country that has been subjected to aggression and the host country. Psychologists and sociologists are trying to understand the large-scale phenomenon of Ukrainian refugees.

We studied the ethnic and civil self-identification of forced migrants. Identification is known to be associated with processes of social categorization and social comparison. Self-identification of forced migrants is complicated by the influence of two systems of identificational objects: in their own country and in the country of temporary residence [3].

The article is organized as follows: the first part of our article examines the scientific literature related to the concepts of migration, and self-identification of displaced persons. Then we detail the methodological framework used to conduct this study. We present the results with commentary, a critical discussion of our results, and the strengths and weaknesses of the study. In conclusion, we draw conclusions summarizing the key perspectives and define the prospects for future research.

The term “migration” means relocation, namely the territorial movement of the population associated with a change in place of residence. Many typologies of migration indicate the complexity of the phenomenon itself, the variety of factors influencing the movement of people, as well as the presence of various theories that, within the framework of different sciences, explain it and clarify the conceptual apparatus of its description. Traditionally, we are talking about labor migration. Ukraine has been characterized by forced migration over the past decade due to the temporary occupation of part of its territories by the Russian Federation.

In the official documents of Ukraine and Latvia, two official types of migration are distinguished: "forced migrants" and "refugees" in terms of state assistance and legal status. Common in these statuses is the very moment of coercion. According to M. Slyusarevsky and O. Blinova [2], the differences from a psychological point of view lie in the fact that a person with refugee status is dominated by remoteness from a dangerous place, while a forced migrant has the moment of assessing the place of resettlement, that is, he chooses a place for resettlement in that or some other degree. In our opinion, this statement does not fully reflect reality, since a migrant has the opportunity to choose one of these statuses with different possibilities and consequences, which means making a vital decision with varying degrees of possible reflection.

We are impressed by two ideas. One of the ideas is that forced migrants are “ordinary people and “purposeful actors” immersed in certain life circumstances, belongs to D. Turton [11]. G. Uehling, in turn, insists that "moving to another country is, to a certain extent, their attempt to build their world in new circumstances"[12].

We agree with D. Massey [5], the author of the synthetic theory of migration, that all approaches to understanding migration can be conditionally divided into two large groups: those that focus on the factors and causes of migration, and those that rely on analysis mechanisms of self-development and self-support of migration. We can also accept the clarifications of N. Sakız [9], who clarifies that migration studies focus either on the motivational component of migration (forced or voluntary) or on the adaptation component - on the consequences of migration and ways to correct the behavior of a migrant. Our work can be attributed to the second approach.

Under all-encompassing penetration risks, a person is forced to take numerous and make quick decisions without following pre-existing instructions.

One of the key problems for forced migrants is the problem of identity. As is known, the theoretical understanding of social identity is associated with the development of key concepts of social categorization and social comparison. Identity at its core is a personal construct that reflects a person’s internal solidarity with social group ideals and norms and thereby helps the process of self-categorization, in other words, the process of dividing people into those similar and dissimilar to themselves [8]. Moreover, identity can be seen as a trade-off between assimilation with others and differentiation from others [6]. It is these two closely related processes that, in our opinion, determine the essence of forecasts about the number of Ukrainian refugees who may return to Ukraine after the war.

In the first section, we will present an analysis of the experience of internally displaced persons from the eastern, south-eastern, and central regions of Ukraine who found themselves in Latvia due to threats of shelling and occupation. At the same time, we strive to show how our informants tried, with varying degrees of reflexivity, to make a decision about choosing a country of temporary residence, both with the help of social connections and intuitively, taking responsibility for the choice made. This indicates that the contingencies of

a given time and space may lead a forced migrant to use both explicit and implicit competencies that help him at different stages of the decision to move to another country.

In the second section, we describe the role of social and autobiographical contexts of self-categorization in refugees. narratives, as well as the features of their transitive self-categorization and narrative identity in the social stratification system of the host country.

The choice of methods was determined by the goals and objectives of the study. The purpose of the research project is to study the features of transit identification of forced migrants as a factor in the process of European integration of Ukraine.

The following tasks were set

1. Identify the features of the social and autobiographical contexts of the stay of Ukrainian refugees in Latvia.
2. Identify narrative markers of self-identification of forced migrants.
3. Describe the features of transitive self-categorization in the social stratification system of the host country [7].

The idea of the study was based on the fact that, on the one hand, the uniqueness of the experience of migrants is difficult to formalize but is transmitted through the personal testimonies of the migrants themselves, and on the other hand, narratives and discourses become an important element of migrants' self-reflection, allowing them to develop their strategy and establish itself in its correctness. engaging in communication with different people and telling them about the experience and the difficulties of deciding to resettle.

The methodology of so-called qualitative research was chosen, which seems to be the most appropriate for the purposes and objectives of the study.

At the heart of the research design, therefore, the emphasis of the criteria for choosing research methods has been shifted from procedural features to features of individual and group experience as a whole. The method of free and focused group interviews with a list of main topics for discussion was chosen.

In other words, the ones we have chosen are aimed at studying the qualitative uniqueness of the experience of people involved in certain relatively well-known situations [1]. This made it possible to maximally reflect the diversity of experiences of forced migrants. It is the qualitative uniqueness of the intersection of trajectories of different experiences that underlies the use of free and focused group interviews in our study. Based on this, the use of qualitative methods involves: - the selection of informants, not so much based on their socio-demographic characteristics, but based on taking into account their experience in solving a particular problem; the orientation of the wording of questions to reflect the life experience of the informant; the use of strategies that allow repeated appeals to the informant related to the clarification of information; taking into account the need not so much to maintain anonymity, which in some situations is impossible, but to preserve the personal motivation of the informant in the study and its continuation.

In the first study, eight women aged 30 to 60 took part in a one-hour interview. Riga, August 2022. In the second study, we conducted four in-depth interviews and three focused group interviews. A total of 16 women aged 27 to 55 were interviewed. Riga, November 2022.

We took into account the activity of military operations in different regions of Ukraine. but at the same time, we believed that battle intensity, as measured by combat casualties, is not a good general predictor of bias. We focused on the lived experiences of internally displaced people rather than on the intensity of the fighting that forced them to migrate. Thus, among the informants were: from Mariupol and its suburbs, Kharkiv, from the south of Mykolaiv and Odesa, and one-woman Kyiv and the Dnieper.

In addition, when selecting informants, marital status, the presence and age of children, and the timing of departure from Ukraine were taken into account. The number of informants was determined according to the criterion of repeatability of key variants of positions. The processing of the results took place in 2 stages - a general analysis of judgments on the research topic and an analysis of a free interview using the principles and techniques of the so-called "grounded theory" [10].

Based on this, four strategies for choosing the place of temporary movement in the system of two vectors can be distinguished: unambiguity - mediation, explicitness - implicitness.

Rational choice of the country taking into account circumstances and opportunities of temporary residence with a possible objective assessment of the option due to the experience of working in the chosen country of family members, including remotely, but without personal experience of staying in it or other countries.

Largely rational choice, but under the influence of random factors for temporary asylum with a possible objective assessment of the option and experience of staying in several countries, allowing you to include both reflection and intuition.

Largely random, intuitive choice, but with rational consideration of individual factors for temporary asylum with experience of staying in the chosen country and other countries and analysis of direct additional information about Latvia.

Random or intuitive choice of country for temporary asylum based on intuitive decision making, almost blindly.

All of these options need further testing. This typology helps to understand that in extremely risky situations with a rapid change in the situation and contexts of one's own life, complete reflection becomes almost impossible. And risky decisions can be decisions of the least evil, the best of the worst. At the same time, making such decisions only rationally cannot be a guarantee of well-being, since any rational choice is primarily a reflection of typical and generalized properties that do not fully take into account the individual characteristics and feelings of a particular refugee.

Thus, forced migrants with varying degrees of knowledge of the specifics of the country of temporary residence left for the EU countries. The fact of leaving for the EU indicates a fairly high level of trust in them and indirectly reflects, in our opinion, the support of residents of different regions of the country, including the eastern ones, for Ukraine's orientation towards joining the EU.

The regions of Ukraine inhabited by Ukrainians, Russians, Jews, and other nationalities and with the fairly widespread use of the Russian language were subjected to aggression by Russia. According to the results of the 2001 census of the population of Ukraine, the national composition of the country was presented as follows: 77.8% of Ukrainians, and 17.3% of Russians, a significant part of which lived in the southeastern regions of the country.

Identity issues for forced migrants are among the most frequently discussed issues. First of all, the issues of maintaining or changing identity in the country of forced migration are discussed. In particular, «it is argued that in the modern multicultural society, rigidly determined algorithms for the formation of a national identity, characteristic of previous historical epochs, are being changed for the principle of variability, choice, and construct of identity" [4].

Of interest is the idea of a context-dependent identity about the presence of many forces that influence identification processes. These fluctuations can be caused by opportunities, both psychological and material, such as gaining respect and dignity or finding a job or a better home.

In our study, we tried to determine the specifics of the ethnic attitudes of refugees and the role of national (political and ethnic) identity in the context of temporary resettlement in Latvia.

The following stories from participants illustrate this situation:

I 5. "My father is Russian, my mother is half Ukrainian, and in Russian-speaking Kharkiv, I felt Russian, but not Russian, since February 24 we are all Ukrainians without embroideries, without demonstrations, deep in our souls"

I 7. "I have always felt like a Ukrainian. In Lviv, they somehow talked more about this than in Mariupol.»

I 4. "I speak both Ukrainian and Russian fluently without an accent. But here I realized that I love Ukraine and I like to speak Ukrainian I am proud to say that I am Ukrainian."

I 3. "Yes, I am half Ukrainian, half Jewish, but at the same time, my mother is half Ukrainian, half Russian. Probably for the most part, I am Ukrainian, but I know for sure that Jewish blood flows somewhere in me Something like this, a Ukrainian with Jewish blood.

First of all, we note that half of the respondents either both or one of the parents were of Russian origin, and before Russia's aggression they were inclined to identify themselves with Russians. At the same time, regardless of ethnicity, after the aggression, all the respondents definitely felt like citizens of Ukraine, in other words, a civic Ukrainian identity was sharply manifested. Personal experience of tragic experiences prompted all informants to use the Ukrainian language more often.

The study showed that although knowledge of the Russian language was considered by some as a factor that would help them adapt to a new country, at the same time, a certain prevalence of pro-Russian ideas in the Russian-speaking environment contributes to an even greater civic Ukrainian identity. Informants had to deal with the fact that not knowing the Latvian language in some cases made it difficult for them to solve some issues, but the remark "Sorry, I'm from Ukraine" in the absolute majority of cases changed the situation to an orientation towards help or vice versa to accept help. Local residents understand the problems of Ukrainians both at the level of ordinary people and at the level of government.

I 5. "I understand that Latvians who come to the dentist are determined to be spoken to in Latvian. I asked my assistant to tell them that I am a Russian-speaking doctor from Ukraine and, unfortunately, I cannot speak Latvian yet. The language barrier does not prevent them from thanking me after the reception.

Along with attempts to preserve their own culture, there is an unequivocal tendency to study the Latvian language and Latvian culture. First of all, we note the interest in the Latvian culture. The country has

made it possible to get to know the country through the introduction of free trips around the country. Differences between cultures rather indicate the level of adaptation of migrant women, and the commonality in cultures is perceived through the prism of gratitude for help and support.

I 3. “I think that having moved to another country, it became possible to look, as it were, into someone else's “garden”. And I think about why I am here and what I am doing here for my country, what I will learn.”

Most of the informants intend to return home.

I 3. “Then, when they stop shelling Ukraine at all, then I will return to Ukraine, later, when the risk will be reduced to nothing. Right now, Odessa is quite calm, except for air raid warnings both day and night (for example, from 3:00 to 3:45). I myself was not in Odessa with sirens. I can’t imagine how you can sleep under a siren, how you can run to the basement under a siren. I have only one friend who is still running into the vestibule when the siren howls, but she gave birth to a child on February 27».

Most likely, Mariupol residents will remain in Latvia.

I 8. “Definitely not in Mariupol (we are not returning). I don’t see the point (to return) to the territory of Ukraine either, because it is not known what will happen next. Avoid one to get into another? Yes, it's scary, scary. This animal fears, when the blood freezes in your veins, that you don’t understand how much you have left to live and, if it does, then it’s better to let it be right away - so that no one suffers. God forbid you to go through this again. The only thing we want is to change the status from temporary protection to family reunification, and since my husband has been working here for a long time, he has a working residence permit here.”

Thus, gratefully accepting help from Latvia, understanding not simple problems, including those related to ethnic relations within the country, most informants feel like representatives of another country to which they want to return.

Having conducted free, axial and selective coding of informants' narratives, we specified the structures of concepts describing the semantic messages of forced Ukrainian migrants. Migrants are forced to live in three social dimensions - their country, the state of temporary residence and their own life. This in itself creates the basis for transitive or intermediate identification.

There is an interest in establishing criteria or even a special categorization. We have seen the resource criteria: competent-incompetent (language, legislation of the country), bounded-unbounded (material resources, emotional state), secured - unsecured (living, connections, resources), as well as special criteria: active - passive; independent - non-independent, busy - unoccupied, emotional - non-emotional.

Otherwise, the transitory identity of the victimized refugees is associated with objective and subjective officials. Ukrainian women grew up in different countries with different minds of life, mine, cultures, traditions, and legal provisions of life. The hour changes people, behavioral patterns, habits, habits and habits, and new contexts make adjustments to the value system and behavioral style. On the other hand, refugees reveal their agency when a decision is made and do not lose their roots. The war further consolidated the nation and marked the national, Ukrainian identity and new developments and patterns of behavior intertwined with the particular structures that had already taken shape.

Thus, transit identity is a chain of cumulative proof of the independence of a person in his or her formation, the rights and availability of benefits before birth, and the insignificance of capacity and future stability. The vision of the concept of transit identity and the transformation of its particularities can become a guarantee of the success of the return of seduced migrants to the Fatherland, the war reform of the Ukrainian marriage, and the further integration of Ukraine into the EU.

Conclusion

Our study involved women with different military experiences and with different periods of decision-making about moving to a particular country, to a certain extent corresponding to their needs and capabilities. The results obtained allow us to explain the rather active position of internally displaced persons from Ukraine. This means that strong-willed, professionally trained, highly organized women are temporarily pouring into the society of the host country, who not only gratefully accept help, support, and sympathy, but actively try to solve their problems on their own in cooperation with other refugees.

With a sufficiently high probability of their safe return to their homeland soon, both countries face the problem of humanitarian support, spiritual development, and the national identity of forced Ukrainian migrants, especially their children. In the conditions of the beginning processes of Ukraine's integration into the EU, not only the integration of refugees into the European space as new residents of the EU countries but also the provision of psychologically comfortable return to Ukraine of temporary migrants as people with personal experience of living according to European standards is of particular importance. At the same time, migration processes can become productive for the host country in terms of forming loyalty to their culture in the present and future.

Forced migrants live in three dimensions - the social conditions of their country, the social conditions of the state of temporary stay, and the circumstances of their lives. This is what creates the conditions for transit identity, a temporary, intermediate identification process. Transit identity can be considered as a condition for ensuring personal security, which is based on the search for the common and different in two countries and accounting for their advantages in the organization of one's own life.

In our second study, the key category "Ukrainian civic identity" and the subcategory "gender identity" were identified. The criteria or dimensions of personal categorization are of interest.

We have identified two groups of criteria for personal categorization of forced migrants: resource and personal criteria. Migrants assess, first of all, their resource capabilities on such scales as competent-incompetent (language, country legislation), limited–unlimited (material resources, emotional state), secured – unsecured (housing, connections, resources), In addition, they evaluate their personal potential according to such criteria as: active- passive; independent - non-independent, busy - not busy, emotional – unemotional.

Thus, the transitivity of the identity of forced refugees is associated with objective and subjective factors. Ukrainian women moved to different countries with different living conditions, languages, cultures, traditions and legal conditions of life. On the one hand, new contexts change people's behavior patterns, habits, skills, and values. On the other hand, refugees show their subjectivity in decision-making and do not lose touch with their homeland. The war further united the nation and strengthened the Ukrainian identity, and new habits were woven into already-formed personal structures.

Consequently, transit identity is a person's experience of uncertainty about his position, rights, means of existence, and the future. The concept of transit identity can contribute to the success of migrant return programs, post-war reform of Ukrainian society, and further integration of Ukraine into the EU.

It seems promising to continue researching the influence of social and autobiographical contexts on the attitude towards temporary resettlement in another country and the direction and intensity of attitudes toward integration into the Latvian society of refugees from Ukraine. Of particular importance is the study of the strategies of refugee mothers in relation to their children, primarily the preservation of their own Ukrainian identity and the assimilation of the culture of the host country, relying on large samples that allow for multigroup analysis and the use of quantitative methods that would offer support for inferential statistics to judge features of their self-determination with the corresponding variables, for example, gender, generational cohort, education, social media, and more.

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