

INVASION OF UKRAINE:

A STUDY OF THE WORLD'S FASTEST-GROWING REFUGEE CRISIS

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Abstract

The refugee crisis in Ukraine presents a complex humanitarian challenge, exacerbated by ongoing conflicts and geopolitical tensions. This report provides a comprehensive analysis of the current situation, focusing on the impact of the crisis on displaced populations, host communities, and the national infrastructure. Drawing on a combination of primary and secondary data sources, including interviews, surveys, and official reports, the report highlights the multifaceted nature of the crisis. The report examines the causes of displacement and investigates the patterns of displacement within Ukraine's borders and to neighboring countries. Furthermore, it delves into the efforts of international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and governmental bodies in providing aid and support to refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has given rise to a grave humanitarian emergency. Russia's actions have triggered a massive surge of refugees into nearby nations and have worsened global food insufficiency. Since the onset of the conflict, numerous individuals have been forced to relocate within Ukraine's borders. Between February and September 2022, almost 7 million people (about twice the population of Oklahoma) were designated as internally displaced persons (IDPs.) The international community, including entities such as the United States and the European Union, has extended substantial humanitarian aid to both Ukraine and other impacted countries. Humanitarian groups are delivering crucial life-saving support and protective services to those in need, including IDPs, evacuees, and those affected by the conflict.

The United Nations approximates that 18 million people (about the population of New York) within Ukraine will require assistance and safeguarding, particularly interventions tailored for the winter season. By November 2022, over 7.8 million refugees (about twice the population of Oklahoma), including a notable number of children, had fled the hostilities in Ukraine. Poland has taken in the highest count of refugees among European nations, followed by Hungary, Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia.

1.2 About the Report

This project focuses on exploring project management methodologies, tools, and techniques used in the software development industry. Through the analysis of real-world case studies, the study aims to identify key factors that contribute to project success, such as scope definition, resource allocation, risk mitigation, and stakeholder engagement. By understanding the interplay between project management strategies and the unique challenges of software development, the research aims to provide actionable insights that can improve project outcomes and foster sustainable practices.

Chapter 2

Refugees before the Invasion

The Russo-Ukrainian War, which includes the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation and the war in the Donbas, had already resulted in over two million refugees and internally displaced persons since 2014 before the invasion. These refugees have been referred to as Europe's forgotten refugees by some media due to their cool reception in the European Union, comparatively low asylum claim success rate, and media neglect. More than a million of the pre-2022 refugees, mainly from Donbas, had gone to Russia between 2014 and 2016, while the number of people displaced within Ukraine had grown to 1.6 million people by early March 2016. As of late May 2022, an estimated 8 million Ukrainians had been displaced within the country, while over 8.2 million refugees fleeing Ukraine had been recorded across Europe. The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) estimated that Russia has taken in three million Ukrainian refugees in the past 12 months.

Chapter 3

Refugees after the Invasion

3.1 Background

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 has had devastating consequences for the Ukrainian population, leading to the displacement of over 13 million individuals (about twice the population of Arizona). This includes 6 million refugees (about twice the population of Arkansas) scattered across Europe and more than 5 million people (about twice the population of Mississippi) internally displaced within Ukraine's borders. Reports indicate that certain Ukrainian billionaires had foreseen the conflict and initiated their departure from the country. These initial movements were driven by individuals possessing resources and networks that facilitated their mobility.

3.2 UN Response

The possibility of returning to their homes soon remains uncertain due to ongoing hostilities, insecurity, and widespread destruction in their native regions. Two recently released reports by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) underline this uncertainty. Refugees expressing a desire to return in the coming three months were older individuals, those separated from family members still in Ukraine, or those facing exclusion.

Refugees from Ukraine recorded in Europe¹
5,882,100
<small>Last updated 8 August 2023 - Source: UNHCR collation of statistics made available by the authorities</small>
Refugees from Ukraine recorded beyond Europe²
358,300
<small>Last updated 22 July 2023 - Source: UNHCR collation of statistics made available by the authorities</small>
Refugees from Ukraine recorded globally
6,240,400
<small>Last updated 8 August 2023 - Source: UNHCR collation of statistics made available by the authorities</small>

In comparison to past conflicts, the full-scale Russian invasion prompted a notable mass movement of people. This was facilitated by safe exit options, a receptive attitude in Europe, and an existing culture of migration, in contrast to scenarios like the Syrian conflict where European reception was mixed due to cultural and political factors.

Chapter 4

Refugee flow from Ukraine

4.1 Response by European Countries

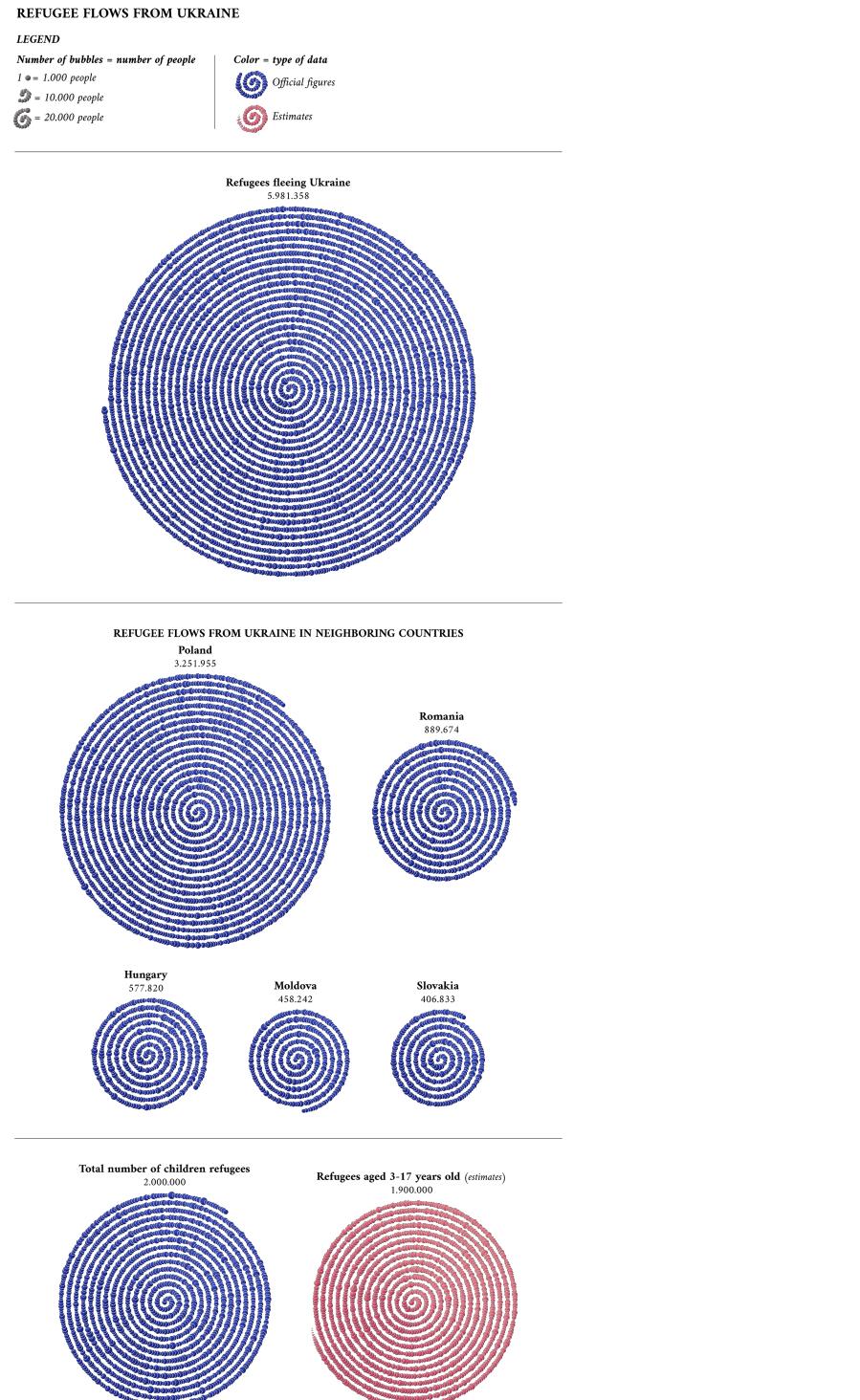
Poland has emerged as the primary destination for Ukrainian immigrants, influenced by a history of labor immigration from Ukraine. The country currently hosts the largest population of Ukrainian refugees, followed by Russia, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Moldova. Survey data from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) suggests that the presence of relatives and friends in these countries has been a significant factor guiding destination choices for Ukrainian migrants.

Slovakia has also gained prominence as a destination due to factors like student migration and the growth of the Ukrainian diaspora. Mobility for males was hindered due to conscription, resulting in most migrants being women, children, and the elderly, with a sizable portion being elderly and disabled individuals.

4.2 Countries featured in Refugees Response

Country	Data Date	Refugees from Ukraine recorded in country as of date ⁽¹⁾	Refugees from Ukraine who applied for Asylum, TP or similar national protection schemes to date ⁽²⁾	Border crossings from Ukraine since 24 February 2022 ⁽⁴⁾	Border crossings to Ukraine since 24 February 2022 ⁽⁵⁾
Bulgaria	7/11/2023	162,935	164,470	Not applicable	Not applicable
Czech Republic	7/30/2023	358,225	543,190	Not applicable	Not applicable
Estonia	6/5/2023	48,590	48,590	Not applicable	Not applicable
Hungary	8/7/2023	49,375	36,930	3,234,720	Data not available
Latvia	7/25/2023	32,315	32,325	Not applicable	Not applicable
Lithuania	8/4/2023	48,425	79,395	Not applicable	Not applicable
Poland	7/27/2023	968,390	1,639,725	13,698,045	11,381,315
Republic of Moldova	8/7/2023	117,340	3,195	894,820	561,920
Romania	8/6/2023	95,160	139,995	3,069,200	2,517,530
Slovakia	7/30/2023	105,600	122,480	1,584,010	1,397,220
Total		1,986,355	2,810,295	22,480,790	15,857,985

4.3 Visualization of Ukraine Refugee Crisis by Country



Sources: UNHCR, AP.
Total refugees and refugees in neighboring countries data as May 10, 2022.
Total number of children refugees data as April 11, 2022.

Chapter 5

Needs and Challenges

5.1 Shelter

The refugees had multiple needs, of which shelter was a key priority for many new arrivals. Some initially came to live with family and friends already in Poland. However, many did not have a destination in mind, and those without family support networks locally were likely to be more vulnerable. The homeless refugees were temporarily housed in repurposed shopping centres, office buildings, or large-tented facilities.

5.2 Risk of Disease

Another concern was the risk of infectious diseases. Preconflict, childhood vaccination uptake was suboptimal. In 2020, 85 percent of children in Ukraine received their first dose of measles vaccine, less than the recommended 95 percent coverage needed for population herd immunity.⁴ The conflict has further hindered vaccination programmes in Ukraine. In the worst conflict-affected areas, the risk of disease outbreaks was heightened by the lack of access to water, sanitation and hygiene, crowded conditions in bomb shelters and refugee centres, and disrupted vaccination programmes. Mobile refugee populations may also enable the spread of infectious diseases

5.3 Access to Healthcare

Whilst Poland has offered similar levels of healthcare provision to the Ukrainian refugees as provided for Polish citizens, there were still issues. Refugees with little or no funds could not afford co-payment charges for prescriptions. Some used medications (e.g. antiretrovirals and anti-TB medications) that were not licensed or available

in Poland. There was a risk of disruption for chronic disease treatment, worsened by the lack of patient health records.

5.4 Mental Health

A lot of psychological distress was also reported by the refugees who were affected by family separation, loss, fear and worry about the future. Their experience of conflict-related trauma and psychological stress differed considerably, and at least one in five women were reported to have had suffered gender-based violence. Psychological distress surfaced as behavioural issues in children, anxiety and sleep disturbances in adults. Various stress factors reported included the lack of ability to meet basic needs, lack of information and accommodation concerns. Access to treatment for adults and children with pre-existing severe mental health conditions and psycho-social disabilities was a concern due to the lack of established referral pathways, language barriers and access requirements for clinical reassessment.

5.5 Informational Needs

Refugees had substantial and diverse informational needs ranging from legal advice, transport and accommodation issues to advice on accessing services and health care. At transit centres, informational posters and advice desks were provided for refugees. SIM cards were also distributed free at reception centres, which helped refugees access sources of information, as well as stay in touch with family and friends. There were some innovations too, such as the use of QR codes and smartphone applications to enable translations and interpretations.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The ongoing humanitarian and refugee crisis in Ukraine is caused by the conflict with Russia. The scale of this crisis is immense, with millions of people displaced and in desperate need of assistance, resulting in the loss of thousands of lives and the displacement of millions of people.

The crisis has disrupted livelihoods, destroyed infrastructure and services, and exacerbated food insecurity. The humanitarian crisis resulting from the conflict has been the subject of virtual roundtables and reports by organizations such as McKinsey, ODI, and CRS Reports.

The world community faces a gargantuan task in aiding, sheltering, and hosting those affected by the conflict. The crisis has also resulted in a massive refugee flow to neighbouring countries, with over 3 million people seeking refuge. The ongoing destruction of infrastructure and services continues to impact the well-being of human lives, making the war an ongoing humanitarian crisis.

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