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The Decision-Making of Refugees from Ukraine under Temporary Protection Schemes - Where Did They Go in Europe and Why? The Factors in the Choice of Host Country for Refugees from Ukraine in Europe, Under EU or Similar Temporary Protection Schemes

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The Decision-Making of Refugees from Ukraine under Temporary Protection Schemes – Where Did They Go in Europe and Why?

The Factors in the Choice of Host Country for Refugees from Ukraine in Europe, Under EU or Similar Temporary Protection Schemes

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Introduction

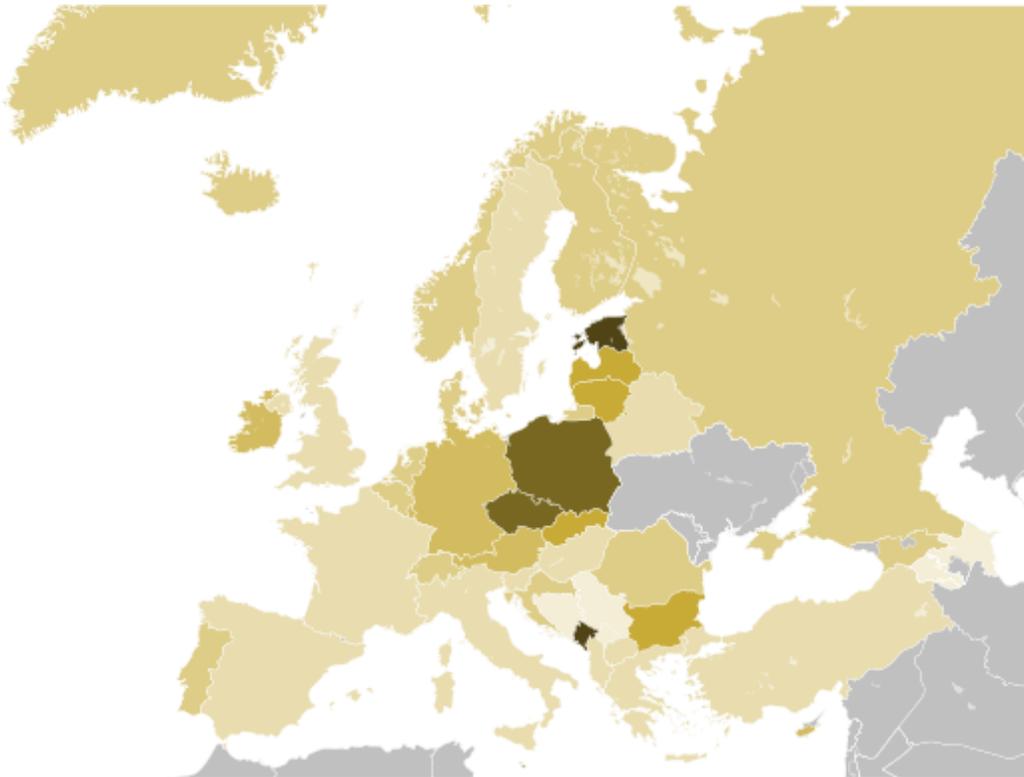
The February 24, 2022, full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia was followed by the biggest migratory crisis the European continent has seen since the Second World War. As of March 7, 2023, one year after the beginning of the war, 8,108,448 people fled Ukraine¹. This surpasses in number previous crises, including the 2015 refugee crisis (mostly from Syria) or the 1990s refugee flows from ex-Yugoslavia. As air links were interrupted from the very first day of the war, people went in the first place to Ukraine's neighboring countries: Belarus, Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Moldova, Romania, Russia, and Slovakia. Distance was therefore cited as an important factor of destination, as Russia and Poland received the highest number of refugees, with respectively more than 2.5 and 1.5 million refugees (after one year). However, after one year, the repartition in Europe followed a different pattern, with the presence of people fleeing Ukraine in more distant countries in Western Europe, and even in North America².

A presentation of refugee flows from Ukraine with the number of refugees in each country in proportion to its total population, gives very different insights than an overview based on the sheer number of refugees. This gives a more appropriate view of the relative importance of refugee flows for each country.

¹ Figure including refugees recorded in Belarus and Russia. UNHCR, Regional Bureau for Europe, "Ukraine Situation Flash Update #42."

² On December 21, 2022, more than 220 000 Ukrainians had arrived in the US. House, "Remarks by President Biden and President Zelenskyy of Ukraine in Joint Press Conference."

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE	POPULATION (2021, World Bank)	REFUGEE_SHARE
Albania	2686	2811666	0,10%
Armenia	511	2790974	0,02%
Austria	93579	8955797	1,04%
Azerbaijan	4928	10137750	0,05%
Belgium	68304	11592952	0,59%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	153	3270943	0,00%
Bulgaria	153059	6877743	2,23%
Croatia	20796	3899000	0,53%
Cyprus	21359	1244188	1,72%
Czechia	490802	10505772	4,67%
Denmark	36756	5856733	0,63%
Estonia	67243	1330932	5,05%
Finland	49726	5541017	0,90%
France	118994	67749632	0,18%
Georgia	25701	3708610	0,69%
Germany	1055323	83196078	1,27%
Greece	20955	10641221	0,20%
Hungary	34248	9709891	0,35%
Iceland	2239	372520	0,60%
Ireland	75260	5033165	1,50%
Italy	169837	59109668	0,29%
Latvia	45687	1884490	2,42%
Lithuania	74611	2800839	2,66%
Luxembourg	6756	640064	1,06%
Malta	1744	518536	0,34%
Moldova	109630	2615199	4,19%
Montenegro	33954	619211	5,48%
Netherlands	89730	17533044	0,51%
North Macedonia	6483	2065092	0,31%
Norway	39931	5408320	0,74%
Poland	1563386	37747124	4,14%
Portugal	58043	10325147	0,56%
Romania	115047	19119880	0,60%
Serbia and Kosovo	2989	8620364	0,03%
Slovakia	109828	5447247	2,02%
Slovenia	8874	2108079	0,42%
Spain	167726	47415750	0,35%
Sweden	50740	10415811	0,49%
Switzerland	80773	8703405	0,93%
Türkiye	95874	84775404	0,11%
United Kingdom	162700	67026000	0,24%



Share of refugees from Ukraine recorded in European countries, in proportion to the population of the host country.
Sources: UNHCR (2022-2023), World Bank (countries' population in 2021)

0>0,1%	AM, AZ, BA, RS/XX		
0,1>0,5%	AL, BY, ES, FR, GB, GR, HU, IT, MT, MK, SI, SE, TR		
0,5>1%	BE, CH, DK, FI, GE, HR, IS, NL, NO, PT, RO, RU		
1>2%	AT, CY, DE, IE, LU		
2>3%	BG, LV, LT, SK		
3>4%			
4>5%	CZ, MD, PL		
<5%	EE, ME		

It appears that certain European countries welcomed a number of refugees equivalent to 5% of their population (Estonia or Montenegro) while others, less than 0.5% (Azerbaijan, Serbia and Kosovo, Armenia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina). Among Western European countries, striking discrepancies were observed, as for example, France hosted fewer refugees than the Netherlands relative to their population (0.18% in France, 0.51% in the Netherlands). This initial observation is the starting point of my thesis, as I wanted to understand the factors behind this repartition.

Understanding the repartition of refugees supposes an understanding of their decision-making. The first assumption to be made, if studying decision-making, is that the people fleeing Ukraine had a level of agency and decided on their own to leave the country. This assumption, however, did not apply to every refugee from Ukraine.

Forced migration to Russia was documented by several organizations, among which a report by Human Rights Watch³ and an investigation conducted by Associated Press⁴. Moreover, Russia was accused by the International Criminal Court of “unlawful deportation of children from occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation”⁵. Due to these accusations towards Russia, I decided to remove this country from my analysis, as well as its ally country Belarus. One more reason for their removal is the unavailability of actualized data on the number of refugees in Russia and Belarus, these countries providing it less frequently (the last figure for Russia dated back to October 3, 2022). The assumption of level of agency is kept only for remaining European countries, with the assertion that most of the refugees leaving Ukraine for Europe, apart from Belarus and Russia, made the choice on their own, even if the choice was made under severe circumstances. I also make this assumption based on the nature itself of the warm welcome Ukrainians received in Europe. Indeed, they were granted a particular status, the Temporary Protection Directive, created in 2001, which was activated for the first time on February 24, 2022⁶. Temporary Protection allows for an immediate range of rights, including residence, employment, social welfare, or education, and it allows for a common policy among the EU. On the contrary, the refugee status is determined on the basis of every country and means that every asylum seeker has to go through a procedure to obtain refugee status, which can take up to six months, during which time they do not enjoy full refugee rights⁷. Temporary Protection allows immediate rights after the registration in the first host country. Ukrainians also benefited from the 90 days visa-free regime in the Schengen area since 2017. Therefore, this range of legal measures supposed a wider level of agency for refugees from Ukraine in choosing their destination country, they could easier travel within Europe than asylum seekers from other parts of the world. Certain countries in Europe, whether EU or non-fully EU members, also created similar schemes to the Temporary Protection, that is why I included them in my analysis. For

³ Wille and Lokshina, “‘We Had No Choice’, ‘Filtration’ and the Crime of Forcibly Transferring Ukrainian Civilians to Russia.”

⁴ Hinnant et al., “The Mouth of a Bear.”

⁵ International Criminal Court, “Situation in Ukraine.”

⁶ European Commission, “Temporary Protection.”

⁷ Wagner, “The War in Ukraine and the Renaissance of Temporary Protection - Why This Might Be the Only Way to Go.”

example, Denmark, which has an opt-out in legal issues, did not take part in the TP Directive⁸, however, it “introduced a special law that strongly resembles the directive”⁹. Second, I assume that the warm welcome of Ukrainians by the European population increased even more their level of agency, as they faced less barriers from the host population. David de Coninck gave hints on the reasons for this warmer welcome: Ukraine and European countries “share a similar value system”, in particular in taking steps to joining the EU and NATO, they participate in similar “collective rituals” (e.g., sports events), they are geographically close and may share the same fear towards the aggressor (Russia), and most of all, “Ukraine’s ethnic and religious composition more closely resembles those of other European countries”¹⁰. For this entire set of legal and social reasons, I supposed that most of the refugees had a relatively wide choice when going to Europe.

The second assumption is that refugees from Ukraine went mostly to Europe, therefore I removed from my analysis migration flows to other continents, in particular America. First, North America represents a minor destination for people from Ukraine (3%¹¹), so its removal did not affect considerably the results. Second, North America is not covered by the UNHCR in the “Ukrainian Refugee Situation” which does not help to compile comparable data between countries. The spatial analysis of my thesis will include all European countries, EU or non-EU member states, extending to the Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia), and Türkiye. Third, focusing on European countries will also facilitate comparisons in terms of data for the various decision-making factors (independent variables). For the last reason, I excluded Liechtenstein from my analysis, which also received a minor share of refugees, because data on this country is hardly available (for example, the World Bank does not have actualized data on it).

⁸ Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 of 4 March 2022 establishing the existence of a mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine within the meaning of Article 5 of Directive 2001/55/EC, and having the effect of introducing temporary protection.

⁹ “New Danish Law for Those Fleeing Ukraine Mirrors EU Temporary Protection Directive | European Website on Integration.”

¹⁰ De Coninck, “The Refugee Paradox During Wartime in Europe.”

¹¹ Considering that 221 000 went to the US, and 32 000 went to Canada, related to the 8,108,448 in Europe as of March 7, 2023.

The third assumption for my research is taking the Ukrainian population as a unique dependent variable, without population segmentation. It means that I will not be able to assess if certain people from Ukraine chose a certain country because of, e.g., their socio-economic features. The main reason is that this data is not available for the entire population who fled Ukraine. Only certain insights, in particular reports conducted by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), helped to understand the composition of the Ukrainian refugee population for limited samples. The most complete was realized between May and November 2022, by the UNHCR, interviewing 43 571 refugees in Ukraine's neighboring countries (Poland, Romania, Moldova, Slovakia, Belarus, Hungary, and Bulgaria)¹². The main findings showed that 99% were Ukrainian, 85% were women, most of them were between 35 and 59 years old (53%), most of them had a higher education level (47% went to a university, 96% attended at least secondary school), most of them were employed (73%) before leaving Ukraine, only 14% were pensioners. Moreover, their main places of origin were Odesa (12%), Kharkiv (12%), Kyiv (10%), Dnipro (8%), Donetsk (8%), Mykolaïvska (7%), Zaporizhka (6%), and Kherson (5%). This means that most of them came from Eastern parts of Ukraine, or from Kyiv. Even if segmentation is not possible at the European scale, these insights based on a large sample allowed me to select interviewees who most closely match these socio-economic features.

The fourth and last assumption, resulting from the third (no segmentation) is that I considered only the pull effects which drove the refugees to European countries. A traditional academic distinction was made between push and pull effects, defined for example by Rawaa Laajimi and Julie Le Gallo: "Push factors are the reasons that forcefully push people into migration from their origin regions, while pull factors are the ones that forcefully attract them to destination regions"¹³. I chose to focus on the factors which are attracting refugees from Ukraine to destination regions (pull factors), without taking into account why they left Ukraine (push factors). The reason is that I assume most of them left the country because of war consequences, though other push factors may coexist, as economic motives. The reason for focusing on pull factors is because

¹² UNHCR, "Profiles, Needs, and Intentions of Refugees from Ukraine."

¹³ Laajimi and Le Gallo, "Push and Pull Factors in Tunisian Internal Migration," 773.

my research question focused on destination countries. Focusing on push factors would also suppose a thin knowledge of the refugee population composition, for example to see if socio-economic motives drove certain categories abroad, which is not possible without segmentation.

In order to frame the repartition of refugees, I chose to take into account the repartition of refugees from Ukraine as of February 2023, one year after the beginning of the 2022 conflict and the migration crisis. This date allows to take into account refugee relocation movements, and to consider medium- to long-term decision-making. Taking into account the distribution at the start of the conflict would probably have resulted in a greater concentration in the countries bordering Ukraine.

The research question is formulated as follows: What factors determined the country of destination of the people fleeing Ukraine to Europe, during the first year of the 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia?

A mixed-method methodology was used to answer the question, including both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Each factor was analyzed using, on the one hand, a statistical analysis of regression analysis, and on the other hand, insights from interviews conducted with ten Ukrainian refugees, from February to June 2023. I chose a mixed method in order to draw a comprehensive analysis of the repartition of refugees while taking into account the particularities of individual journeys. The set of factors chosen was based on the literature review of existing academic research on refugees' or asylum seekers' decision-making.

Questioning the repartition of refugees from Ukraine may address several issues. In the first place, it completes a research gap on Ukrainian refugees' decision-making after February 2022, which is probably due to the recent nature of the crisis. Second, this could help governments or organizations to adapt their refugee policies. This work could help to better understand a migratory crisis within the European continent, as most of the relevant research was made on inter-continental migrations. This work finally aims to counteract preconceived ideas about refugees' migration choices, in particular ideas of migrations driven solely by economic or cultural motivations.

I will first elaborate on the existing academic literature, before establishing the research methodology I used, developing both quantitative and qualitative methods. I will then explain in more detail the data I gathered to build dependent and independent variables. Chapter 1 examines the role of the network of refugees from Ukraine and assesses its high significance as a factor for choosing a country to seek refuge in. In Chapter 2, the focus shifts to the geographical factor, considering how the importance of distance diminishes as conflicts persist. Chapter 3 delves into the economic factors, assessing the impact of work and education expectations during times of war. Chapter 4 explores the limited impact of institutional responses from host countries on the repatriation of refugees, in particular financial assistance. Chapter 5 examines the concept of "cultural proximity" between Ukraine and European countries, investigating the significance of language and lifestyle compatibility in decision-making. Chapter 6 considers the importance of the host population's support in the choice of refugees to settle in there. Lastly, a more general analysis of refugees from Ukraine decision-making as a multi-layered process imbricating several factors is made in Chapter 7.

Literature Review

1. Can People Fleeing Ukraine Be Considered Refugees?

There is an academic debate on the denomination of people fleeing their country, and their categorization under the terms of “migrant”, “refugee” or other classifications. The idea of classifying is itself problematic since it presupposes a stable identity for the person on the move. Before studying the decision-making of “refugees” from Ukraine, it is important to consider the implications of this appellation.

One of the most discussed stances was that of Erika Feller, former Director of Department of International Protection of the UNHCR, who asserted that “refugees are not migrants”, as an association of both terms would be “dangerous, and detrimental to refugee protection”¹⁴, because of a risk of refoulement, but also because this association may lead to a growing unpopularity of refugees. This position, held by international organizations¹⁵, has a historical background, according to Katy Long, who found that “treating refugees as migrants in the 1920s and 1930s failed to ensure their protection from persecution because their admission was entirely dependent upon economic criteria”¹⁶. It is only the 1951 Geneva Convention which legally separated both categories.

Nonetheless, a broad distinction solely between two categories – refugee or migrant – leads to categorizations that are as yet imprecise. Michael Collyer and Hein de Haas pointed out that new categories appeared, as “transit migration”, which may also be misleading as “ignoring that journeys may take years, are generally made in stages, often have no fixed end-points”¹⁷. They reminded the political character of such categorizations, which “allow states to maintain the rigidity of social categorizations, even across border”¹⁸. Heaven Crawley and Dimitris Skleparis also questioned the

¹⁴ Feller, “Refugees Are Not Migrants,” 27.

¹⁵ UNHCR, “UNHCR Viewpoint.”

¹⁶ Long, “When Refugees Stopped Being Migrants,” 4.

¹⁷ Collyer and de Haas, “Developing Dynamic Categorisations of Transit Migration,” 479.

¹⁸ Collyer and de Haas, 468.

new multiple denominations that appeared, such as “people in distress”, “distress migrants” or “survival migrants” as they do not encompass fully the experience of people concerned¹⁹.

To overcome the limitations of categorizing people on the move, a recent article by Oliver Bakewell encompassed the terms of displacement and migration under three different senses: “as a process, condition, or category”²⁰. *Process* encompasses the level of agency, the rationales for migration, the timescale of migration, the degree of change involved, the extent of migration (individual, household, generational...) and the level of institutional engagement. *Condition* refers to the “state of being” of the person, but Bakewell specified that even a person who never moved can self-identify as “displaced”. *Category* is the label attributed, which is “not limited to the legal sphere” but can be attributed by “organizations, such as international humanitarian agencies, non-governmental organizations, service providers, and advocacy groups”²¹. Applying these three layers – process, condition and category – to people fleeing from Ukraine may be useful, in particular to tackle the idea of stable identities, to consider their journey and to question their categorization by states and international organizations.

The public discourse assigned the people fleeing Ukraine the label of “refugees”, however in legal terms, they fall under the EU Temporary Protection directive, which gave them different rights than the refugee status. In particular, the refugee status does not imply immediate rights when the person crossed the border, and “a person cannot be employed for six months while his/her application for refugee status is being considered”²², which makes the Temporary Protection status more attractive.

Categorization, then, in the case of people fleeing Ukraine, is at least twofold: “refugees” or “under Temporary Protection”, but the term “migrant” is rarely used to label them. *Condition* is also dependent on the individual, as certain people from Ukraine self-identify as refugees, other do not. In this thesis, I may use the term

¹⁹ Crawley and Skleparis, “Refugees, Migrants, Neither, Both.”

²⁰ Bakewell, “Conceptualising Displacement and Migration,” 19.

²¹ Bakewell, 24.

²² “How to Apply for a Shelter in Europe: Temporary Protection vs Refugee Status.”

“refugee” to designate people under Temporary Protection, as most of the people I interviewed self-identified as “refugees” (*bezheny*, in Russian), and that the UNHCR used both designations. However, the term of people fleeing Ukraine under Temporary Protection (or similar schemes) is preferred, as it implies different rights.

2. Existing Literature on Destination Factors of Refugees from Ukraine

The first layer of literature deals directly with recent works that identified factors of destination for the Ukrainian refugees since 2014 or February 2022. Solely one academic work addressed the role of the pre-War network of Ukrainians in their destination choice²³. The authors used Facebook Connectedness, a tool from the company Meta to measure links between users of different regions of the world, they found a correlation between the diaspora repatriation and the connectedness Ukraine’s users have on Facebook. I will include this tool in my quantitative analysis. Moreover, previous research by Irina Kuznecova studied why part of the Ukrainian population went to Russia after the 2014 Donbas War²⁴. Conducting 60 interviews in 2016-2017 in different regions of Russia, she concluded that the most important factors were (by order of importance) the availability of relatives and friends, the intervention of Russian humanitarian services, economic motives, personal safety considerations and the Russian citizenship of a family member.

The quasi-absence of articles directly answering my research question can be explained because the conflict is recent (less than a year), and the available data is still limited. That is why utilizing a methodological broader second layer will be necessary.

3. Academic Literature on Destination Factors of Refugees and Asylum Seekers from Other Countries Than Ukraine

The second theoretical layer pertains to academic literature which identifies destination factors for refugees from other backgrounds than the Russo-Ukrainian War.

²³ Minora et al., “Migration Patterns, Friendship Networks, and the Diaspora.”

²⁴ Kuznecova, “Bezheny Iz Ukrainy.”

This category proved to be very broad, so that the following list will not be exhaustive: I tried to identify theories which were the most recent or the most quoted elsewhere. Much of the literature on other conflicts concerns refugees or asylum-seekers from Sub-Saharan African and Middle Eastern countries. Even though a lot of characteristics (country, status, distance, path, socio-cultural traits ...) from other countries' refugees are certainly very different than characteristics of Ukrainian refugees, this field of study will be helpful to draw up methodological protocols to address my research question. I divided this field of research into quantitative and qualitative research. This division allows a general overview of methods that will be re-used in my research, in particular, quantitative studies used regression analysis methods to assess the importance of a set of independent variables on a dependent variable (depending on the samples and the timeline: either Ordinary Least Squares, Negative Binomial Regression, Fixed Effects or Random Effects Models). I will use the first method, OLS (or Multiple Linear Regression) for the quantitative analysis part.

a) Quantitative Research Academic Literature

A first approach to identify the factors of destination is setting up of a comprehensive set of variables that may influence the decision-making of refugees or asylum seekers. Eric Neumayer aimed to explain the “relative attractiveness of destination countries”, focusing on European countries as destinations²⁵. He combined different hypotheses for choosing a destination country, with a utilitarian approach considering the refugees or asylum seekers as “utility maximizers”, which means that they are perceived as individuals making rational choices during the migration decision process. He aimed to measure “economic attractiveness, generosity of welfare provisions, deterrent policy measures, hostility towards foreigners and asylum seekers, existing asylum communities, colonial and language links as well as geographical proximity”. To this end, he built an algorithm to measure how twelve factors impacted the destination decision-making of the individuals²⁶. His results showed that richer destination

²⁵ Neumayer, “Asylum Destination Choice.”

²⁶ The factors are as follows: the share of asylum seekers who came before to the destination country, the recognition rate of past asylum seekers, the GDP, the GDP growth rate, the unemployment rate, the part of social welfare expenditures of one's country related to its GDP, its status as a former colonizing

countries received a higher share of asylum demands, but that other indicators as GDP growth rate, unemployment rate or social and welfare expenditures were insignificant. Electoral success of right-wing populist parties resulted in a lower share of asylum seekers, and left-wing parties in governments of destination countries only had a small influence on the number of refugee arrivals. A higher recognition rate in the previous year also affected this number positively. Other positive factors were the former colonies, the same language, and the geographical proximity.

Another inductive study was made by Will Moore and Stephen Shellman who also searched for factors influencing destinations choices²⁷. It added on Neumayer's research by examining flows of refugees not only to European countries, because according to him Neumayer's results can conduct to biases as European countries constitute "only a small fraction of the countries in which refugees seek asylum". Their results showed the importance of the geographical factor, as "refugees most often flee to the nearest port in the storm". They added that when refugees reached further countries, it is because they either "had colonial ties to their origin country" or "had signed the UN refugee treaties". They concluded, as Neumayer, that higher wages and democratic institutions were not determinant factors.

Also taking multiple factors into account, Liesl Riddle and Cynthia Buckley made a study over the case of forced migration of Armenian refugees in the Russian Federation²⁸. They supported the utilitarian argument in favor of freedom of choice of refugees concerning their destination. Using the data from official sources of the USSR and Russia, they found that Armenian resettlements in Russia were made where there was already a high concentration of Armenian residents (correlating with the network effect), but also in places closer to Armenia and where the cost of living was lower (correlating with the geographical and economic factors). However, new constructions, share of urban population and unemployment rates were not primary predictors.

country or not, the language shared between the origin and destination country or not, the distance and the belonging of the country of destination to the Schengen area and the success of right-wing populist or left parties in elections

²⁷ Moore and Shellman, "Whither Will They Go?"

²⁸ Riddle and Buckley, "Forced Migration and Destination Choice."

Three studies were made to understand the determinants of asylum application to three countries (Australia, Hungary, and Denmark). An article by Tim Hatton and Joseph Moloney focused on the choice of Australia by asylum seekers, assessing the importance of 15 factors, and concluded that GDP and unemployment rates have a negative correlation with the number of demands (the richest countries would receive less demands), while “destination country policy has a negative deterrent effect, but only through access and processing policies, not through welfare policies”²⁹. A similar study was conducted by András Tétényi et al. to understand why asylum seekers registered in Hungary from 2002 to 2016 and found that the recognition rate by the Hungarian authorities had an influence on the number of applications, while factors like income, unemployment or relationships between Hungary and the home country were not significant. Finally, Lenka Janýšková and Jaromír Harmáček found that the number of asylum applications was positively correlated with the number of immigrants already living in Denmark and distance with the home country³⁰.

The influence of network, in particular spatial dependence was explored by Fabian Barthel and Eric Neumayer: they argued that existing refugees in destination countries from countries that are similar to the country of origin of the asylum seeker (geographically or linguistically) can also provide information and assistance to newcomer³¹ (for example, asylum seekers from Ghana in the UK would be helped by seekers from Togo or Côte d’Ivoire).

Certain deductive studies focused on the impact which governmental policies had on the number of refugees or asylum seekers. Eiko Thielemann, based on the study of 20 OECD countries between 1985 and 1999, challenged the utilitarian assumption that asylum seekers are generally in a position of making an “asylum shopping”³². However, he argued that those who have the choice “do so in a rational manner on the basis of some knowledge about the real or perceived differences between these

²⁹ Hatton and Moloney, “Applications for Asylum in the Developed World.”

³⁰ Janýšková and Harmáček, “Seeking Asylum in Denmark: Analysis of Determinants in 2005–2015.”

³¹ Barthel and Neumayer, “Spatial Dependence in Asylum Migration.”

³² Thielemann, “Does Policy Matter? On Governments’ Attempts to Control Unwanted Migration.”

states". He rejected the influence of "short-term welfare maximizations" and his results showed a higher impact of legacies of migrant networks (network effect), employment opportunities and the "relative "liberalness" of a particular host country". He concluded that policies are not what refugees look at the most, but that the recognition rate of asylum seekers and employment opportunities are the most important, and that this information "do reach asylum seekers either directly or indirectly through their agents and traffickers". Marie McAuliffe and Dinuk Jayasuriya surveyed over 35,000 people in Australia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to search if asylum seekers had a preference for their destination country (in this case, Australia), and which factors drove them to that particular country³³. They found that a majority had a destination country in mind, and that policy led by the destination country had an impact, the "acceptance of refugees" by Australia creating a favorable perception of this country among them. Nozomi Matsui and James Raymer also found, in a world-scale analysis, a deterrent effect of immigration policies³⁴. On the contrary, Lamis Abdelaaty found the opposite result, concluding that "deportation, detention, and encampment are not associated with decreases in asylum applications or refugee arrivals"³⁵. Thus, the studies differed on the influence of governmental policies of host countries, depending on the area covered and the methods used.

A study of Seraina Rüegger and Heidrun Bohnet sought to research the ethnic factor³⁶ in the decision-making of asylum seekers. Based on data from the UNHCR, the UNRWA, and from reports and qualitative data to cross-check ethnic backgrounds of refugees, they found that "many ethnic groups flee to kin groups in neighboring countries" and found evidence of the impact of "previous refugee or migration groups". In another study, Hélène Syed Zwick searched for the influence of the "safety" factor for choosing a destination country³⁷. Relying on 3,794 surveys of refugees and migrants in Libya, she found that "refugees and migrants who experienced at least one

³³ McAuliffe and Jayasuriya, "Do Asylum Seekers and Refugees Choose Destination Countries?"

³⁴ Matsui and Raymer, "The Push and Pull Factors Contributing Towards Asylum Migration from Developing Countries to Developed Countries Since 2000."

³⁵ Abdelaaty, "Do Rights Violations Deter Refugees?"

³⁶ Seraina Rüegger and Heidrun Bohnet, "The Ethnicity of Refugees (ER)."

³⁷ Syed Zwick, "Onward Migration Aspirations and Destination Preferences of Refugees and Migrants in Libya."

protection incident in Libya were more likely to aspire to migrate to France, Sweden or the UK over stay in Libya than those who did not report any protection incident”.

Finally, a study by Anita Böcker and Tetty Havinga led in coordination between the European Commission and the University of Nijmegen combined a quantitative analysis with a qualitative one, using both data from Eurostat and interviews of refugees in the Netherlands, the UK and Belgium³⁸. They divided the factors into three broad categories: economic, historical-political and social factors. The three most decisive factors identified were “existing communities of compatriots, colonial bonds and knowledge of the language”, even though other factors were relevant as economic opportunities. They refuted the importance of religion and of the asylum policy of the destination country.

b) Qualitative Research Academic Literature

I identified several sets of academic articles pertaining to refugees’ decision-making, which were all based on interviews: studies concluding in multi-factor decision-making, studies focusing on the refugees’ perception of the destination country, studies assessing the role of policies, and studies showing the importance of the refugees’ network.

An inductive approach was made by Masooma Torfa et al., who researched the factors behind the destination choice of migrants from Afghan and Syrian refugees, using 87 interviews or “focus group discussions”³⁹. They found that a combination of the perception of a welcoming culture, high quality of life, and the protection scheme in Germany were the key factors of choice. They also found that depending on the nationality groups, migrants did not necessarily know which country they wanted to reach at the departure, showing that asylum seekers are not always “in a position to decide, plan and choose their destination country”. Another factor was the mediatization of Germany and the “opening of borders to Europe”, especially on social networks. Z. Kahraman found that Syrians who went to Türkiye undertook a “complex

³⁸ Böcker, *Asylum Migration to the European Union*.

³⁹ Torfa, Almohamed, and Birner, “Origin and Transit Migration of Afghans and Syrians to Germany.”

multi-dimensional process” and stressed the importance of “reaching the nearest safest place”⁴⁰. In another study by Tetty Havinga and Anita Böcker on asylum seekers in Belgium, the Netherlands and the UK, the authors found that the factors really differ depending on the destination country, and that a general cross-country assumption on a factor or even a set of factors driving refugees cannot be made⁴¹.

How refugees perceive their destination country is also an important factor which was studied in two qualitative studies. Robert Barsky studied the motivations of former Soviet Union citizens when choosing Canada as a destination country. It resulted that the justification was often articulated around the narrative of the “American Dream”, thus reinforcing the idea of a leading role of the perception⁴². On the contrary, Alan Gilbert and Khalid Koser found that their sample, asylum seekers in the UK from Afghanistan, Colombia, Kosovo and Somali, had a very narrow perception of the destination country⁴³.

Three qualitative research assessed the influence of the policies as a factor of destination choice. Jessica Hagen-Zanker and Richard Mallett relied on 52 in-depth semi-structured interviews with Eritrean, Senegalese and Syrian respondents in London, Manchester, Berlin and Madrid⁴⁴. Their finding was that policies of “welcoming-ness” influenced positively migrants who did not know where to go, while this did not impact the choice of those having a defined idea of their destination. This study would then present the government policies as a secondary factor, behind other more important factors such as “labour market opportunities and access to education”. This result was corroborated by another study by Heaven Crawley and Jessica Hagen-Zanker, this time combining a set of 259 in-depth interviews⁴⁵. They again found that

⁴⁰ Kahraman, “Understanding Location Choice of Syrian Refugees from Country to Neighbourhood Level: Opportunities, Restrictions and Expectations.”

⁴¹ Havinga and Böcker, “Country of Asylum by Choice or by Chance: Asylum-seekers in Belgium, the Netherlands and the UK.”

⁴² Barsky, “Arguing the American Dream à La Canada.”

⁴³ Gilbert and Koser, “Coming to the UK: What Do Asylum-Seekers Know About the UK before Arrival?”

⁴⁴ Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, “Journeys to Europe. The Role of Policy in Migrant Decision-Making.”

⁴⁵ Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, “Deciding Where to Go.”

migrants “had limited knowledge of migration policies” so that policies were not a key destination factor, but perceptions of “general security or economic conditions these countries were perceived to offer and/or the presence of family members” were more important. Finally, in a study by Khalid Koser on Iranian asylum seekers in the Netherlands, most of the 32 respondents expressed that they chose the Netherlands because of its policies, and not because of their personal network.

On the influence of the “network” factor, Angela Dew conducted “life history methods” and a “participatory action research approach” to determine what drove disabled migrants to reach their destination country⁴⁶. She was helped with a co-researcher who was a migrant and disabled person. They found that over 12 interviews, all participants had relatives already living in the host country. Kate Day and Paul White found that among a combination of factors, family and friendship connections were the most important factors in the choice of the UK by Bosnian and Somali asylum seekers⁴⁷. Michael Collyer elaborated on networks used by refugees, showing the importance of non-family social networks in the destination decision-making of Algerian migrants. Migrants would focus “on weaker ties rather than strong family networks”⁴⁸.

Finally, research was done on a particular sample of participants, stateless migrants from Palestine, and based on 33 interviews: evidence was found that migrants choosing Sweden as a destination country made it primarily because of its accessible citizenship, while “considerations related to economic or educational opportunities played only a marginal role in the decision making”⁴⁹.

c) Conceptualizing Refugee Journeys

⁴⁶ Dew, “Drivers and Destinations.”

⁴⁷ Day and White, “Choice or Circumstance: The UK as the Location of Asylum Applications by Bosnian and Somali Refugees.”

⁴⁸ Collyer, “When Do Social Networks Fail to Explain Migration? Accounting for the Movement of Algerian Asylum Seekers to the UK.”

⁴⁹ Tucker, “Why Here?”

Two conceptual articles proposed frameworks to consider the journeys of refugees, hence also help to conceptualize the choice of the destination country.

First, Biao Xiang and Johan Lindquist created the concept of “migration infrastructure”, defined as “the systematically interlinked technologies, institutions and actors that facilitate and condition mobility”⁵⁰. They argued that “migration should not be imagined as a line between two places, but rather as a multi-faceted space of mediation occupied by commercial recruitment intermediaries—large and small, formal and informal—bureaucrats, NGOs, migrants, and technologies”. This concept favors an institutional approach over a utilitarian one. According to the authors, this broad concept can avoid focusing on “policies, the labor market, or migrant social networks alone”. This concept will be taken into account to consider the choice of the destination country by the refugees from Ukraine as the result of a meta-process, an infrastructure.

The second conceptual work comes from Gadi BenEzer and Roger Zetter and was quoted in a substantive amount of other academic articles to frame their analysis⁵¹. They built a series of questions that researchers can ask to take into account in the most comprehensive way the refugee journeys. They aimed to create a comprehensive framework on the “journey”, after having noted that “the study of refugees focuses on either one end or the other of the migration process”. They divided these questions into four global lenses: 1) the temporal characteristics of the journey, 2) its drivers and destinations, 3) its process/content, 4) and the characteristics of the wayfarers. To answer my research question on the factors of destination choice, the second lens will be particularly useful. To that regard, they interrogate “What is the destination?”, “Is the destination significant?” or “Do refugees always define/plan for one destination, or, at times, for consecutive places until they arrive at their goal? This series of question will help to build variables and potential interviews, for example to take into account the fact that the destination is not as obvious for the researcher as it is for the refugee. For example, Ukrainian refugees may consider that their destination is not the Netherlands or any other European country, but the return to Ukraine.

⁵⁰ Xiang and Lindquist, “Migration Infrastructure.”

⁵¹ BenEzer and Zetter, “Searching for Directions.”

d) Conclusion on the Existing Academic Literature

The question of refugees from Ukraine decision-making after February 2022 has yet only been addressed by one study, that of Umberto Minora et al., which only focused on the network factor. My thesis aims therefore to complete this research gap by attempting to assess other potential pull factors in this crisis, which will lead me to use theoretical frameworks that were created for refugees and asylum seekers who are not from Europe. However, several significant characteristics of migration flows, institutional background or respondents' attributes are different between refugees from Ukraine and refugees from other countries. Notably, the 2022 refugee crisis was characterized by the "open arms welcome" of European countries with the establishment of the Temporary Protection mechanism for the refugees from Ukraine, but also by the relative short distance of journeys, which were mostly not intercontinental. It is the main limit of the literature, which was developed above, because many variables will have to be readjusted to this particular framework. To help with this readjustment, many different sources are useful, among which in-depth interviews, readings on the peculiarities of the Ukrainian diaspora, or institutional documents from governmental sources.

Moreover, the literature appears to be divided into utilitarian and institutional approaches. Crawley and Hagen-Zanker pointed out some limits to the utility maximization theory, stating that "they presuppose decisions are fully informed, neglect the role of intervening variables, and ignore or downplay a wide range of social factors"⁵². Therefore, the best approach would be to consider that choices can be made in a rational way, but under specific social or institutional constraints, and that this leverage of "freedom of choice" depends on individuals and groups. Several studies showed that the "perception" of a country (its security, policies, ...) sometimes matter more for the refugees than information based on factual indicators. Results such as the importance of "safety" also proved that the personal background (having experienced an incident) can influence destination choices over macro variables, hence the interest to take into account micro-factors with more qualitative data. Particular groups of respondents may have specific factors which have more

⁵² Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, "Deciding Where to Go."

importance when choosing a country, as shown by the stateless refugees whose main objective was to get a citizenship.

We see that same methodologies applied did not necessarily bring same results among the studies. For example, studies assessing the factor of policies of destination countries as a motive of choice appear to show both positive and negative influence, depending on the samples. This suggests that the samples and the geographic focuses have a great influence and that there is no universal behavior observed among refugees.

When it comes to qualitative research, several studies put forward the importance of conducting interviews or surveys in “trust” conditions, for example the study of Crawley and Hagen-Zanker favored the interviews in the native language of refugees (with the use of interpreters) and the conduct of interviews in public spaces: “For most interviews, interpreters were used, many of whom already had a relationship with respondents or others in their network, to facilitate trust”⁵³.

In conclusion, this literature review suggests that a combination between qualitative and quantitative data should be done, in order to counter deterministic issues and identify social or institutional factors.

⁵³ Crawley and Hagen-Zanker.

Research Methodology

1. Preliminary Insights on Decision-Making of Refugees from Ukraine

In addition to the academic literature, a series of sources helped me to build a series of independent variables, and to build preliminary hypotheses on the weight of certain factors in the decision-making of refugees from Ukraine. The UNHCR report on “Profiles, Needs and Intentions of Refugees from Ukraine” provided valuable information on the reasons put forward by the Ukrainians to stay in Ukraine’s bordering countries or to move further away. Insights were also found in reports by the Dutch think tank Clingendael, and newspaper articles.

According to the UNHCR survey⁵⁴, refugees in Ukraine’s neighboring countries indicated that only 12% of interviewed people declared having relatives in the host country. This suggests a weak influence of networks in neighboring countries. Respondents also indicated that their most urgent needs (with cumulative answers) were financial aid (60%), job opportunities (40%), medical care (35%), legal status (29%), accommodation (26%), and education (19%). Most of the surveyed refugees wanted to stay in the host country (63%) while a minority (9%) wanted to move to another country.

Those who decided to stay did it mainly because of safety reasons (46%), family ties (15%) and employment (7%), other reasons invoked being handling with the asylum procedure, community ties, language, proximity to Ukraine, education or because they were advised to do so. However, when the group of refugees who wanted to move to another country was asked their reasons to do so, they replied that they would move because of family ties (30%), safety (20%), employment (17%), community ties (9%), asylum procedure (9%), advised (5%), education (2%) and language (2%). This survey indicates that family or community ties play a broader role when refugees decide to go to further countries, while staying in neighboring countries is related to safety.

⁵⁴ UNHCR, “Profiles, Needs, and Intentions of Refugees from Ukraine.”

The Dutch think tank Clingendael published a series of reports on the Ukrainian displaced people and identified four “factors for onward migration”⁵⁵, which are push factors: potential for onward migration (prior willingness to migrate), living conditions in the first country of asylum (socioeconomic perspectives, housing, language teaching), absence of social networks in the first country of asylum, and actual opportunities for onward travel. When it comes to push factors, the authors pointed out the importance of “the narratives of Ukrainian networks shared about the various potential destination countries”, and that they “make the choices that determine their journeys not only based on objective measurements, but partly on the perceptions of friends and family, news reports, and rumors on social media”⁵⁶. To support their argument, they used tweets’ analysis to measure Ukrainians’ opinion about host countries, and national populations’ opinion about Ukrainian migrants.

Some newspaper articles mention the diaspora as a key factor for refugees from Ukraine to choose a destination country. When it comes to France, which hosted a lower share of refugees from Ukraine than its neighbors, the press mentioned that “the attractiveness of a country depends on a number of factors, including whether or not it has a pre-existing community” and that “France was not a country with a large Ukrainian community”⁵⁷. Other sources explain it by “the cultural and geographical distance between Ukraine and France” and that “it [was] harder to find housing in France at the [time]”⁵⁸.

Thus, this first set of sources helped to dress a first list of decision-making factors, coinciding with those identified in the literature review, among which the diaspora, refugees’ connections, job opportunities, financial aid by host countries, the cultural

⁵⁵ Sie Dhian Ho et al., “Reception of Ukrainians in the Netherlands: a Long-Term Issue. Critical Factors and Scenarios for the Protection Mission of Ukrainian Displaced Persons in the European Union and the Netherlands.”

⁵⁶ Sie Dhian Ho et al., “Steady Increase in Protection Mission for Ukrainian Displaced Persons.”

⁵⁷ Pascual, “La France, un pays peu attractif pour les réfugiés d’Ukraine, de Syrie ou d’Afghanistan.”

⁵⁸ Delrue, “La France est le pays d’Europe qui a accueilli le moins de réfugiés ukrainiens par rapport à sa population.”

distance between Ukraine and host countries, housing, or language. It remains to be seen how much weight these factors carry and how they relate to each other.

2. Quantitative analysis: Multiple Linear Regression Model (Ordinary Least Squares)

In order to measure the importance of different factors on the distribution of refugees from Ukraine in Europe, I will use the multiple linear regression method, also known as the OLS method. OLS stands for “Ordinary Least Squares”: the aim is to minimize the sum of the squared differences between the actual values of the dependent variable and the predicted values obtained from a linear function of the independent variable. Additionally, for each independent variable, I will present a simple linear regression curve, whether the relationship is significant or not with the variable, in order to identify patterns in the countries studied, e.g., countries appearing to be far from the model's prediction. Results of the global MLR model are replicated in Chapter 1, while the results of the Simple Linear Regressions are displayed from Chapter 1 to Chapter 7.

OLS models help figuring out what “best describes the linear relationship between our predictor variable x and our outcome variable y ” or in other terms, “determining a best-fit line between x and y ”⁵⁹. The MLR model makes it possible to determine whether each factor is significant (known as the p -value), as well as its effect size (known as the coefficient). A significant relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables is usually indicated by a p -value below 0,05, however Eric Neumayer in his model also included p -values below 0,10⁶⁰. The coefficient, between -1 and 1, indicates the scale of a negative or positive correlation between variables. Moreover, the indicator “Adjusted R^2 ”, on a 0 to 1 scale, indicates “the amount of variance that is explained in our outcome variable by our predictor variables”⁶¹, the higher it is, the more variance it indicates.

⁵⁹ Fogarty, *Quantitative Social Science Data with R*, 212.

⁶⁰ Neumayer, “Asylum Destination Choice,” 173.

⁶¹ Fogarty, *Quantitative Social Science Data with R*, 217.

The results of the MLR model displayed further do not aim to build a working predictive model, especially because standard errors are high (data does not match with predictions) and certain independent variables prove not to be significant. It is rather an exploratory method in order to assess what factors are the most significant, and to see if they match with the results of the qualitative analysis.

To perform a MLR model, it must be assumed that the independent variables are not correlated with each other and that all variables are normally distributed. I included the correlation and multicollinearity tests in the appendices⁶². I also applied a z-score to each value to facilitate the interpretation of coefficients, which has the advantage of not altering the proportionality between compared values (unlike a log standardization)⁶³.

Other regression models which were used in similar research, such as the Negative Binomial Regression or Poisson models were excluded, as the dependent variable used here (the share of refugees of Ukraine in each country) is not a count, but a continuous value.

The equation of the multiple regression is:

$$\hat{y} = \hat{\beta}_0 + \hat{\beta}_1x_1 + \hat{\beta}_2x_2 + \dots + \hat{\beta}_{10}x_{10} + \hat{\varepsilon}$$

Where \hat{y} is the predictive value of y (the independent variable which is the share of refugees in each country in proportion to its total population), $\hat{\beta}_0$ is the estimated value of the intercept/constant, $\hat{\beta}_x$ is the estimated value of the coefficient for each of the ten independent variables, and $\hat{\varepsilon}$ is the prediction error⁶⁴.

3. Qualitative analysis

⁶² Cf. Appendix 1.1.

⁶³ Cf. Appendix 1.2.

⁶⁴ Fogarty, *Quantitative Social Science Data with R*, 226.

I used semi-directed and in-depth interviews with refugees from Ukraine to obtain insights from personal experiences of migration. This kind of interview provide a framework of predefined questions to obtain, from interviewees, insights on certain variables of migration, while leaving room for them to elaborate on potential mechanisms at play in their decision-making.

Insights from interviews permit to uncover the underlying factors behind quantitative findings, explore how participants interpret the information they have, and gain insights into the social and cultural context. The aim of combining quantitative and qualitative approaches is to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the decision-making.

Data

1. Dependent Variable: The Share of Refugees from Ukraine in Proportion to Host Country's Population

To answer the question of why the refugees from Ukraine chose one country as a destination one year after the beginning of the crisis, the dependent variable must relate to the number of refugees in each European country as of February 2023. This data was already made available by the UNHCR, which regularly updated figures on the number of “refugees from Ukraine recorded in each country” and “refugees from Ukraine who applied for asylum, Temporary Protection or similar national protection schemes”⁶⁵. The two categories often showed similar refugee numbers for the countries in question, more rarely they differed. I chose to use for each country the category showing the highest number of refugees. For example, the number of “refugees recorded” being smaller than the “refugees registered for Temporary Protection or similar national protection schemes” in Bulgaria, Latvia, Romania, Cyprus and Finland, the first category of data was chosen for these countries. I made a snapshot of these figures on the 23rd of February 2023. Unfortunately, there is no retrospective access to the numbers of refugees in each country on the UNHCR’s website.

Two academic articles corroborated the data provided by the UNHCR. An approach was first proposed by the Pew Research Center to detect the “digital footprints of the Europe’s refugees”, the researchers used Google Trends data to correlate the data on refugees provided by the UNHCR and Eurostat⁶⁶. This report inspired Tado Juric who used the same methodology to track Ukrainian refugee flows in 2022. He used queries made in Google, YouTube, as well as information from social networks⁶⁷ to assess the number of Ukrainian refugees in a given country⁶⁸. His results overlapped the survey led by the German government and he forecasted that Germany “can expect 1.5 million

⁶⁵ UNHCR, “Ukraine Refugee Situation.”

⁶⁶ Pew Research Center, “The Digital Footprint of Europe’s Refugees. Methodology.”

⁶⁷ Number of likes, geolocation, pages visited, interests, number of users in one country.

⁶⁸ Jurić, “Big (Crisis) Data in Refugee and Migration Studies – Case Study of Ukrainian Refugees.”

Ukrainian refugees”. A second research on the measurement of Ukrainian refugees by using information drawn from social networks was made by Tal Mizrahi and Jose Yallouz, who used a diverse set of data sources, composed of different websites, to track Ukrainian displacements⁶⁹⁷⁰. They identified limits to their approach, as the Covid-19 provoked an increase of people traveling after restriction releases, and as the existing Ukrainian diaspora can be confused with the refugees. However, they found that the level of confidence on the figures of refugees of Ukraine was high for most of European countries, at the exception of Russia, where the presence of Ukrainian refugees reflected the number provided by the Russian authorities and was higher than the UNHCR data.

Finally, I decided to standardize the number of refugees to the number of inhabitants in each European country to obtain comparable figures between smaller and bigger countries. This technique was also used by Eric Neumayer to build his dependent variable on the share of asylum seekers in each country⁷¹.

2. Independent Variables

Eleven independent variables were analyzed to study their correlation with the dependent variable, the share of refugees from Ukraine in each European country. Variables, acronyms, units of measurement and sources are shown below.

	Independent Variables	Units of measurement	Sources of data
DIASPORA	Ukrainian diaspora	Number of Ukrainian nationals residing in the host country in 2020, in proportion to host country population	UN Migrant Stock 2020: Destination and origin ⁷²

⁶⁹ The UNHCR, Statcounter, SimilarWeb, Google Transparency Report, CloudFare Radar, RIPE Atlas, Speedtest and Google Maps Traffic.

⁷⁰ Mizrahi and Yallouz, “Using Internet Measurements to Map the 2022 Ukrainian Refugee Crisis.”

⁷¹ Neumayer, “Asylum Destination Choice,” 159.

⁷² “International Migrant Stock | Population Division.”

CONNECTEDNESS	Facebook Connectedness	Social Connectedness on Facebook between Ukraine's users and host countries' users in October 2021	Meta, Humanitarian Data Exchange (October 2021) ⁷³
DISTANCE	Distance from Ukraine	Distance in kms between Ukraine and host country's closest border	Distance Calculator, Global Feed ⁷⁴
GDP	GDP per capita	Current US\$, 2021	World Bank ⁷⁵
GROWTH_RATE	GDP growth rate	GDP growth (annual %)	World Bank ⁷⁶
UNEMPLOYMENT	Unemployment rate	Unemployment rate (2021, % of total labor force, modeled ILO estimate)	World Bank ⁷⁷
FINANCIAL_HELP	Financial governmental help	Amount of financial aid available to refugees from Ukraine, average for an adult over 25, converted from the local currency in dollars using the PPP conversion factor, private consumption (LCU per international \$) ⁷⁸	Websites of European governments, websites compiling the services available to refugees from Ukraine ⁷⁹
REFUGEE_STOCK	Refugee population	Refugee population by country or territory of asylum, average between 2018 and 2021, in	World Bank, UNHCR, and UNRWA ⁸⁰

⁷³ "Facebook Social Connectedness Index" This indicator "measures the relative probability of a Facebook friendship link between a given Facebook user in location i and a given user in location j". .

⁷⁴ "Distance Calculator, Distance Between Cities, Distance Chart for Countries around the World."

⁷⁵ World Bank, "GDP per Capita (Current US\$)."

⁷⁶ World Bank, "GDP Growth (Annual %)."

⁷⁷ World Bank, "Unemployment, Total (% of Total Labor Force) (Modeled ILO Estimate)."

⁷⁸ World Bank, "PPP Conversion Factor, Private Consumption (LCU per International \$)."

⁷⁹ Cf. Special section in the bibliography for the full set of sources on financial assistance.

⁸⁰ World Bank, "Refugee Population by Country or Territory of Asylum."

		proportion to host country population	
CUL_DISTANCE	Cultural distance	Euclidean distance between Ukraine and host country, of <i>traditional values</i> ; and <i>survival values</i> versus <i>secular-rational values</i> and <i>self-expression values</i>	Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map 2023's values, European Values Survey (EVS) and World Values Survey (WVS) ⁸¹
LANGUAGE	Language proficiency	TOEFL iBT Test Taker's Total and Section Score Means (English) increased by 10 points if former USSR country (Russian speaking)	ETS TOEFL iBT, Test and Score Data Summary 2021 ⁸²
SUPPORT (Not included in MLR model, limited sample)	Population support of Ukraine	Public opinion approval rate of the European Union's support for Ukraine following Russia's invasion	European Parliament Eurobarometer ⁸³

Table: Description of independent variables and sources of data.

DIASPORA and CONNECTEDNESS measure two indicators of the network which refugees from Ukraine may have activated to go to European countries. I compared them to see if CONNECTEDNESS is more relevant than DIASPORA in predicting the number of refugees from Ukraine in a destination country. DISTANCE estimated the pertinence of remoteness in the repartition of refugees. GDP, GROWTH_RATE and UNEMPLOYMENT are used to estimate the impact of economic attraction in refugees' decision-making. FINANCIAL_HELP and REFUGEE_STOCK addressed the issue of government reception of refugees, and the impact of existing refugee numbers on refugees from Ukraine. CUL_DISTANCE, LANGUAGE and SUPPORT allowed to

⁸¹ World Values Organization, "WVS Cultural Map: 2023 Version Released."

⁸² "TOEFL iBT® Test and Score Data Summary 2021."

⁸³ "EP Autumn 2022 Survey: Parlemeter," 55.

assess refugees' ability to integrate in European countries, taking into account their cultural and linguistic proximity and the welcome they received from local populations.

Here I provide more detail on variables that I adjusted. FINANCIAL_HELP was constructed as an indicator including the one-time and regular assistance that refugees from Ukraine can receive in their country of destination, by standardizing them to an annual amount. This includes assistance specific to refugees from Ukraine, assistance already available to other refugees, and social assistance available to non-nationals in each country. The choice was made not to include financial assistance for housing, given that most countries offer housing to refugees from Ukraine. CUL_DISTANCE was measured on the basis of the cultural map, measuring the distance between the point of Ukraine and other European countries. by using the data of the World Values Survey (WVS). I recreated the map from the most recent figures for each variable from the 2023 data of the organization, which as the timeframe is different, produces a slightly different map from the one published by WVS⁸⁴. Some data were missing for Malta and Cyprus, so I decided to apply the average distance of the other Ukraine countries to them, so that I could continue to use the CUL_DISTANCE variable for the global MLR model. To measure LANGUAGE, I made the choice of choosing the most comprehensive indicator available that I found, published by the company ETS, even though it remains limited as it measures only abilities in the English language of test takers, and not the entire population of each country. As English is used as a mediation language in the destination country, LANGUAGE is a way to measure the ability of the host population to communicate with refugees from Ukraine. However, most of Ukrainians also know Russian language, so I included countries from the former USSR where Russian is still relatively spoken, by adjusting their variable positively by 10.

As Serbia and Kosovo are included together in the UNHCR data for the dependent variable, I have applied a weighted average where necessary, taking into account their respective populations for the independent variables. Finally, I did not included SUPPORT in the general MLR model, as it provides data only for EU countries. I will however use it in the 5th chapter with a simple linear regression.

⁸⁴ Cf. Appendix 4 for a table of WVS data used, and the cultural map recreated.

3. Semi-Directed and In-Depth Interviews with Refugees from Ukraine

Between February and June 2023, I conducted eight interviews with Ukrainian refugees, and as two of them were conducted with two persons, I obtained the experience from ten persons. Their names were changed and the city where they lived were not mentioned in quotations to preserve their anonymity. Interviews were obtained using the snowball method, starting from personal acquaintance. Others were obtained by asking refugees living in a Dutch municipality's accommodation where I volunteered, in accordance with the administration. Two interviews were conducted in the Russian language and the others in English. The sample questionnaire used during interviews can be found in appendices⁸⁵.

They were 8 women and 2 men, which reflects the gender composition of refugees from Ukraine revealed in the UNHCR report (85% of women)⁸⁶. They came from Odesa, Mariupol, Kharkiv, Melitopol and Kyiv. Eight of them moved to the Netherlands and were living in Almere, Haarlem, Leiden, and Maastricht. Two had left for Belgium (Brussels) and France (Saint-Etienne). Ages of interviewees varied between 17 and 39 years old. In Ukraine, they worked in different fields such as sales, IT engineering, teaching or administration. Concerning their personal situation, two were married with no child, one divorced with a child, and others unmarried and/or with a partner with no child. I made a last interview with a Ukrainian teacher in the Netherlands, who provided me with information on her students, among whom were refugees from Ukraine.

⁸⁵ Cf. Appendix 2.

⁸⁶ UNHCR, "Profiles, Needs, and Intentions of Refugees from Ukraine."

Chapter 1 - The Existing Ukrainian Diaspora: A Solely Relevant Factor for Choosing a Country to Seek Refuge In?

1. Multiple Linear Regression Model Results: A High Significance and Effect Size of Connectedness Among Other Variables

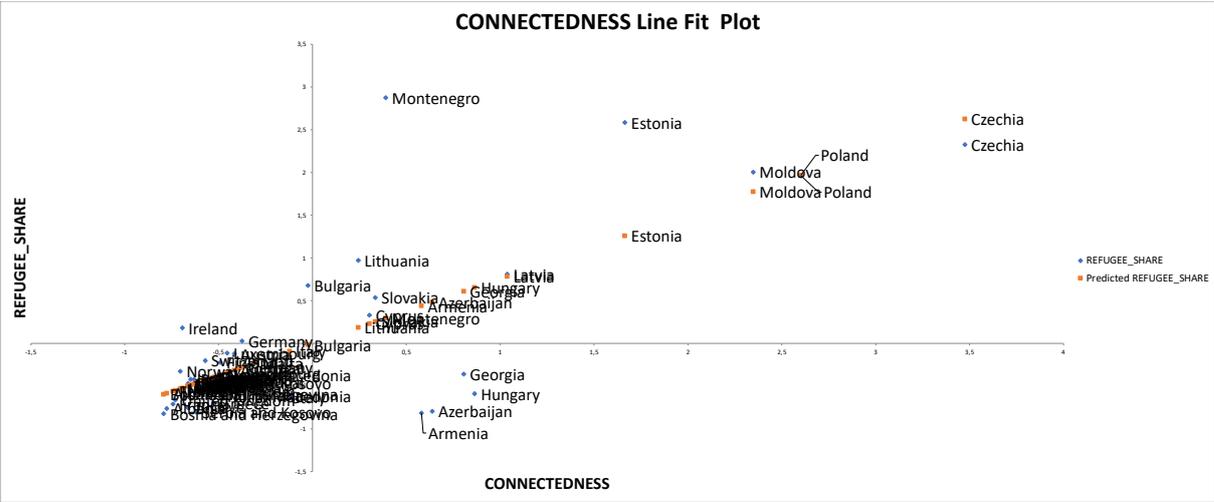
SUMMARY OUTPUT								
<i>Regression Statistics</i>								
Multiple R	0,82128894							
R Square	0,67451552							
Adjusted R S	0,56602069							
Standard Err	0,65877106							
Observations	41							
<i>ANOVA</i>								
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>			
Regression	10	26,9806207	2,69806207	6,2170293	4,4254E-05			
Residual	30	13,0193793	0,43397931					
Total	40	40						
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95,0%</i>	<i>Upper 95,0%</i>
Intercept	1,3314E-16	0,10288275	1,2941E-15	1	-0,2101146	0,21011462	-0,2101146	0,21011462
DIASPORA	0,15727523	0,20116854	0,78180824	0,4404543	-0,2535658	0,5681162	-0,2535658	0,5681162
CONNECTED	0,70477493	0,19268809	3,65759461	0,00096921	0,31125335	1,09829652	0,31125335	1,09829652
DISTANCE	-0,1035487	0,13970026	-0,7412203	0,46432292	-0,3888547	0,18175733	-0,3888547	0,18175733
GDP	0,23837536	0,1865194	1,27801911	0,21104328	-0,1425481	0,61929881	-0,1425481	0,61929881
GROWHT_R	0,1702376	0,11514629	1,47844628	0,14971205	-0,0649225	0,40539768	-0,0649225	0,40539768
UNEMPLOYM	0,20810142	0,1387875	1,49942478	0,14421435	-0,0753405	0,49154332	-0,0753405	0,49154332
FINANCIAL_F	0,0865516	0,15683363	0,55186886	0,58512618	-0,2337454	0,40684861	-0,2337454	0,40684861
REFUGEE_ST	-0,1092062	0,11729948	-0,9310036	0,3592837	-0,3487637	0,13035125	-0,3487637	0,13035125
CUL_DISTAN	0,02660794	0,16879894	0,15763094	0,87580382	-0,3181255	0,37134137	-0,3181255	0,37134137
LANGUAGE	0,08583111	0,15020155	0,57143957	0,57195849	-0,2209214	0,39258361	-0,2209214	0,39258361

The global results of the MLR model with the ten selected independent variables display a R2 of 0,67 and an adjusted R2 of 0,56, indicating that 56% or 67% of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables in the model. However, most of the independent variables are not significant because their p-value are above the recommended threshold of 0, 05 or 0,10. Apart from CONNECTEDNESS (which is well under the threshold), the two variables for the economic factors GROWTH_RATE and UNEMPLOYMENT have the lowest p-values (0,14) but are still above the threshold.

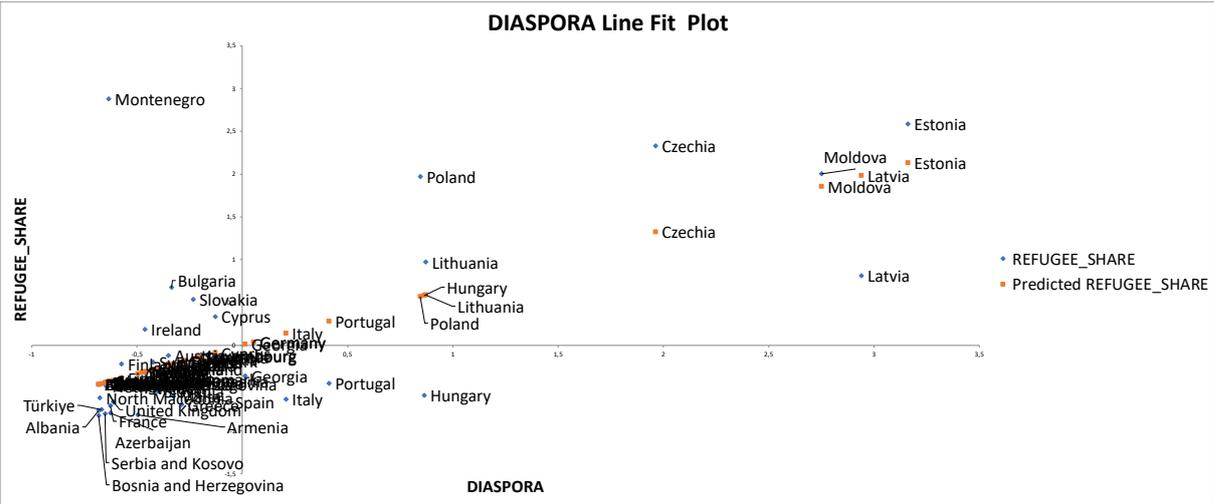
The model demonstrates a high significance (0,0009) for CONNECTEDNESS. It means that there is a low chance that the observed relationship between the share of refugees from Ukraine and their social network connections could have occurred by chance. Moreover, this variable has a considerable effect size of more than 70%, which means that this variable alone explains a large part of the repartition. DIASPORA which also accounts for the network proves not to be significant with a p-value of 0,44, which runs against some of the preliminary insights. As most of the variables are not significant, this model cannot be used as a predictive tool, however it is useful to demonstrate that certain variables have no significance and should not be considered as important factors of decision-making for refugees from Ukraine. In particular, FINANCIAL_HELP, CUL_DISTANCE and LANGUAGE turn to be very insignificant (above 0,50).

2. The Relevance of Connectedness to the Diaspora

Ukrainians used a wider range of connections in Europe than simply entering in contact with the Ukrainian diaspora, defined as the Ukrainians living abroad. Connections could be Ukrainian or non-Ukraine acquaintance, friends or family members living abroad. During the first year of the war, different waves of migration occurred and the first waves of refugees, with less information at the outset, were able to help refugees from the following waves.



By examining the single variable CONNECTEDNESS, the only significant in the MLR model, it can be observed that most of the predictions fall close to the real values of REFUGEE_SHARE. Certain countries are above, as Ireland, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Montenegro and Estonia, meaning that they hosted more refugees than the network could have predicted. On the contrary, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Hungary are below the predictions.



The DIASPORA graph shows much greater dispersion than CONNECTEDNESS. Ukraine’s bordering countries are in general above predictions, at the exception of Hungary. Poland for example which as an important Ukrainian diaspora who represents “the largest group”⁸⁷ in the country, has hosted even more refugees from Ukraine than the diaspora could have predicted. Italy, described in the academic literature with an important Ukrainian diaspora⁸⁸⁸⁹ is situated below the predictions.

Interviews informed on diverse dynamics within the connections’ variable. Refugees who first settled in European countries provided the following waves with information, thus creating an increasing dynamic. Ksenia “could advise to come to the Netherlands to Ukrainians because [they] feel in here really comfortable”⁹⁰. Oksana, who went to

⁸⁷ Iglicka and Weinar, “Ukrainian Migration in Poland from the Perspective of Polish Policies and Systems’ Theory.”

⁸⁸ Montefusco, “Ukrainian Migration to Italy.”

⁸⁹ Marchetti and Venturini, “Mothers and Grandmothers on the Move.”

⁹⁰ #1 Interview with Ksenia and Yana in the Netherlands (ENG).

France, provided information her grandmother, who was living in an occupied territory by Russia and faced “propaganda”: “I told her that this is propaganda, that here it is good, how Poland help, how French help and so on. I told her to find a way to escape and to meet me. She trusted me and found a driver who go from Donetsk to Lithuania”⁹¹.

The network used by interviewees turned out to be varied, from family, friends, or more or less distant acquaintance. The Ukrainian friends of Polina “had received a visa job offer from Amsterdam”⁹² and were living there prior to the war. Ilona’s mother found a woman through a tango community within which she was active, who hosted Ilona one month in Belgium⁹³. Nikita wanted to join her mother in the Netherlands and “didn't look for other options”⁹⁴. Alina joined her father’s friend, a Spanish woman who lived in Ukraine. This woman, “when the war started, directly went to the Netherlands, because she had really close friends here, which are Dutch”⁹⁵. For Misha, “[her] sister and [her] girlfriend came here before because [her] sister had a friend here”⁹⁶. Diana had a Ukrainian friend who had lived in the Netherlands for five years⁹⁷. Also, Vesna knew some professors who went to the Netherlands because Leiden University or the University of Europe proposed to help them, she noticed strong connections in the academic sphere⁹⁸. Thus, the interviewees’ network extends from the Ukrainian diaspora to much more distant contacts.

Contacts not only helped to choose the final host country, but were useful during the journey, which was more difficult during the first days or weeks after the beginning of the war. Refugees' connections could guide them on their journeys. Diana “had a friend in Rotterdam, who was constantly on a phone with [her] checking up and actually

⁹¹ #2 Interview with Oksana in France (ENG).

⁹² #3 Interview with Polina in the Netherlands (ENG).

⁹³ #4 Interview with Ilona in Belgium (ENG).

⁹⁴ #5 Interview with Nikita and Kira in the Netherlands (RU).

⁹⁵ #6 Interview with Alina in the Netherlands (ENG).

⁹⁶ #7 Interview with Misha in the Netherlands (RU).

⁹⁷ #8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG).

⁹⁸ #9 Interview with Vesna in the Netherlands (ENG).

leading this whole path”⁹⁹. Polina was helped from a distance by her friend in Vienna: “My friend from Vienna found a bus. She was busy to find a bus from Lviv”¹⁰⁰. In both cases they left Ukraine during the first weeks of the war, when a remote help was more decisive to find a way out.

In some cases, refugees could be hosted by different relatives in different countries. In this case, they had to make a choice based on their personal situation. Polina first planned to go to Austria where a first friend was living, however “she had no place for [her] and [her] son, they had a full small room already” so her “friends from Amsterdam” invited her to join them: “they just texted to me, “the room for you and your son is ready so you can come anytime”, “just make a decision”. That's how I decided to go to the Netherlands”¹⁰¹. Diana insisted on the fact that even if she accepted help, she preferred to remain independent as much as possible and declared that “we don't like to take space from someone”¹⁰² and she “was also thinking about people who are either without children or with grown up children, or who are not buried into jobs or changing jobs or moving or having their own problems; or those who are hysterically volunteering”¹⁰³. Alina considered the burden it would be on his acquaintances to host him and chose the person for whom it would be the least inconvenient: “We have still some awesome other friends in different countries, but I was feeling that maybe it will be difficult for them to accept another person and live with this person”¹⁰⁴.

Oksana also had the possibility to choose between two countries, France and Palestine, but for her the low support in the second country was decisive in her decision: “I had a friend in France. I also had another friend in Palestine, he is Palestinian. I texted them, asked if I can come to them. It was either to France or to Israel. But in Israel they don't help Ukrainians at all. My friend from Palestine told me

⁹⁹ #8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁰⁰ #3 Interview with Polina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁰¹ #3 Interview with Polina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁰² #8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁰³ #8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁰⁴ #6 Interview with Alina in the Netherlands (ENG).

he could host me, but it would be difficult with papers and so on, and that it would be better to go to France”¹⁰⁵.

The choice of an acquaintance among others could also be the result of the unexpected. One of the students of Vesna stayed in the Netherlands because she had a stopover in Amsterdam airport to come back from vacations in South America, and an acquaintance in the Netherlands who could help her¹⁰⁶.

Only two interviewees, Ksenia and Yana, did not have any connections in their destination country, and Ksenia explained that she tried to connect with Dutch people in order to obtain information: “when I knew that I will go to the Netherlands, I tried to use the application Tandem and to search for people who speaks Dutch. So, I had two guys who helped me, with whom I could have some information. But before going I didn't know anyone”¹⁰⁷.

Therefore, the main finding from the interviews is that the connections used to settle in European countries were much wider than the Ukrainian diaspora, and the quantitative part showed that they played a decisive role among other factors, as reflected in the interviews where only two interviewees did not know anyone in their destination country.

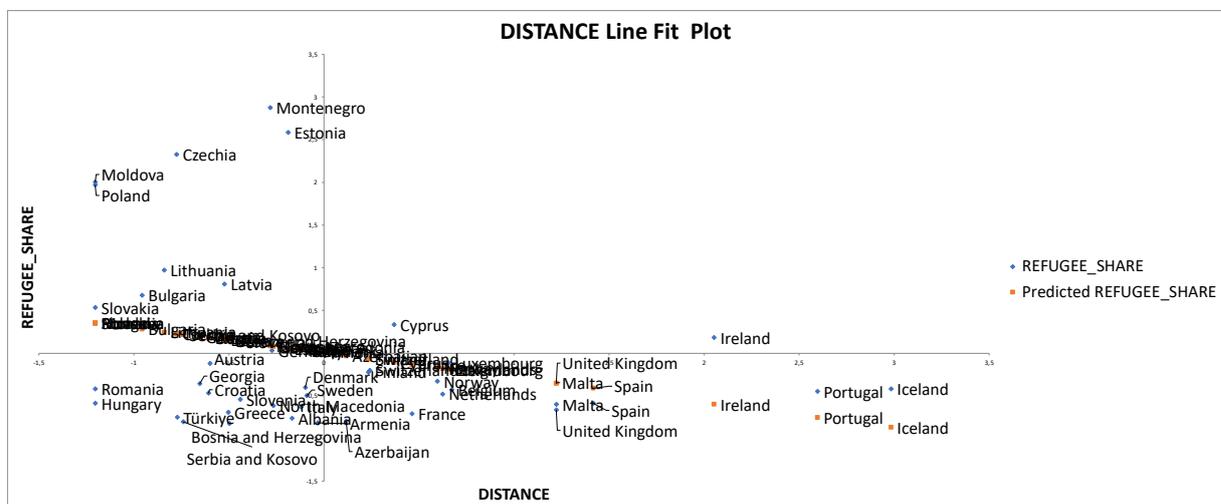
¹⁰⁵ #2 Interview with Oksana in France (ENG).

¹⁰⁶ #9 Interview with Vesna in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁰⁷ #1 Interview with Ksenia and Yana in the Netherlands (ENG).

Chapter 2 – The Geographical Factor: Distance, a Factor that Becomes Less Decisive the Longer the Conflict Lasts

The significance of distance in the refugees' decision-making was not found either in the quantitative analysis, nor in the different interviews. As the air borders were closed immediately after the beginning of the war on February 24th, 2022, people fleeing Ukraine had no choice but leaving first to Ukraine's neighboring countries. Therefore, distance was important after the first days or weeks of the war, then refugees could resettle in another country.



The DISTANCE regression graph displays an important dispersion for countries which are closer to Ukraine (on the left of the X-axis). Certain geographically close countries as Moldova, Poland, Czechia, or Estonia received more refugees than their distance from Ukraine would have predicted. At the contrary, many countries are well under the predictions, in particular Romania and Hungary, two bordering countries of Ukraine. Other factors such as the connections and support offered in countries may explain these discrepancies. On the other hand, remote European countries received more refugees than the predictions, as Ireland and, to a lesser extent, Portugal and Iceland. DISTANCE is therefore not significant as an independent variable.

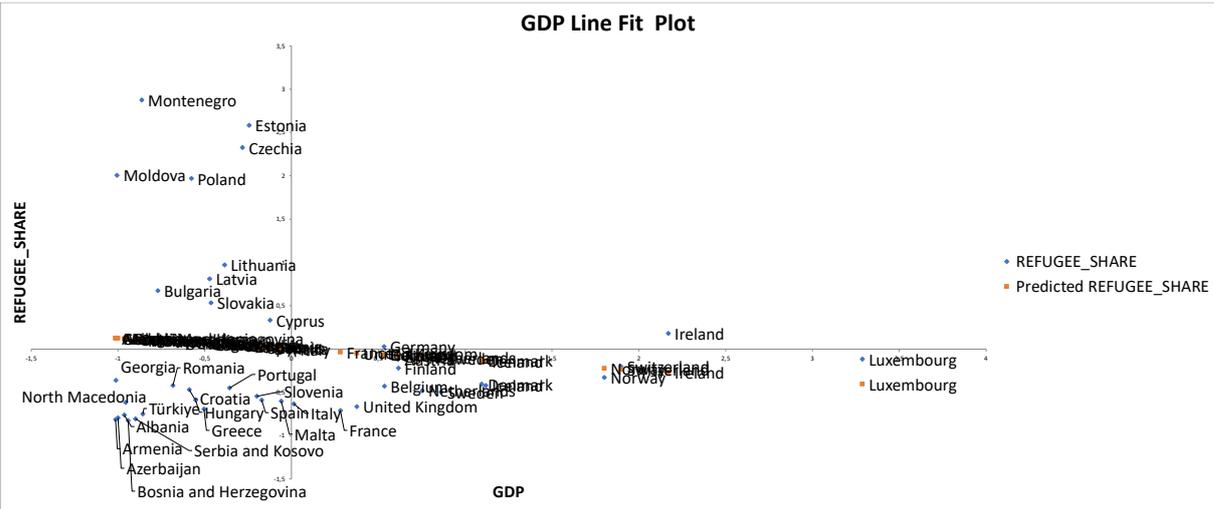
This observation was confirmed during the interviews, during which none of the interviewees expressed negative feelings about the distance of their host country from Ukraine. Some of them punctually went back to Ukraine to visit relatives who decided

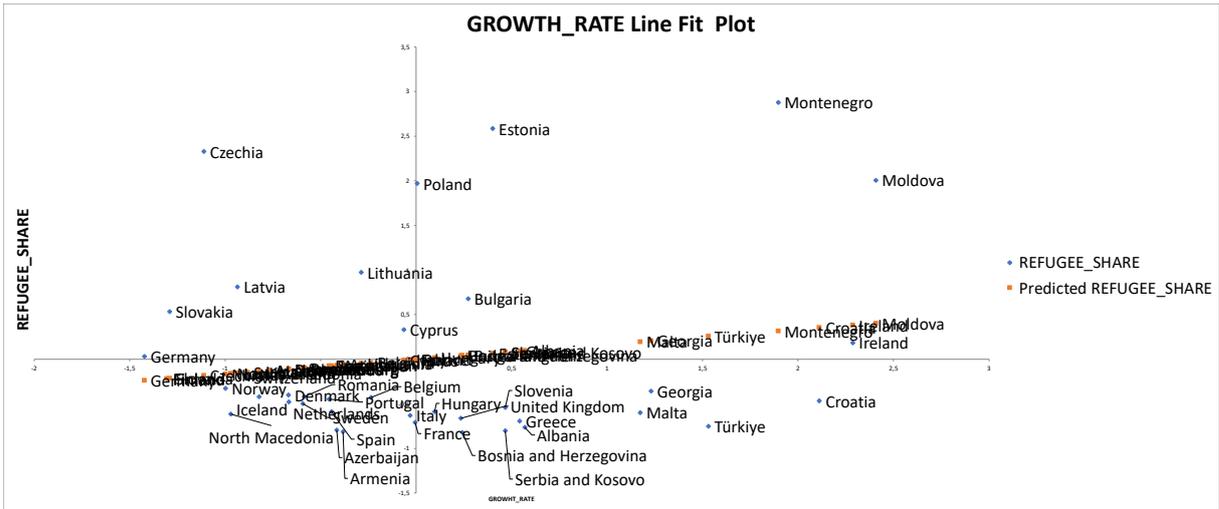
to stay. For Misha, in the Netherlands, “the fact that it is far from Ukraine, it was not a problem, because in any case, even to the extreme point, you can get there in one and a half to two days, and when [he] had to go back to Ukraine, to the funeral [of her mother], that is two days, you can get there; well, there is no problem in the distance itself”¹⁰⁸. Thus, the mixed-method results show that distance was not significant.

¹⁰⁸ #7 Interview with Misha in the Netherlands (RU).

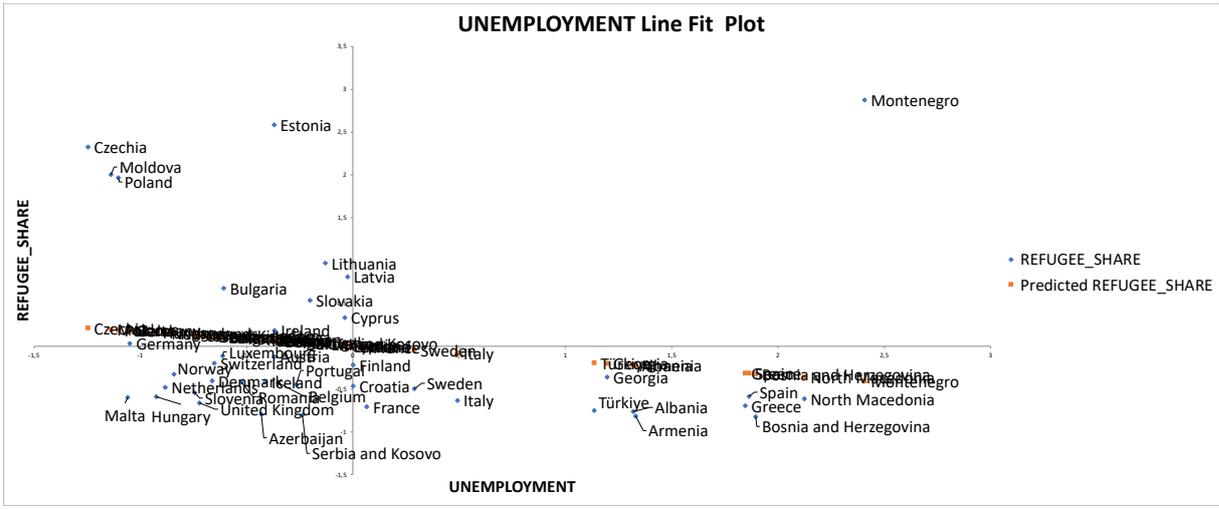
Chapter 3 - Economic Factors: The Relevance of Work and Education Expectations as Factors of Emigration in Times of War

Economic factors were mostly secondary considerations for refugees from Ukraine when choosing their destination country. Temporary Protection status provided by the European Union and similar schemes in other European countries allowed them to work quickly after their registration in the host country. Even though a large part of the refugees benefited from that status, no sufficient findings show that economic situations and job opportunities were determinant as a primary factor for migrating to a particular country.





GROWTH_RATE is also not significant, with a very high dispersion under and above the predictive levels. The GDP growth rate is not relevant for refugees to choose a destination country.



UNEMPLOYMENT is an important variable to take into account as the refugees obtained the right to work under Temporary Protection statuses. The variable is not statistically significant. The graph shows on the left-side of the X-axis countries with a low unemployment rate, and high rates on the right-side. Several neighboring countries with a low unemployment rate as Czechia, Estonia, Moldova, or Poland show a much higher number of refugees, whereas most of other countries are under the predictions.

During interviews, economic opportunities were important for the interviewees, without necessarily constituting a priority. First, as most of the interviewees had

received a higher education, they did not have much concern about finding work opportunities. Oksana expressed: “I know I had a really good expertise and career as a specialist. Ukrainian IT sphere is really strong. I knew it would just be a matter of time when I find some enterprise or startup to work with. I knew it was an opportunity to get a job, I just can do any job to get money, it’s not a problem”¹⁰⁹, Diana had the same thoughts: “I’m a multi-potential and I have different professions. And I have languages, so I didn’t care. I knew that I could find any job”¹¹⁰.

On the contrary, for Ksenia, Poland was not considered because of low economic opportunities, stating that “in Poland there are so many Ukrainian people now, and [she] knew already that it would be hard to find work”¹¹¹. Among all interviewees, only Ksenia and Yana expressed that economic opportunities were among the main reasons of their destination country. Ksenia said that “[she] ran because it was quite dangerous but more to find good life, to use this opportunity to find a good job, to earn some money, to see European countries”¹¹². In particular, she chose the Netherlands for the following reasons: “The first reason was easy to find work easily and if you have a BSN number and a sticker you can apply for work almost like Dutch, almost like a member of the European Union. You can easily work in here, but Ukrainians couldn’t before. Now we have such opportunity to start working here”¹¹³.

In addition to their main reason of going to the Netherlands, which was to reach Nikita's mother, Nikita and Kira stated that “wherever [they] went, [they] always thought about work, [they] didn’t think about any welfare or anything like that, [they] knew where we were coming to live, [they] needed a job, to provide for [themselves]”¹¹⁴. In their case, work opportunities were determinants as a secondary factor.

Polina, who was the only interviewee with a child, expressed that one more reason why she took the decision to go to the Netherlands was because “they told [her] it is

¹⁰⁹ #2 Interview with Oksana in France (ENG).

¹¹⁰ #8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹¹¹ #1 Interview with Ksenia and Yana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹¹² #1 Interview with Ksenia and Yana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹¹³ #1 Interview with Ksenia and Yana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹¹⁴ #5 Interview with Nikita and Kira in the Netherlands (RU).

the best country for children”, however, this “was important later” and “a place where you can sleep, feel warm and something to eat” was the most important at first¹¹⁵. Education was also primordial for Alina, who declared: “as I finished school, then we started to think about education, because we were all hoping that war will finish soon, but now as you see it's really long term, and we still don't know when it will finish, and education in Ukraine now is not really great, because everything is focused in the army, and that's why it's more difficult to study there now. So I cannot say that education was my priority, but now I really appreciate to study here”¹¹⁶. As people looking for work opportunities, refugees who needed to look for education regarded it as a secondary determinant in the decision-making process, after looking for a safe place and having acquaintance in the destination country. According to Vesna, it was very important for the Ukrainian people to find work but only after arriving, the first important priority was to be safe¹¹⁷.

¹¹⁵ #3 Interview with Polina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹¹⁶ #6 Interview with Alina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹¹⁷ #9 Interview with Vesna in the Netherlands (ENG).

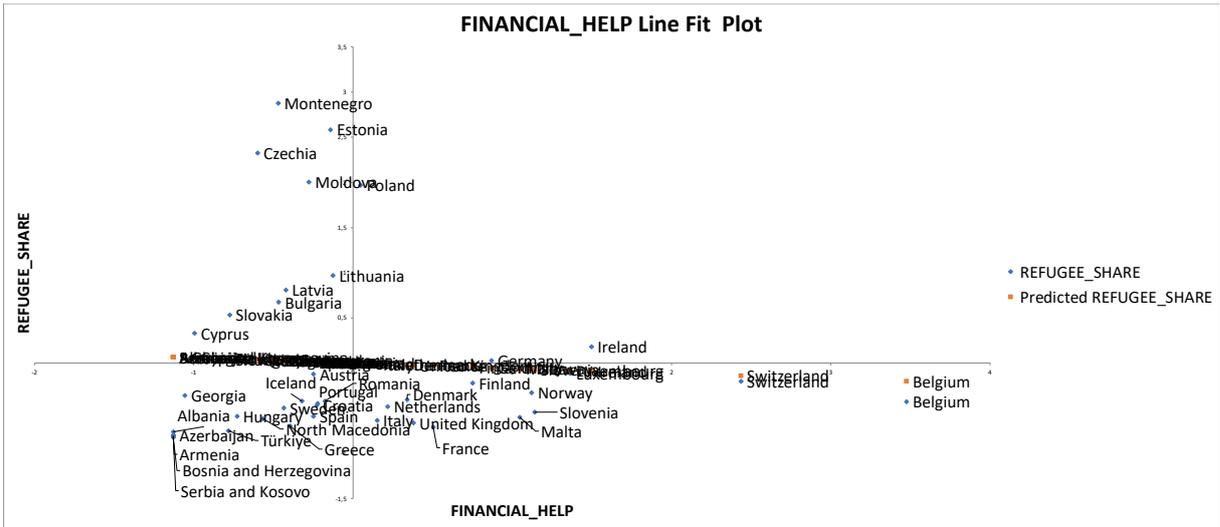
Chapter 4 – Low Significance of the Financial Help Provided by Host Countries as Vector of Choice

The institutional response to refugees from Ukraine varied from country to country. It consisted in accommodation, and financial help or social assistance. My results show that financial help was not significant neither in the quantitative nor the qualitative analysis. In particular, the interviews revealed a refusal on the part of refugees to "live off aid". Moreover, comparing the existing number of refugees in each country helped to grasp the existing institutional answer to previous refugees' situations, and to see if the previous institutional response affected the destination choice of refugees from Ukraine.

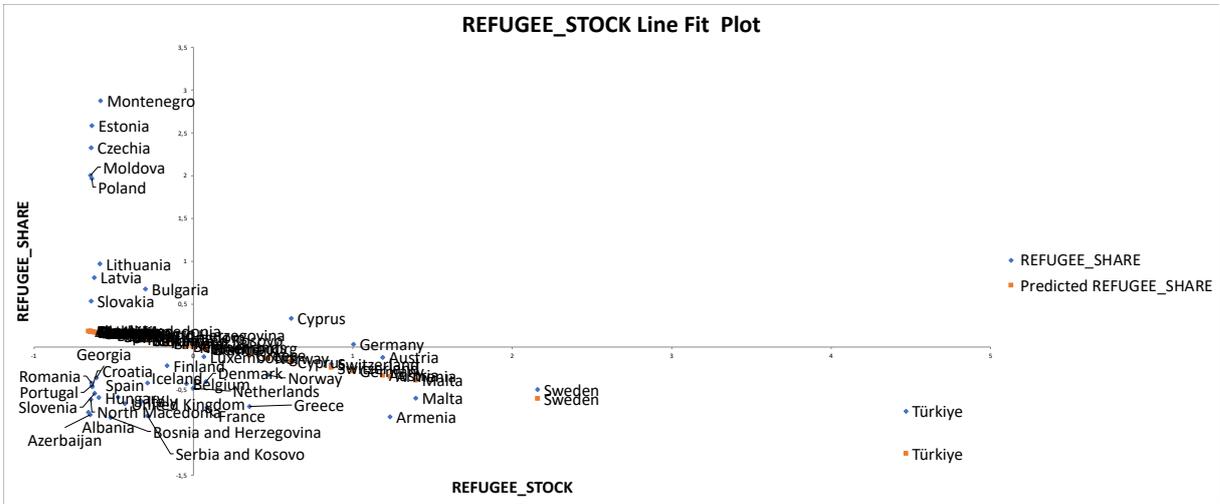
As the accommodation provided in European countries differed itself inside the countries, for example municipalities offered accommodation while others did not, it was not possible to assess the accommodation policy in all 41 countries studied. However, I gathered data on the financial help available for individual refugees over 25 years old in every country every month, in order to compare the values at the European scale. The table below shows the results in local currency and standardized in US dollars.

Country	Local Currency	Converted in US\$
Albania	0	\$0,00
Armenia	0	\$0,00
Austria	227,5	\$280,44
Azerbaijan	0	\$0,00
Belgium	1214,13	\$1 466,36
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	\$0,00
Bulgaria	167,75	\$210,74
Croatia	1128,333333	\$286,80
Cyprus	28,33333333	\$42,75
Czechia	2500	\$168,42
Denmark	3644	\$467,90
Estonia	200	\$314,51
Finland	555,11	\$598,48
France	426	\$519,52
Georgia	25	\$23,26
Germany	502	\$636,46
Greece	150	\$233,40
Hungary	22800	\$127,29
Iceland	42800	\$256,83
Ireland	880	\$836,11
Italy	300	\$407,28
Latvia	131,6666667	\$225,29
Lithuania	167,7	\$319,21
Luxembourg	791,8	\$793,10
Malta	444,72	\$692,77
Moldova	2200	\$271,31
Montenegro	90	\$209,38
Netherlands	364,18	\$428,55
North Macedonia	4000	\$178,88
Norway	7713	\$716,54
Poland	750	\$374,06
Portugal	189,66	\$288,62
Romania	600	\$303,19
Serbia and Kosovo	0	\$0,00
Slovakia	74	\$112,67
Slovenia	465,34	\$722,24
Spain	200	\$280,45
Sweden	2130	\$221,08
Switzerland	1500	\$1 135,07
Türkiye	346,6666667	\$110,11
United Kingdom	368,74	\$479,92

4.1: Table of financial or social assistance available to refugees from Ukraine in each European country, for an individual over 25 years old and per month (set of sources in bibliography)



The FINANCIAL_HELP graph does not display a correlation between the financial help provided by governments and the number of refugees from Ukraine they hosted, with many countries below and under the predictions. Belgium and Switzerland, which provide the highest social assistance to refugees, received a slightly lower share of refugees than the predictions.



The REFUGEE_STOCK graph also shows that countries who received a low or high share of refugees the last four years before the war did not necessarily receive a corresponding number of refugees from Ukraine. Countries geographically closer to Ukraine (Baltic countries, Czechia, Moldova, Poland, Bulgaria, Slovakia) received a higher share than the number of existing refugees could have predicted, while more distant countries received less.

During interviews, in the case of Ksenia and Yana, for whom the connections were not a main decision-making factor, institutional support was an important consideration, but they were the only interviewees for whom it was the case. They made some research on the available institutional support, and they declared that “in general [they were] looking all countries, what they can give [them], but the main priority was free accommodation, not so many countries gave [them]”¹¹⁸. In the Netherlands they declared receiving 56 euros each month, with free accommodation and food.

When asked about the financial support, most of the refugees immediately denied the importance of financial support. Misha reacted as follows: “I did not initially make such a decision for myself to sit and live as if on welfare”¹¹⁹. Alina insisted on the burden the financial help was provoking on the host country: “you need to understand that from their taxes, people are paying us financial help, so this is also making the country more tired, because of all these buildings, which are built now for Ukraine”¹²⁰. Oksana drew a comparison between the European and the Ukrainian welfare systems: “The life in Ukraine is different. We don’t have this economic system, these organizations which help in terms of money and subsidies. That’s why the majority of Ukrainians start working early, they don’t rely on the government, we don’t rely on any help that we could get from someone. I was also not expecting from France anything”¹²¹. Certain refugees did not consider financial help also because they did not expect it, some discovering later what they could obtain.

Moreover, refugees who left Ukraine during the first weeks of the war did not have access to reliable information on this matter, as governments did not necessarily adopt immediate or sufficiently clear measures on the financial support to refugees. Polina declared that “nobody knew that we would receive some support, and even for many weeks, two months; nobody, even the municipality or the government, did know what to do with the Ukrainians”¹²².

¹¹⁸ #1 Interview with Ksenia and Yana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹¹⁹ #7 Interview with Misha in the Netherlands (RU).

¹²⁰ #6 Interview with Alina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹²¹ #2 Interview with Oksana in France (ENG).

¹²² #3 Interview with Polina in the Netherlands (ENG).

Most of the people interviewed quickly started to work in the place where they arrived, which led to the discontinuation of financial assistance. It was the case of Alina, who declared: “Now I am working, and that’s why I don’t receive any financial help from the government”¹²³. A similar decision-making was made by Diana, who preferred to consider job opportunities over the financial help as she expected to find work: “when I was choosing, okay the allowance from the government was better in Belgium, but the salaries were better in Holland. So after I had my processing time, if I thought to work somewhere, that would be in Holland”¹²⁴.

Thus, financial help was seen as an insignificant factor by the interviewees. Most of them declared that they did not know how much financial support they could receive in their destination country before they arrived. However, the governmentally provided accommodation seemed to be a most important factor, as all interviewees stated that living in a “safe place” was among their priorities. Therefore, financial support was not decisive in the country’s choice, but accommodation was important as a negative factor, as some refugees declared that they decided not to go to certain countries because it was more difficult to obtain a place to live there. Ilona also did not search on financial aid, she just had information on it from her mother and a friend. The most important was the place of living, and to know if housing was offered by the government¹²⁵.

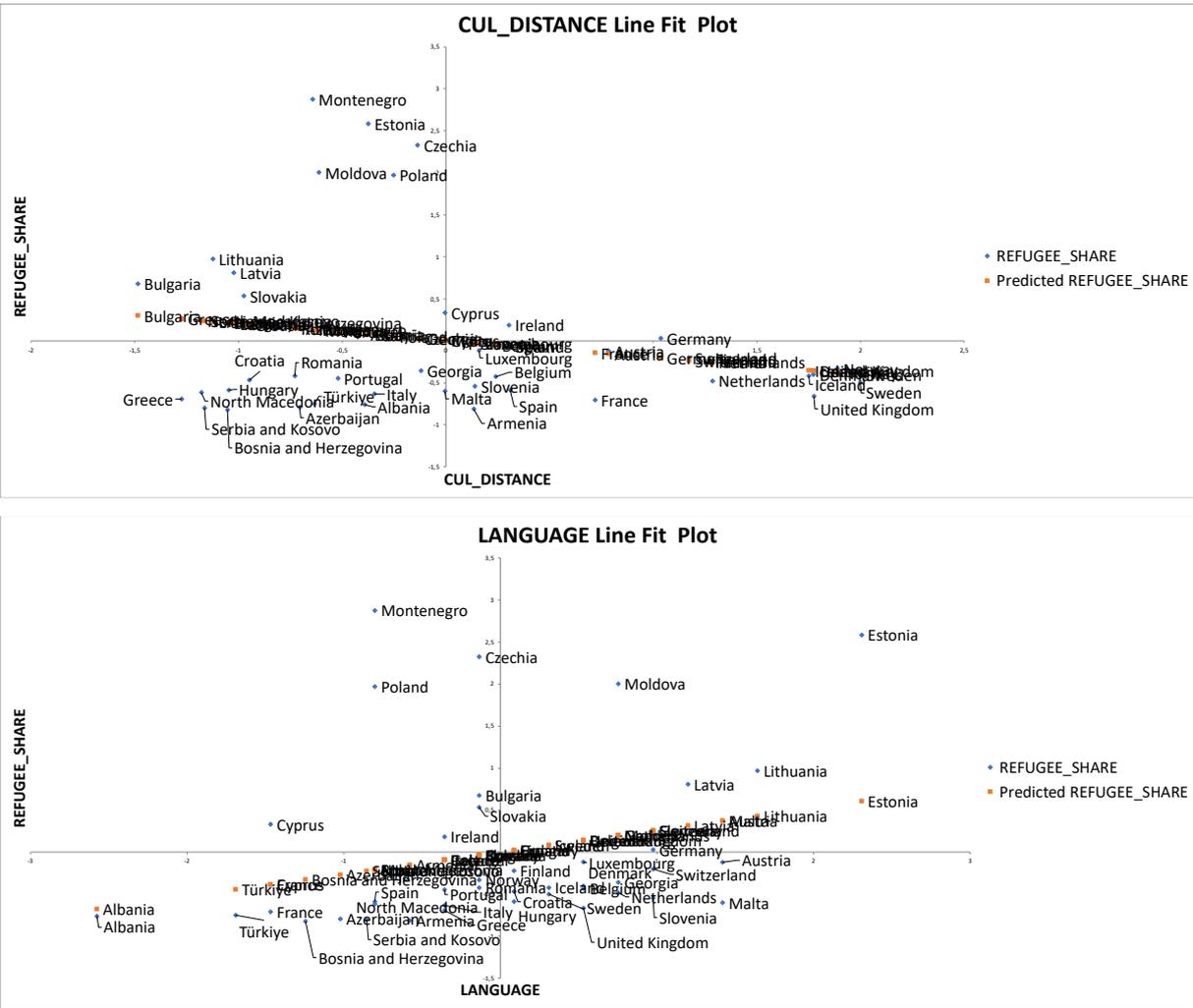
¹²³ #6 Interview with Alina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹²⁴ #8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹²⁵ #4 Interview with Ilona in Belgium (ENG).

Chapter 5 – “Cultural Proximity” Between Ukraine and European Countries: Language and Lifestyle of Host Country as Determinants of Decision-Making

The cultural similarities between Ukraine and host countries may explain why refugees decided to choose a destination country among others. Culture is a complex multi-dimensional factor, encompassing diverse dimensions. To apprehend this variable, I used data from the World Values Survey¹²⁶, and I studied the impact of language spoken in host countries. Results from the regression charts show that this is insignificant, and interviews did not reveal this factor to be of primary importance.



¹²⁶ Cf. Appendix 4.

The CUL_DISTANCE regression graph proves to be very scattered, countries with a lower cultural distance with Ukraine received either less refugees than predicted (i.e., Greece, North Macedonia, or Serbia and Kosovo) while other culturally close countries are above the predictions (i.e., Bulgaria, Baltic countries, Slovakia). The lack of correlation suggests that the cultural characteristics of host countries did not influence the destination choice of refugees from Ukraine. Moreover, the LANGUAGE variable is not significant, the more a country's population (precisely, TOEFL test takers) know English and or Russian does not correlate with the predicted number of refugees.

When asked about their knowledge of their destination country, interviewees knew more or less about the local culture, depending on whether they had previously visited the country, or what research they had done. However, their prior knowledge of the host country's culture did not appear to be a key factor in their decision, but rather a factor in confirming their choice to settle there.

In some cases, culture has proved to be an important factor, especially for the people staying in Poland, which has a language closer to Ukrainian than other countries. Oksana explained that “[her] mom prefers to stay in Poland because the culture is more similar, and she likes the Polish language”¹²⁷. Alina also pointed out that “Polish language is really similar to Ukrainian, and you really can understand everything that Polish people are saying; so, adults, for example, they don't know English but they can just understand Polish”¹²⁸.

Language was more important than culture in general during interviews. Kira declared: “For me always, if in another country, the most important things are language and living rooftops”¹²⁹. The choice of Oksana to go to France was reinforced by her previous knowledge of French language: “I was studying French language for 6 months, I went to “Alliance Française” in Kharkiv, it also gives a lot of cultural aspects when you're learning the language and before, a lot of foreigners including French lived

¹²⁷ #2 Interview with Oksana in France (ENG).

¹²⁸ #6 Interview with Alina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹²⁹ #5 Interview with Nikita and Kira in the Netherlands (RU).

in Kharkiv”¹³⁰. Ilona searched for information about the language and saw that English was widely spoken in Belgium¹³¹, which reinforced her choice to go there. Language was also primordial as condition for departure, not much for choosing the destination country, she said that “as [she] knew English, [her] parents decided to send [her] alone to Netherlands”¹³². To Polina and Alina, the lack of knowledge on the Netherlands made them think that English or German were more widely used in this country, Polina said that “[she] really believed that [she] could use German”¹³³, while Alina said that “before arriving [she] was thinking that in the Netherlands all people just speak English and don't speak Dutch”¹³⁴. Also, not knowing the local language or English did not necessarily prevent refugees to come, Misha for example stated that “[he] understood that there would be certain difficulties but it kind of motivated [him], when [he] arrived here, to learn it faster”¹³⁵.

Language could also be a negative factor, making refugees reluctant to go to a certain country. This was the case of the mother of Oksana, who regretted: “I wanted my mom to be close to me. But she’s 50 years old and speaks only Russian and Ukrainian, and learning only English is already a problem for her. And here in France, most people maybe know how to speak English, but they don’t really speak English. You need to learn French, and the French language is so difficult”¹³⁶. Vesna also noticed that many Ukrainians who did not speak English very well went back to Ukraine because they found it too hard to live in Europe with the language barrier¹³⁷.

Therefore, language was rather a push factor than a pull factor, people who spoke English easily took the decision to go to European countries. However, this has not necessarily prevented people who do not speak English from emigrating.

¹³⁰ #2 Interview with Oksana in France (ENG).

¹³¹ #4 Interview with Ilona in Belgium (ENG).

¹³² #6 Interview with Alina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹³³ #3 Interview with Polina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹³⁴ #6 Interview with Alina in the Netherlands (ENG).

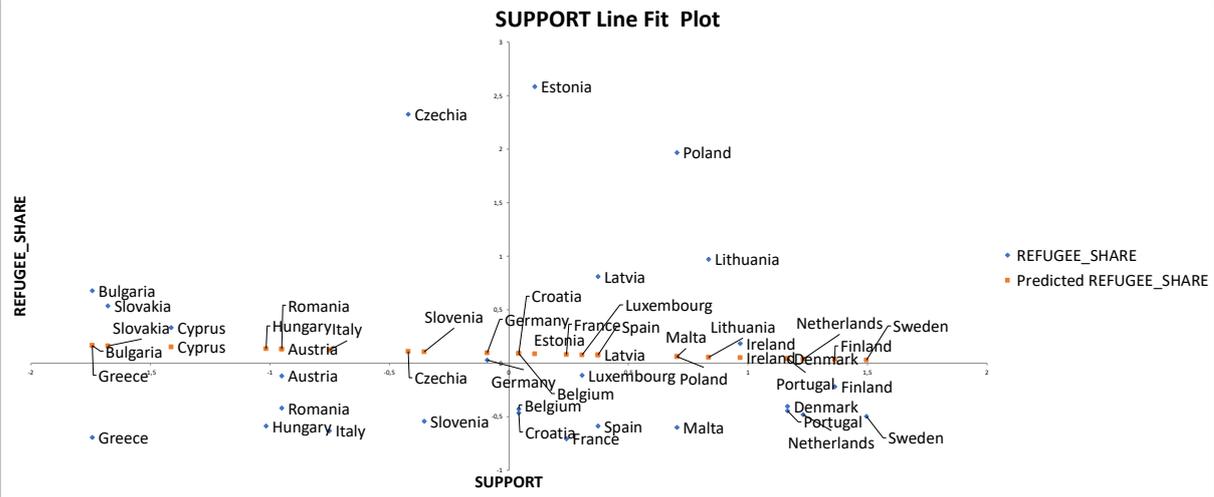
¹³⁵ #7 Interview with Misha in the Netherlands (RU).

¹³⁶ #2 Interview with Oksana in France (ENG).

¹³⁷ #9 Interview with Vesna in the Netherlands (ENG).

Chapter 6 – The Host Population Support in the Destination Choice of Refugees from Ukraine

After the beginning of the 2022 invasion of Ukraine by Russia, reactions in Europe were mostly favorable to Ukrainians, the governments from European countries providing support and large parts of European countries’ populations helping Ukrainians. However, polls conducted by the EU showed that the approval of EU’s support towards Ukraine was stronger in some countries than others¹³⁸. Quantitative analysis based on the EU’s polls do not show a correlation with the share of refugees, however support by the population was considered important to refugees during interviews as a secondary factor in their decision-making process to move to Europe.



The SUPPORT regression graph shows a high dispersion, with no correlation between populations showing a lower (to the left side of the X-axis) or stronger (to the right side) support to EU’s help to Ukraine, and the share of refugees in these countries.

Interviewees expressed the importance of the host population’s support in their choice of their destination country, for most of them however it was not the primary factor. Ksenia and Yana considered it as a “third reason”, considering the Netherlands as a “friendly society”, and “heard a lot about Dutch people, that they are friendly, they

¹³⁸ “EP Autumn 2022 Survey: Parlemeter.”

accept in a good way foreign people”¹³⁹. Nikita also expressed that “when you move, you want to live in a good country, in a good city. And I want them to be good people. That’s all. And then there are jobs, housing, everything”¹⁴⁰, therefore considering support of surrounding people as crucial.

Population’s support could also be important in the decision of refugees to stay in their first transit country, in particular Poland. Alina declared that “a lot of people who live now in Poland, they will maybe stay there after war, because it’s really comfortable to live in this country”¹⁴¹. Also, when Diana arrived in the Netherlands, perceived population’s support was important to her in deciding to stay in that country: “I was still not able to make any decisions, but people were smiling to me, that’s the reason why I stayed in Holland. People were smiling to my dog”¹⁴².

On the contrary, a perceived low support conducted Polina in not considering Germany as her destination country, based on a previous negative experience when traveling before the war in that country: “I thought I will never live in a country where people don’t have kindness and open heart”¹⁴³. Circulation of rumors also played a role in increasing or decreasing the perceived support by different European populations. Nikita said that “maybe a rumor started that France doesn’t accept refugees, because of that many people didn’t even consider it”¹⁴⁴. Alina conveyed the same thought: “the thing why people were not going to France, is that in the beginning of war, France was not really helping people with housing, it was like, in our public opinion, for example, Poland really keep people, Netherlands keep people, German keep people, but it was nothing about France”¹⁴⁵. The extent of the role of rumors is, however, difficult to gauge, especially as other interviewees said that they had not heard rumors about particular countries. Misha for example “had never come across it, and no one of [his]

¹³⁹ #1 Interview with Ksenia and Yana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁴⁰ #5 Interview with Nikita and Kira in the Netherlands (RU).

¹⁴¹ #6 Interview with Alina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁴² #8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁴³ #3 Interview with Polina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁴⁴ #5 Interview with Nikita and Kira in the Netherlands (RU).

¹⁴⁵ #6 Interview with Alina in the Netherlands (ENG).

acquaintances told [him] about rumors; all the countries that are listed, all responded kindly and helped, everyone was grateful”¹⁴⁶.

The host population’s support was important as a secondary factor to choose a destination country for interviewees, but the impact of this factor was not statistically significant. Rather, interviews showed the high importance of this variable when taking the decision of staying in a destination country or moving to another.

¹⁴⁶ #7 Interview with Misha in the Netherlands (RU).

Chapter 7 – A Multi-Layered Decision-Making with a Key Role of Network

In Chapter 1 to Chapter 6, I saw that different factors played a role in the decision-making of refugees from Ukraine when choosing a country in Europe to live in. The connections in the destination country turned out to be the most important, and secondary factors which differed among the refugees according to their personal experiences played a role in the decision-making. Interviews helped to uncover certain mechanisms on this multi-layered process, and to see how interviewees combined different reasons together.

The combination of factors depended on the individuals. When comparing different countries in Europe where accommodation was provided, Ksenia and Yana first considered “Germany because of its good economy and because [Ksenia] was studying the German language at school”¹⁴⁷. In that case, the standard of living, job opportunities and integration opportunities were the most important. In the case of Misha, the cultural factor played an important role as secondary variable (after the network), as he replied after being asked about his motivations: “First of all, being closer to my relatives. Secondly, learning about the history of the Netherlands itself”¹⁴⁸.

In order to reach a decision, the management of different sources of information was also of importance in ordering the different factors of choice. Social media were used, as Telegram channels or YouTube videos. Ksenia and Yana who did not have any contact in the Netherlands before arriving “looked at videos on YouTube and otherwise only from social medias”¹⁴⁹. Group discussions with friends on online messaging services were primordial to exchange information, Polina explained how the network with her friends was settled: “from the first hours, we created a small chat, we called it “safety from Ukraine”, it was my friends from Amsterdam and my best friends from Lviv”¹⁵⁰. Diana described how more general group chats gathering entire communities

¹⁴⁷ #1 Interview with Ksenia and Yana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁴⁸ #7 Interview with Misha in the Netherlands (RU).

¹⁴⁹ #1 Interview with Ksenia and Yana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁵⁰ #3 Interview with Polina in the Netherlands (ENG).

were also created on which information was shared on host countries: “one of the most popular things were, and still are, I guess, the chat organized on Telegram, so you can find like Ukrainians in the Netherlands, Ukrainians in Portugal, Ukrainians there...”¹⁵¹. Diana and Oksana also pointed out the lack of information, both in the beginning of the war and in Russian occupied regions of Ukraine, where Internet is lacking, and information controlled. Oksana described how filtered was the information in the region of Mariupol: “It is crazy propaganda, they say that Europe is starving to death, that there is no food and electricity, that Ukraine is conquered; the only way is “peaceful great Russia””¹⁵². Diana explained that in the first days of the war, “you have to make decisions based on rumors and your intuition”¹⁵³. These harsh circumstances reduced the transparency and the level of agency in the decision-making.

Interviewees highlighted key moments when they made their decision to choose to go abroad. For Polina, it was “when [she] found out that [her] company didn't find an apartment or some place for [her] to live in Lviv”¹⁵⁴. In the case of Nikita and Kira, they took part in a health program which stopped when the city was occupied by Russia, and “when the program was closed, everyone started to think about what to do, and many people went straight to Europe”¹⁵⁵.

In the decision-making process, timeframe was also primordial, as people who left Ukraine directly at the end of February 2022 had less information of what they could expect in Europe: people who constituted the first wave could not rely on previous people, and policies by host countries’ governments were not settled yet. On the contrary, interviewed people who left Ukraine a few months after had more elements and a higher level of agency.

The difficult conditions under which certain interviewees made their decision also show that circumstances affect the factors taken into account when choosing a country,

¹⁵¹ #8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁵² #2 Interview with Oksana in France (ENG).

¹⁵³ #8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁵⁴ #3 Interview with Polina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁵⁵ #5 Interview with Nikita and Kira in the Netherlands (RU).

where safety and a place to live became paramount over other factors. Oksana said that “you didn’t have time to make a decision, you had so much stress”¹⁵⁶. For Polina, “it was hard on all of the steps, especially [she] didn’t sleep many days and sometimes [her] eyes couldn’t even see”¹⁵⁷. Diana also explained the particular circumstances of her decision-making: “You normally choose where to live by taking into account several aspects, like your job, with the language, also the economy and all of those things. I was not able to make those decisions when I was sitting in Odessa, understanding that I’m losing my job, my family, everything”¹⁵⁸. Ilona did not want to leave Ukraine and was strongly advised by her relatives and friends to do so, she expressed that it was only “a 20% decision”¹⁵⁹. Accordingly, it appears that the field of possibilities was narrowing in times of tough circumstances, and a number of key factors mattered more, primarily the need to find a safe place where to live.

Humanitarian organizations also played a role as external actors in the decision-making of certain interviewees. It is more difficult, however, to evaluate the impact of these organizations on a global scale. On the local level, the Red Cross participated in the repartition of refugees among municipalities within countries, Ksenia and Yana declared: “The Red Cross helped us, they took us in Amsterdam, and they moved us to [our final city] and gave us a place to live”¹⁶⁰. It was also the case for Diana: “So I went to Red Cross, and I asked for a shelter because I couldn’t live with that host anymore and I couldn’t find myself a place. And they sent me here in [my final city]”¹⁶¹. Kira and Diana mentioned a German organization called “Be an Angel” which helped Ukrainians to go to European countries, without altering the level of agency of the refugees transported as they could stop anywhere on the journey, as specified by Diana: “they were getting out people from Ukraine, like transporting them. They were bringing them to Germany, or they would stop in any city. If you had relatives or friends, if you were going to another city, if you don’t have a place where to go, they would find

¹⁵⁶ #2 Interview with Oksana in France (ENG).

¹⁵⁷ #3 Interview with Polina in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁵⁸ #8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁵⁹ #4 Interview with Ilona in Belgium (ENG).

¹⁶⁰ #1 Interview with Ksenia and Yana in the Netherlands (ENG).

¹⁶¹ #8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG).

some host for you”¹⁶². The impact of organizations was important in helping refugees to reach their desire countries, but it cannot be said from the interviews that they influenced the choice of the destination country itself.

The decision-making of interviewees was multi-layered, but always demonstrated a main factor to decide in which country to leave. Circumstances as the timeframe of the decision, the access to information on host country, decisive moments faced by the people, or the intervention of external actors could also add to the multiple factors at play.

¹⁶² #8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG).

Conclusion

The multiple linear and simple regression results, supported by interview, showed that connections were the most important predictor of decision-making for refugees from Ukraine when choosing a destination country. However, this variable alone did not explain the entire repartition, suggesting that secondary factors also played a role in their choice.

Connections between Ukrainians and acquaintances in certain countries were below or above the predictions set by the independent variable of connectedness. The three South Caucasus countries received less refugees from Ukraine than what their connections would have predicted, which may be explained by their distance from Ukraine (and the necessity to cross Russia) or the low economics and financial support in these countries. Some countries were at the contrary above the predictions, as Estonia, Lithuania, or Montenegro. In the case of Estonia and Lithuania, the countries' support may explain these high variations, as the Baltic states were the first and most vocal supporters of Ukraine after its invasion by Russia. When it comes to Montenegro, the high number of refugees could be linked to the primary source of data used on the number of refugees in this country, since UNHCR indicated a lower number for refugees under Temporary Protection or similar schemes, than for refugees recorded.

Decision-making is a complex and multi-layered process and each individual path proved to be different when it comes to the most important factors which were decisive. In situations where individuals had connections in several European countries, secondary factors made it possible to decide on one destination or another, based on the individual's economic, social or cultural situation. Economic factors appeared to be important during interviews, even though their significance was not confirmed by the quantitative analysis. Distance was not very important and not considered as a big issue for refugees, as some distant countries, as Ireland, Portugal or even Iceland, received a high share of refugees from Ukraine. Also, the amount of financial help proved not to be significant in both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Finally, secondary factors were important to confirm a choice, to reassure oneself, particularly with regard to language, work or educational opportunities. Therefore, factors other

than connections, as support of host population, perceived cultural proximity or financial help were most often more important after the arrival.

My findings matched with those of Irina Kuznecova¹⁶³, who identified after the 2014 war in Ukraine determinant factors of migration such as connections, economic reasons, safety considerations and the role of humanitarian organizations. However, my research showed that connections were the most decisive factor and added the importance of host country's support as secondary factor in the decision-making. The existing literature on refugees' pull factors using quantitative analysis, from Neumayer¹⁶⁴ and Moore and Shellman¹⁶⁵ showed that the wealth of host countries, cultural ties, language and geographical proximity were important as factors for selecting a country of migration. In the case of refugees from Ukraine, only the connections proved to be statistically significant, which would be closer to the results of Riddle and Buckley on Armenian refugees in the Russian Federation¹⁶⁶ or Collyer who noticed the importance of non-family connections of Algerian migrants to the UK¹⁶⁷. There are no similar results to those of the studies showing an impact of the recognition rate of previous refugees on the number of arriving refugees, which can be explained by the fact that refugees from Ukraine were provided with a special status in all European countries and did not have to go through an asylum application. My results on refugees from Ukraine show that their perception of the host country was important as a secondary factor in their decision-making, as Barsky found with refugees from the former Soviet Union in Canada¹⁶⁸, even though that perception did not match the reality. Also, the support or welcomeness was important, as in Hagen-Zanker and Mallett's study¹⁶⁹, but did not impact the choice of the refugees who already had a defined idea of their destination country.

¹⁶³ Kuznecova, "Bezheny Iz Ukrainy."

¹⁶⁴ Neumayer, "Asylum Destination Choice."

¹⁶⁵ Moore and Shellman, "Whither Will They Go?"

¹⁶⁶ Riddle and Buckley, "Forced Migration and Destination Choice."

¹⁶⁷ Collyer, "When Do Social Networks Fail to Explain Migration? Accounting for the Movement of Algerian Asylum Seekers to the UK."

¹⁶⁸ Barsky, "Arguing the American Dream à La Canada."

¹⁶⁹ Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, "Journeys to Europe. The Role of Policy in Migrant Decision-Making."

This mixed-method studies shed light on the importance of a variety of factors of decision-making. Interviews showed that accommodation was primordial along connections in choosing a country and a municipality where to settle, this variable could be the fruit of explorations in another research project, which I was unable to explore due to a lack of sources on housing availability in European countries. Furthermore, it could be interesting to carry out a segmentation of refugees from Ukraine to explore if their socio-economic characteristics have guided them towards certain countries rather than others. Understanding the key factors that attract refugees to certain countries, as I showed principally the connections in a broad sense, could help to improve the response of European governments to the current migratory crisis, but also to future mass displacements to anticipate the influx of refugees and better organize their reception. This is all the more important given that this is the first such situation within the European continent since the wars in former Yugoslavia, and a unique situation in terms of the Temporary Protection response granted by the EU to refugees from Ukraine. Most of all, I hope that this study helped to dispel certain preconceived ideas about the choices made by refugees from Ukraine, but also, through interviews, to show the harsh circumstances that forced them to leave their homeland and choose to settle in countries where many had never been before.

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#2 Interview with Oksana in France (ENG), February 25, 2023.

#3 Interview with Polina in the Netherlands (ENG), March 2, 2023.

#4 Interview with Ilona in Belgium (ENG), March 9, 2023.

#5 Interview with Nikita and Kira in the Netherlands (RU), March 21, 2023.

#6 Interview with Alina in the Netherlands (ENG), April 6, 2023.

#7 Interview with Misha in the Netherlands (RU), May 25, 2023.

#8 Interview with Diana in the Netherlands (ENG), June 2, 2023.

#9 Interview with Vesna in the Netherlands (ENG), June 9, 2023.

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aid to refugees. The strong collinearity between diaspora and Facebook Connectedness is probably explained by the fact that users of Facebook in Ukraine tended to communicate with users of the Ukrainian diaspora in European countries. As most relations are below the threshold of 0.6 and the three strongest collinearities can be explained and bring additional insights, I kept the entire set of independent variables.

I also performed on Excel a multicollinearity test using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) to measure the collinearity between one independent variable and all other nine independent variables. The results below show that there are all situated under the recommended threshold of 5, which means that they don't have a high degree of multicollinearity.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	VIF
DIASPORA	3,73001962
CONNECTEDNESS	3,42216327
DISTANCE	1,79881048
GDP	3,20655733
GROWHT_RATE	1,22205522
UNEMPLOYMENT	1,77538156
FINANCIAL_HELP	2,26709324
REFUGEE_STOCK	1,26818653
CUL_DISTANCE	2,62621587
LANGUAGE	2,07940853

1.2. Standardization of variables' values

Dependent and independent variables were standardized using z-scoring, also called standard score, which involves transforming variables to a shared scale, where the values are adjusted to have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. The following formula is used to calculate the standardized value z:

$$z = \frac{x - \mu}{\sigma}$$

With x as the variable value, μ as the mean of all variable values, and σ as the standard deviation of all variable values.

2. Questionnaire for Semi-Directed and In-Depth Interviews with Refugees from Ukraine

This sample interview was used to conduct interviews with Ukrainian refugees and was translated into Russian for the two interviews conducted in this language.

1. Personal information of the interviewee

Gender:

Age:

City of birth:

Personal situation (married, single):

Children:

Profession in Ukraine:

Last city where you lived in Ukraine:

Number of countries you crossed/lived in before arriving in the Netherlands:

If you crossed or lived in other countries, which were they:

Date of arrival in the host country:

Place of living in the host country:

2. General questions on the decision-making leading to the choice of the destination

Were you free in your choice to come to the Netherlands?

If not, why so?

If you did choose, what motivated you to choose this country?

Did you compare the Netherlands with other countries?

If so, with which countries did you compare the Netherlands?

On what aspects did you compare the countries?

When did you make that choice (to come to the Netherlands)?

Is Leiden the first city you reached when you arrived in the Netherlands?

Do you plan to leave to another place than the city where you live now?

3. Specific questions related to the factors of decision-making

a. Network

Did you know any people in the Netherlands before travelling to that country (family, friends, acquaintances)?

Did you have other relatives or acquaintance in Europe or in the world?

Did someone advice you to come to the Netherlands?

Did someone help you to come to the Netherlands?

Did any group or organization help you to come to the Netherlands?

Did you help other Ukrainian people to come to the Netherlands?

Are there relatives who will join you in the Netherlands?

b. Integration opportunities

Did you expect to find a job in the Netherlands when you chose to come to that country?

If you are student, have you considered enrolling in a higher education institution in the Netherlands?

If you have children, how important was their education in your choice of the Netherlands?

c. Institutional support

Did you know the amount and modalities of monetary support from the Dutch government for Ukrainians before coming to the Netherlands?

Did you know that you could get an accommodation within a municipality in the Netherlands?

Did you compare the ease of administrative procedures between different countries?

d. Perception of the Netherlands

What kind of information on the Netherlands did you receive before coming here?

Did you visit Europe before the war?

From which sources (media, social networks, relatives)?

If not mentioned in the previous answers, what did you know about the Dutch people, the Dutch way of life, the Dutch politics, the economy of the Netherlands, the cost of living, the functioning of the Dutch administration.

Did you visit any European country before February 2022?

e. Distance/Geography

Was distance from Ukraine an important factor when choosing to leave to a country abroad?

f. Language/Cultural affinity

What languages do you speak?

How important were the languages widely spoken in the Netherlands (Dutch, English) in your decision to come here?

4. Open questions

Do you keep track of your life and journey in any support? (social networks, messages, journal, ...)

If it is the case, would you be willing to share it with me?

Do you know any other Ukrainian who fled Ukraine after the war, whom I may contact?

Is there something I did not mention that you wish to talk about?

3. Data Tables for Dependent and Independent Variables

Dependent and Independent Variables Non-Standardized

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES											
COUNTRY	DIASPORA	CONNECTEDNESS	DISTANCE	GDP	GROWHT_RATE	UNEMPLOYMENT	FINANCIAL_HELP	REFUGEE_STOCK	CUL_DISTANCE	LANGUAGE	SUPPORT
Albania	3,55661E-07	1489	639	6492,87201	8,515501123	12,68299961	0	4,14345E-05	0,687066776		84
Armenia	0,000878905	14340	722	4966,51347	5,7	12,72900009	0	0,015996566	0,976303005		93
Austria	0,001568481	4890	373	53637,7057	4,556850913	6,179999828	280,4421494	0,015606093	1,331854233		102
Azerbaijan	0,000265148	14878	815	5387,99797	5,600037273	5,949999809	0	0,000135311	0,515456753		91
Belgium	0,000228501	3665	1158	51247,0144	6,133865964	6,260000229	1466,361831	0,005237148	1,034409173		98
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3,05722E-07	1331	436	7143,31055	7,54559113	14,89999962	0	0,001218303	0,323931511		90
Bulgaria	0,001639491	8611	152	12221,4966	7,634609716	5,269999981	210,7432056	0,003063759	0,087407197		95
Croatia	0,000182611	2566	368	17885,3253	13,07220492	7,610000134	286,797989	0,000235894	0,382141769		96
Cyprus	0,002618575	11712	970	31551,8164	6,638926968	7,460000038	42,75488598	0,010767464	0,9		89
Czechia	0,01249951	41768	264	26821,2452	3,544223443	3,569999943	168,4240935	0,00019199	0,827478967		95
Denmark	0,001946648	3902	682	68007,7567	4,855707586	5,059999943	467,8951268	0,006267231	1,874520415		98
Estonia	0,018160958	24605	626	27943,7012	8,013462924	6,179999828	314,5128824	0,000234422	0,696916676		106
Finland	0,000514707	4180	887	53654,7503	2,973229356	7,610000134	598,4781184	0,004207305	1,598832305		96
France	0,000268149	1791	1029	43658,979	6,816589136	7,860000134	519,5191643	0,006318223	1,296525924		89
Georgia	0,00290721	16472	339	5023,2748	10,46553729	12,20800018	23,25986929	0,00046783	0,836689723		99
Germany	0,003482664	5290	574	51203,5545	2,626987267	3,569999933	636,4605692	0,014053568	1,470996254		100
Greece	0,001865106	3829	432	20192,5963	8,434425502	14,71000004	233,4034581	0,008566945	0,202854837		94
Hungary	0,007306467	17019	0	18728,1219	7,117315315	4,050000191	127,2911315	0,00599466	0,327620724		96
Iceland	0,001175776	2695	2584	68727,6367	4,403044786	6,019999981	256,8310966	0,00317634	1,862468894		97
Ireland	0,001039704	2262	2010	100172,079	13,58824711	6,190000057	836,1116627	0,001609971	1,066785277		94
Italy	0,00420339	7682	669	35657,4976	6,737277123	9,5	407,2844176	0,002832548	0,712711499		94
Latvia	0,017120282	18660	420	21148,1629	4,068073863	7,510000229	225,2907391	0,00035434	0,341265128		101
Lithuania	0,007343157	11146	224	23723,3403	5,981032113	7,110000134	319,2072544	0,000652751	0,285247389		103
Luxembourg	0,00229977	4532	1147	133590,147	5,102455447	5,25	793,1014795	0,006146651	0,988487198		98
Malta	0,001675872	5993	1497	33486,672	10,2977636	3,529999971	692,7684348	0,017351736	0,9		102
Moldova	0,016227063	31083	0	5230,66173	13,9445896	3,230000019	271,314586	0,00015104	0,566417731		99
Montenegro	0,000227709	12536	568	9465,704	12,43435899	16,870000084	209,3830768	0,000694836	0,549415442		92
Netherlands	0,000172417	2578	1128	57767,8788	4,863219149	4,210000038	428,5524323	0,005585496	1,607384831		99
North Macedonia	3,09914E-05	4228	578	6694,64113	3,964264171	15,77999973	178,884736	0,000164884	0,255371149		92
Norway	0,001052822	2158	1111	89154,2761	3,880936036	4,369999886	716,5356796	0,009549222	1,937559084		95
Poland	0,00722161	33472	0	17999,9099	6,847173362	3,359999895	374,0556964	0,000217228	0,756433147		92
Portugal	0,005170386	5133	2345	24567,5093	5,482391708	6,579999924	288,6213257	0,000231498	0,616193865		94
Romania	0,002268006	2872	0	14858,1294	5,100128197	5,590000153	303,1940977	0,000206264	0,502669938		95
Serbia and Kosovo	0,000150574	2961,72286	286	8409,63119	8,212023785	6,691999912	0	0,00316402	0,264042668		91,7568706
Slovakia	0,002126395	12005	0	21391,9253	3,014302861	6,829999924	112,6654202	0,000181514	0,367657169		95
Slovenia	0,001331544	3165	471	29291,4006	8,211062592	4,739999771	722,2434339	0,000373444	0,979128514		100
Spain	0,002243432	3689	1617	30102,5137	5,519594973	14,779999973	280,4455157	0,001604694	1,072421258		92
Sweden	0,000977072	3261	687	61028,7381	5,075084725	8,720000267	221,0842553	0,023791306	1,997991212		97
Switzerland	0,001221591	3418	892	91991,6005	4,221716577	5,099999905	1135,069485	0,012891506	1,54549513		100
Türkiye	6,77791E-05	2541	266	9661,23598	11,35349641	11,979999954	110,1083138	0,004371389	0,553807768		88
United Kingdom	0,000330021	1917	1497	46510,2288	7,524910374	4,826000214	479,9164955	0,00197376	1,876312087		98
MEAN	0,003229138	8837,212753	743	35273,188	6,831042765	7,60653658	359,4881497	0,005594766	0,902104774	95,6038261	74,3703704
STANDARD DEVIATION	0,004725254	9474,269995	617,268945	29895,7829	2,955580175	3,848416826	318,4463863	0,008431083	0,548635963	4,50435635	15,1254959

DEPENDENT VARIABLE											
COUNTRY	REFUGEE_POPULATION	POPULATION (2021, World Bank)	REFUGEE_SHARE	VARIABLES TO BE STANDARDIZED AS A PROPORTION OF THE COUNTRY'S POPULATION							
COUNTRY	DIASPORA	REFUGEE_STOCK									
Albania	2686	2811666	0,00095531	Albania	0	116,5					
Armenia	511	2790974	0,00018309	Armenia	2 452	44646					
Austria	93579	8955797	0,01044899	Austria	14 046	139765					
Azerbaijan	4928	10137750	0,0004861	Azerbaijan	2 687	1371,75					
Belgium	68304	11592952	0,00589186	Belgium	2 648	60714					
Bosnia and Herzegovina	153	3270943	4,6776E-05	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	3985					
Bulgaria	153059	6877743	0,02225425	Bulgaria	11 275	21071,75					
Croatia	20796	3899000	0,00533368	Croatia	711	919,75					
Cyprus	21359	1244188	0,01716702	Cyprus	3 257	13396,75					
Czechia	490802	10505772	0,04671737	Czechia	131 316	2017					
Denmark	36756	5856733	0,00627585	Denmark	11 400	36705,5					
Estonia	67243	1330932	0,05052324	Estonia	24 170	312					
Finland	49726	5541017	0,00897416	Finland	2 851	23312,75					
France	118994	67749632	0,00175638	France	18 166	428057,25					
Georgia	25701	3708610	0,00693009	Georgia	12 203	1735					
Germany	1055323	83196078	0,01268477	Germany	289 743	1169201,75					
Greece	20955	10641221	0,00196923	Greece	19 846	91162,75					
Hungary	34248	9709891	0,00352713	Hungary	70 944	5820,75					
Iceland	2239	372520	0,00601042	Iceland	437	1183,25					
Ireland	75260	5033165	0,01495282	Ireland	5 232	8103,25					
Italy	169837	59109668	0,00287325	Italy	248 460	167431					
Latvia	45687	1884490	0,02424369	Latvia	32 262	667,75					
Lithuania	74611	2800839	0,0266388	Lithuania	20 566	1828,25					
Luxembourg	6756	640064	0,01055519	Luxembourg	1 471	3934,25					
Malta	1744	518536	0,00336332	Malta	868	8997,5					
Moldova	109630	2615199	0,04192033	Moldova	42 436	395					
Montenegro	33954	619211	0,0548343	Montenegro	140	430,25					
Netherlands	89730	17533044	0,00511777	Netherlands	3 022	97930,75					
North Macedonia	6483	2065092	0,00313933	North Macedonia	63	340,5					
Norway	39931	5408320	0,00738325	Norway	5 693	51645,25					
Poland	1563386	37747124	0,04141735	Poland	272 594	8199,75					
Portugal	58043	10325147	0,00562152	Portugal	53 384	2390,25					
Romania	115047	19119880	0,00601714	Romania	43 363	3943,75					
Serbia and Kosovo	2989	8620364	0,00034674	Serbia and Kosovo	1 297	2272,5					
Slovakia	109828	5447247	0,02016211	Slovakia	11 582	988,75					
Slovenia	8874	2108079	0,00420952	Slovenia	2 806	787,25					
Spain	167726	47415750	0,00353735	Spain	106 373	76087,75					
Sweden	50740	10415811	0,00487144	Sweden	10 176	247805,75					
Switzerland	80773	8703405	0,00928062	Switzerland	10 631	112200					
Türkiye	95874	84775404	0,00113092	Türkiye	5 745	3668349,5					
United Kingdom	162700	67026000	0,00242742	United Kingdom	22 119	132293,25					
MEAN			0,01224829								
STANDARD DEVIATION			0,01481203								

4. Data Table and Cultural Map for the “Cultural Distance” Variable

Data was obtained from the Excel file intitled “F00016619-CulturalMapFinalEVSWS_2023” provided by the World Values Survey organization¹⁷⁰. These figures compile results of surveys by the organization using a common questionnaire in almost 100 countries. The map shows the average between “Survival” and “Self-Expression” values on the x-axis, and the average between “Traditional” and “Secular” values on the y-axis.

X-axis represents “the contrast between societies in which religion is very important and those in which it is not, but deference to the authority of God, fatherland, and family are all closely linked with each other”. Y-axis reflects “a syndrome of tolerance, trust, emphasis on subjective well-being, civic activism, and self-expression that emerges in postindustrial societies with high levels of existential security and individual autonomy”¹⁷¹.

Most recent data was selected for each country, ranging from 2008 to 2022. In order to obtain a country’s values’ distance with Ukrainian values, I calculated a Euclidean distance d , using the following formula:

$$d(p, q) = \sqrt{(q1 - p1)^2 + (q2 - p2)^2}$$

With p as the position of Ukraine, q the position of the other European country; $q1$ and $p1$ the X-axis values, and $q2$ and $p2$ the Y-axis values of the corresponding countries.

¹⁷⁰ World Values Organization, “WVS Cultural Map: 2023 Version Released.”

¹⁷¹ World Values Organization, “WVS Database - Findings and Insights.”

Countries	Survival vs Emancipative	Trad vs Secular	Euclidean Distance from Ukraine's Values
Albania (2018)	-,2078	-,2216	0,68706678
Azerbaijan (2018)	-,2356	-,0327	0,51545675
Austria (2018)	1,2876	,5134	1,33185423
Armenia (2021)	-,2017	-,5180	0,97630301
Belgium (2009)	,9824	,3057	1,03440917
Bosnia and Herzegovina (2019)	-,1340	,1345	0,32393151
Bulgaria (2017)	-,0628	,5303	0,0874072
Croatia (2017)	,2814	,2424	0,38214177
Czechia (2022)	,6107	,9532	0,82747897
Denmark (2017)	1,8140	,7042	1,87452041
Estonia (2018)	,6160	,6733	0,69691668
Finland (2017)	1,5484	,6043	1,5988323
France (2018)	1,2540	,4405	1,29652592
Georgia (2018)	-,2314	-,3698	0,83668972
Germany (2018)	1,4160	,6364	1,47099625
Greece (2017)	,0928	,2941	0,20285484
Hungary (2018)	,2789	,5086	0,32762072
Iceland (2017)	1,8199	,4612	1,86246889
Ireland (2008)	,7945	-,2194	1,06878528
Italy (2018)	,6630	,3445	0,71271115
Latvia (2021)	,2278	,6536	0,34126513
Lithuania (2018)	,1526	,6533	0,28524739
Luxembourg (2008)	,9446	,3766	0,9894872
Moldova (2008)	-,5901	,3004	0,56641773
Montenegro (2019)	,2033	-,0461	0,54941154
Netherlands (2022)	1,5239	,8060	1,60738483
Norway (2018)	1,8816	,6734	1,93755908
Poland (2017)	,5405	-,0476	0,76343315
Portugal (2020)	,4194	,0374	0,61619386
Romania (2018)	-,1912	-,0349	0,50269694
Serbia (2018)	-,0801	,3533	0,0993738
Slovakia (2022)	,2923	,5972	0,36765717
Slovenia (2017)	,9246	,5980	0,97912851
Spain (2017)	1,0266	,5299	1,07242126
Sweden (2017)	1,9262	,7862	1,99799121
Switzerland (2017)	1,4986	,5612	1,54549513
Turkey (2018)	-,1708	-,0935	0,55380777
Ukraine (2020)	-,0425	,4453	0
North Macedonia (2019)	,0757	,2189	0,25537115

Great Britain (2022)	1,4432	,7034	1,50795886
Northern Ireland (2022)	1,1447	,2596	1,20169462
Kosovo (2008)	-,0254	-,4487	0,89415283

