

# THE TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE OF THE MARIUPOL CIVILIANS' FORCED MIGRATION AND ADAPTATION ABROAD IN 2022

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## ABSTRACT

The article presents the interim results of the “Mariupol: past, present, future” research project, which is being conducted by the author since May 2022. The objective is to investigate the problems of social adjustment and integration of civilian residents of Mariupol who were forced to go abroad due to the war in Ukraine and the occupation of Mariupol. The article analyzes the socioeconomic aspects of the forced migration of military migrants abroad and their adaptation in the host communities. Special attention is paid to the analysis of the impact of the traumatic experience of war and evacuation on the successful adaptation of Mariupol civilians in the country of their temporary stay. Qualitative methods of sociological research, analysis of statistical data and documents related to the problem of forced migration and adaptation of Mariupol citizens abroad are used to collect data. The collected empirical material made it possible to clarify and supplement the information about the previous period of the sociological analysis of the society of the city of Mariupol during the war, in particular, evacuation experience, going through the “filtering” procedure of Mariupol civilians, evacuation from the occupied city. Special attention is paid to such issues as the experience of evacuation during this period after a long stay in the occupied city (evacuation in April-September 2022), the experience of internal displacement on the territory of Ukraine and forced migration to different countries of the world; as well as the views of Mariupol residents on their immediate and/or distant future.

**Keywords:** *civil residents, evacuation, forced migration, involuntary displacement, problems of adaptation, social adjustments of migrants, traumatic experience, war in Ukraine*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The full-scale military invasion of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, the constant danger to life and health, the siege and occupation of Ukrainian cities, the energy crisis, the desire to ensure safe conditions for children to study and develop - all this forced millions of Ukrainians to leave their city of residence and seek shelter abroad. Refugees from Ukraine recorded across Europe - 8,173,211 people. Refugees from Ukraine registered for Temporary Protection or similar national protection schemes in Europe - 5,008,482 people (UNHCR, 2023). One of the Ukrainian cities that suffered the most during the full-scale military invasion of the Russian Federation in Ukraine is Mariupol, a large industrial city in the south of Donetsk Oblast. According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, the population of the city of Mariupol (Donetsk region) was 425,681 (as of January 1, 2022). Since the beginning of the armed conflict in Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts in 2014, Mariupol has become the most important strategic point, the object of contact between the opposing sides. With the deterioration of the situation in Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts and with the beginning of the armed conflict escalation, residents of the temporarily occupied territories began to move to

Mariupol. In 2019, 97,058 people were officially registered as internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the city of Mariupol, most of them being women with children and elderly people. According to the Office for Emergency Situations Victims Social Protection of the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, the number of internally displaced persons in Mariupol who were registered was the following: in 2015 – 91,030 people, in 2016 – 105,288, in 2017 – 95,964, in 2018 – 99,967, and in 2019 - 97,058 people correspondingly.

On 24 February 2022, the Russian Federation launched a large-scale military invasion in Ukraine, announcing the so-called «special military operation» in Ukraine. Very quickly, the city of Mariupol found itself amidst constant shelling and on the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe. At the beginning of the war, the exit from the city was blocked. Chances for evacuation by private transport arose in mid-March, but at Mariupol residents' own risk, as the «green corridors» did not work officially due to the occupiers blocking all attempts of the Ukrainian authorities to open humanitarian and evacuation corridors. Only those civilian residents of Mariupol had the opportunity to evacuate who possessed surviving personal transport, a supply of fuel or dared to leave the city on foot. In May 2022, the city was completely occupied. According to the Mariupol City Council, since the beginning of the full-scale military invasion of Russia on the territory of Ukraine, the number of residents of the Mariupol has decreased fivefold. At the moment, it is not possible to establish the real number of Mariupol residents who died during active hostilities and during the occupation, those left the city of Mariupol or remained there. It is worth noting that at the time of writing this article, it was not possible to obtain real statistical data on the population of the city of Mariupol, due to the fact that the city is under occupation, and the Ukrainian authorities do not have access to this information. As mentioned above, Mariupol was blocked and surrounded since the first days of the full-scale military invasion of Russia, and the civilians of Mariupol did not have the opportunity to leave the city.

With the help of qualitative methods of collecting sociological information, the ways of evacuation of Mariupol civilians from the surrounded and occupied city were determined. The experience of leaving Mariupol was traumatic. But after the civilians of Mariupol who survived the blockade left the occupied and destroyed Mariupol, they are forced to face a new problem – adaptation and integration in a new place of residence abroad.

The problems of forced migration are not a new phenomenon for the modern world in the global perspective. [Maggie O'Neill and Tony Spybey \(2003\)](#) note that forced migration can be caused by wars, ethnic cleansing, environmental disasters, political conflicts, and so on. Scientific publications analyze the consequences of evacuation and migration, in particular, cognitive, emotional and personal consequences of a natural disaster, and the impact of evacuation ([Knez et al., 2021](#)); a comparative analysis of psychological trauma experienced by children and young adults in two scenarios: evacuation after a natural disaster vs forced migration to escape armed conflict ([Myles et al. 2018](#)). At the international level, data on forced migration are collected and/or compiled by various intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR, 2023](#)) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). According to IOM, forced migration is “a migratory movement which, although the drivers can be diverse, involves force, compulsion, or coercion”. According to UNHCR, the number of forcibly displaced people both within countries and across borders as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order has nearly doubled in the last 10 years; there were 41 million forcibly displaced people as of the end of 2010, and the figure was 78.5 million by the end of 2020 ([UNHCR, 2023](#)).

At the end of 2021, the total number of people worldwide who were forced to flee their homes due to conflicts, violence, fear of persecution and human rights violations was 89.3 million. This is more than double the 42.7 million people who remained forcibly displaced a decade ago and the most since World War II. This represents the highest number available on record ([UNHCR, 2023](#)).

After February 24, 2022, with the beginning of a full-scale military invasion of Russia on the territory of Ukraine, Ukrainians were forced to leave their homes and change their place of residence. Mass internal and external migration processes have become relevant, namely: migration abroad (more

than 8 million people, as of March 28, 2023), internal displacement within the country, and illegal deportation of Ukrainian citizens to the Russian Federation. According to the data of the analytical study of the National Institute of Strategic Studies, the volume of migration exceeds all indicators for the period of Ukraine's independence since 1991. The demographic situation in Ukraine during 2022 is rapidly changing, both quantitatively and qualitatively. These changes affect the socio-economic sphere, the country's defense capability, its positioning in the world and lead to consequences that will affect Ukrainian realities in the short- and long-term perspectives (Potapenko et al., 2023). The problems and condition of Ukrainian forced migrants are also a subject for modern research. In particular, in the article «Immediate physical needs of refugees during the Ukrainian armed conflict of 2022» (Roitblat et al., 2022) the authors investigate the physical needs of Ukrainian refugees and internally displaced persons during the ongoing Ukrainian armed conflict of 2022. According to the results of the conducted research, during an armed conflict, even healthy refugees, IDPs, and regular inhabitants of a country are affected somatically but to varying degrees. For refugees, group-organized travel abroad with a known outcome is the best option. The second good strategy is to remain an internal refugee/internally displaced person. The most difficult from physical status point of view strategy is to travel abroad independently on an individual/family basis (Roitblat et al., 2022). Regarding the socio-economic consequences of the evacuation and forced migration of war refugees, then forced migration has potential consequences for host populations, migrants themselves, and for the populations at origin (Becker, Ferrara, 2019). Let's consider the impact of the experience of a long stay in the blockade and shelling, complicated evacuation on the adaptation of refugees abroad on the example of residents of the city of Mariupol. There are no statistics on the number of Mariupol residents who are currently abroad. This number approximately varies from 100 to 150 thousand people. Besides, the location of military migrants is a dynamic process, because for various reasons, both the city and the country of temporary stay can change; someone temporarily stays in the country until they receive a visa to other countries, such as Canada or the United Kingdom; someone returns to the territories controlled by Ukraine; someone returns to occupied Mariupol.

At the same time, in terms of the problem under study, it is important to dwell on the issue of social adjustment and integration of Ukrainian forced military migrants who have a traumatic experience of war, survival inside a blocked city, evacuation and moving abroad.

## **2. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Research project: «Mariupol in Past, Present and Future» is an interdisciplinary study. Formation of the archive of stories of survival surrounded by civilians of Mariupol began in April 2022 and continues now. Qualitative methods were used during the collection of information and the formation of an archive of the stories of civilians of Mariupol, which made it possible to record and preserve the real stories of people, to reproduce the chronology of events during the war, occupation, evacuation and migration abroad, as well as to analyze the life strategies and socio-economic problems of civilians of Mariupol. For the researcher those social meanings were the most significant ones, which could be recognized and interpreted due to the use of qualitative methods of social reality research. Qualitative methods have long been used in sociological and socio-economic research of social reality. Most often, within the framework of combined strategies, that is, a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. At the same time, qualitative methods are used at the exploratory stage of the research. But, in some cases, the independent use of qualitative methods for a more detailed and in-depth analysis and understanding of the essence of the problem, studying the unique or traumatic experience of a person who has experienced a crisis or stressful event is justified. In the «Qualitative research in sociological practices» (Kostenko, Skokova, et al., 2009, 2017) thesis by Ukrainian sociologists of the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, general methodological and methodical problems of qualitative research, problems of using computer methods of qualitative data analysis are considered, as well as the application of qualitative research in various spheres of life, including social conflicts, labor migration, economic morality, the history of everyday life of townspeople during the war, analyzes the use of the biographical method in the study of traumatic experience in her scientific works.

Using the technologies of qualitative research of the experience of people who survived the traumatic experience of war, occupation, and migration during the Second World War by representatives of the Polish sociological school was important for this study. In particular, Research in which diaries commissioned by researchers being the source of knowledge, are an original contribution of Polish sociology to the methods of social research. Analyzed the Polish tradition of diary studies - the diaries of the unemployed, peasants and emigrants, etc. The projects of Polish researchers dedicated to the study of the war traumatic experience through memories, war memoirs, correspondence, oral histories of war, prisoners, residents of occupied territories, testimonies of refugees and migrants are of high interest (Libich, Sadzik, 2022). Qualitative methods are also used to study the state of modern problems, for example, the collective work of Polish scientists named «Pandemic Diaries», created on the basis of materials collected as part of a diary contest. More than 400 people participated in this contest. They described their experiences during the first months of the coronavirus pandemic (Głowacka et al., 2022). Another example of holding a diary competition to collect and analyze people's life stories is «Diaries of LGBT». This work publishes the texts sent to the competition in 2020 conducted by the Laboratory for the Research of History and Identity of LGBT+ at the Institute of Applied Social Sciences of the University of Warsaw in cooperation with the Adam Mickiewicz Henryk Böll Foundation in Warsaw. The diaries reveal the variety and diversity of individual experiences as well as the common challenges faced by LGBT+ people in Poland (Bednarek et al., 2021).

On the basis of this experience, of the methods of my research was chosen - electronic diaries, in-depth unstructured interviews and documents analysis (photo, audio, video documents) that contain testimonies of the war. It was the qualitative methods of collecting sociological information that made it possible to collect and preserve the real life stories of Mariupol civilians who experienced terrible events during the complete blockade and occupation of Mariupol.

As of March 2023 Mariupol in Past, Present and Future» Database Research project includes the following:

- more 2 thousand life stories of Mariupol citizens published in various open sources (films, photo-video documents, magazines, special sites, social networks, etc., including those published on the website «Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices» (1.04.2022 – u.n.). The «Voices of the Civilians Museum» project of the «Rinat Akhmetov Foundation» charity organization is a collection of stories of civilians, how they were affected by Russia's war against Ukraine. Stories have been collected since 2014. All stories posted in the Voices of the Civilians Museum were told by their authors in the first person and are the opinion and experience of a specific narrator. These stories were collected and published with their authors' permission. As of March 2023, the project archive collected 66,044 real life stories of civilians, including the civilians' stories from Mariupol (Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2014-2023);
- 40 E-Diary of Mariupolite during the War (May-June 2022);
- 120 in-depth interviews with Mariupol residents (September 2022 - March 2023). Including 70 in-depth interviews with Mariupol residents who were abroad at the time of participation in the study;
- 9 Diaries of volunteer students from Mariupol: war memories and experience of volunteer work (January 2023).

To collect information, two contests for electronic diaries of Mariupol citizens were held: in May 2022 and January 2023. The sample included respondents who have different experience of evacuation from the city of Mariupol and different durations of stay in the blockade and occupation. This made it possible to collect various life stories of Mariupol civilians. Among the collected stories is also the story of internally displaced persons in 2014 due to Russia's military invasion of the territory of Ukraine and the occupation of some part of the Ukrainian territory. During the interview, one of the respondents shared that: «My son, parents and I are doubly displaced persons. In 2014, we left our native Donetsk, then we had been living in Mariupol for 8 years, and now our unchanged team has arrived in Dnipro. The family is proven by time and all hardships» (R59, 45 y.o., female).

Basing on the analysis of research materials, a chronology of events in the city was reproduced starting from February 2022. The collected material was structured according to the following thematic blocks: 1. Life before the war (including the experience of internally displaced people in 2014). 2. Day of the beginning of the war. 3. The first days of the war until the complete blockade of the city. 4. The blockade. Humanitarian catastrophe. Survival under constant shelling. 5. Life experience in the occupation. 6. Evacuation experience. Filtration. 7. Integration into new host communities in Ukraine and abroad. 8. Social assistance and social support for Mariupol residents in Ukraine and abroad. 9. Thinking about the future.

Within this article, we will consider in more detail the experience of evacuation from the surrounded and occupied city of Mariupol, the experience of forced migration abroad and the problems of adaptation of forced migrants in their host communities. Special attention will be paid to the socio-economic problems of forced migrants who have a traumatic experience of war. It is worth noting that the sample included respondents who at the time of the interview were in 17 different countries, in particular, more than half of them were in Germany or Poland. Interviews were mainly conducted with women aged 18 to 75.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.**

Migration is a familiar process for the modern development of society and has its own distinctive features related to the availability of information, globalization and relatively easy decision-making on migration (Maciej St. Zięba, 2006). Forced migration occurs when human living conditions change dramatically and there are threats to life and health associated either with conflicts or with natural disasters. In general, the migration process is traumatic for the individual. After all, a person has to live in a new environment, adapt to a different economic and socio-political structure, get used to a new mindset, and learn to fulfil their potential in other professions. Interesting are studies that show that a significant risk for migrants is a decrease in social status, especially for professionals, people with higher education. In this case, the migrant can choose an educational direction in order to increase his chances of obtaining a professional job in the host community in the future and gradually increase his status (Abdullov I. et al., 2020). The issue of ensuring the official employment of migrants, participation in the tax system, which allows, if necessary, to use the services of the social security system, including the pension system of the host country, is especially relevant. (Mastilo Z., 2019). All these socio-economic issues are extremely important for migrants, and are especially intensified for forced migrants from the zone of active hostilities. This situation is further complicated by the fact that the person was not ready to move in advance. Besides, during the move (evacuation from cities of active military operations and occupation), the person was repeatedly in crisis situations that were accompanied by risks to life and health. Such a person may evacuate without documents, without savings and necessary possessions and in a grave psychological and emotional state. As one of the respondents noted, «there was only one desire – to run as far as possible from the horror that was happening in Mariupol. I relaxed a little only when my child I were in a foreign country, but as far away from Mariupol as possible» (A38).

The reception of forced migrants due to war is a familiar phenomenon for the European Community. But now, with the war in Ukraine and a large number of Ukrainian forced migrants, the reasons for forced migration are the same, but the characteristics of the migrants themselves are different. According to the data of the online survey of Ukrainian forced migrants by Info Sapiens, presented in the information and analytical report of the Razumkov Center (Kyiv, Ukraine), the vast majority of Ukrainian forced migrants in EU countries are women with higher (93%) or unfinished higher education (83%). The average age of refugees is 36.9 years. The majority of refugees are skilled workers (36%), specialists in technical/humanitarian profiles, natural sciences (18%), entrepreneurs (15%) and heads of enterprises/institutions/departments (11%), housewives (12%) and pupils/students (10%). The most common fields of activity are education (13%), accounting and finance (10%), wholesale and retail trade (9%), IT (7%), marketing/management/medicine (6% each). 88% of refugees crossed the border with close people: children under 18 (63%) and parents (21%) (Filyak, 2022).

This significantly changes the perception of a military migrant refugee amongst the host communities of European countries. But, at the same time, it is worth paying attention to the region from which the forced migrant originates and the degree of their psychological trauma, which certainly affects the level of adaptation and integration in the host country.

In the context of military aggression and war on the territory of Ukraine, and resulting huge flow of refugees, the Council of Europe and the European Union demonstrated their desire to adhere to international standards for the protection of human rights and freedoms and respect for Ukraine and Ukrainian forced migrants.

From 24 February 2022 till the present time, several waves of migration can be distinguished. It is noteworthy that it was in the first waves of migration that the greatest assistance was provided to Ukrainian forced migrants both on the way to their destination, and in terms of providing free housing and humanitarian aid. Later, assistance to Ukrainian forced migrants changed significantly and became more systematic and institutional. European governments continue to support Ukrainian forced migrants and declare preparations for new waves of migration due to the deterioration of the situation in Ukraine arising under military operations, energy and humanitarian crisis.

Let us dwell on the specifics of the forced migration of Mariupol residents from the area of war and occupation. In order to understand the specifics of the forced migration of civilians from Mariupol, it is worth first stating certain facts. On 24th February 2022 the Russian Federation began the large scale military invasion on Ukraine. According to the testimonies of Mariupol residents, from February 26-27, it was impossible for Mariupol civilians to leave the city. The city of Mariupol was surrounded. Gradually the whole city was deprived of all supply of water, electricity, heating, gas, internet and means of transportation. A humanitarian disaster in the city. On 14th/15th March the evacuation of Mariupol started and 30 000 people left but only with the help of private transportation. The defense of the hero city Mariupol lasted for 86 days, 82 of which it was completely surrounded. The exact number of victims is still unknown. The city that used to be called - Marys City, the Showpiece of the Donetsk Region, the Cultural and Tourist Hub of the Azov Region, and a City for People has been turned into a ghost town. During May 16-20, 2022, the defenders of the city came out of the shelter at «Azovstal». The city of Mariupol is occupied. December 2022 - about 120,000-150,000 Mariupol civilians live in the city. At the time of writing, the city of Mariupol is temporarily occupied (Tashkinova, 2021). Thus, the civilian residents of Mariupol have the experience of war and being in the epicenter of hostilities, being surrounded and blockaded, they know well what hunger, losses, constant stress and trauma, not only physical, but also psychological, are.

At the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the majority of Mariupol civilians did not plan to leave the city, because on the morning of February 24, 2022, missile strikes were launched across the territory of Ukraine, panic and chaos began and, according to Mariupol residents, they decided to stay in the city for a while and to see how the situation will develop further. The local authorities assured the residents of the city through mass media that the city is protected and the situation is under control. But after a few days it was impossible to leave the city. Civilians from Mariupol made attempts to leave the city, but in majority such attempts were unsuccessful, as evidenced by interviews and diaries of Mariupol residents. First successful attempts to leave the city of Mariupol were March 5 and after March 13-15. But the official «green corridors» for the departure of civilian residents of the city were never provided. Columns of private cars leaving the city were constantly fired upon by the enemy. In such a situation, it was very difficult for a person to make a decision to leave the city. It is worth paying attention to the fact that people were out of touch and had no information about what was happening outside the city. Many people said that while experiencing all the horrors in Mariupol, people were sure that the same thing was happening all over the territory of Ukraine. That is why they continued to stay in shelters. According to the respondents during the interview: «... I understood that I had to leave. But I understand people who don't leave there. I understand, because it is very difficult to leave the house when it all hurts, you do not understand what will happen next. This is to leave the house, which seems to be still intact, you want to go home, you are drawn there and long to stay there. Well, I think it's stress that affects this condition a lot, so it's hard for people to get out of there. To make that decision and leave. That's why. Those who have small chil-

dren leave just because of the children. Whether you want it or not, you have to leave. But as for the older generation or those who do not have children, I understand them, I understand why they stay there» (A38).

Evacuation experience. Evacuation routes were diverse and depended on many factors: on the area of the city residence, on the car and fuel supply, on the possibility of receiving a phone message from the authorities with the evacuation route. People tried to save themselves and looked for any opportunity to leave the city. Some of the Mariupol civilians decided to stay in the city. They feared for their lives and decided not to leave the city. For those who decided to take a risk and leave, the most important value was the undamaged car and fuel.

People hoped for safe «green corridors», but they were never provided due to constant shelling by the enemy. The people of Mariupol remained blocked in the city. «We were waiting all the time for the humanitarian corridor, but it was not there» (829, male, «Voices of the Civilians»). Periodically, some civilians tried to leave the besieged city, but these attempts were unsuccessful. According a woman, «they shelled a column of cars going to the evacuation near our house» (1610, woman, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023).

According to a resident of Mariupol who managed to leave the city on March 5 with his family, a friend of his, whom he met outside, told him about the possibility of leaving. There was no connection. «He told me that a convoy will be organized to leave Mariupol. Evacuation. Even then, I doubted whether I should go or not. There was no connection, no electricity either. The day before, several mines had exploded near our house and damaged the gas pipeline. Before leaving, I tried to organize the neighbors. (..) We had 40 minutes to get ready. There was still room in our car. I offered it to a neighbor with a child..(..) It was a very difficult trip. We stood in the field. The temperature dropped to 10 degrees below zero. We reached the turn to the village of Donetsk region, and there was a gang, people in camouflage. They said: «We don't know anything. We are from the «DPR» and we were told not to let men under 60 go» (..)». With great difficulty, the man managed to get his family out of the besieged city. (2085, male, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023).

The first sporadical mass departures from the city took place on March 13-15. According to a woman from Mariupol, on March 13, a small car convoy left the city of Mariupol. «People gathered and decided to leave the city. On March 14, there was a gathering near the Drama Theater. Our men went there. They returned after 10 minutes and said that a decision had been made to organize a convoy and leave. Someone was able to contact the convoy that left on March 13th. There were about 25-30 cars there. And they said that they had reached Berdyansk. And we were told that we have two hours for the meeting... (cries)... I said that I will not go anywhere, because I have a mother and grandmother. But my brother and I could not go to them, because the area was heavily shelled. There were extensive street fights. Everything was on fire. I didn't know how to leave, I had no contact with my relatives. But we were persuaded to leave. (..) There were about 100 cars. We stood near the Drama Theater from 12.00 to 12.30. People came for information. (..) In total, about 120 cars left. We went to the sea, across the embankment and further through the village of Sailors. We drove up to Primorskyi region. The road was very scary. People saw cars driving past them. Women, children, old people came out. They started asking to take them away. Cars drove slowly. People immediately got into these cars and drove with us. Some just stood and watched. Someone was just asking people to take their children (cries). It was scary. Then we went to Mangush. And then there were checkpoints» (2094, woman, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023).

The evacuation route in the direction of the territory controlled by Ukraine passed through the temporarily occupied territory, further to Vasylivka. Then departure to Zaporizhzhia took place. This category of interviewees testifies to the fact that they traveled «at their own peril and risk» and had absolutely no idea what awaited them next. «...it was very scary to pass all the occupiers' checkpoints with the column of cars being fired upon by the Rushistss» (P8, 33 y.o., female). According to a woman from Mariupol who moved to the territory of Ukraine with her family, they learned about the possibility of leaving from their friends and decided to take the risk. Their evacuation route was through the crossing point in the village of Vasylivka and further into the territory controlled by Ukraine: «We cooked food outdoors. There was nowhere to get food from, we only had what was at

home. We wanted to leave right away, but we don't have our own car. I hoped that there would be an evacuation, but it did not take place. And then on March 16, my husband's employee stopped by and said that there is an opportunity to leave, we have 15 minutes to get packed. We grabbed what we could, took the children and left. Of course, everyone was in shock, especially our children were stressed out. We didn't let the children out all this time, they sat in the house all day. We are lucky. Word of mouth worked: someone said that people were starting to leave, and we grabbed everything and left, thanks to my husband's colleague. And I don't know, maybe otherwise we wouldn't have been alive anymore. We were driving in a column, car after car. The column was very large, we spent the night in the village, because in Vasylivka the Russians did not let us go any further. They stopped us and told us to spend the night in the field. But it was not possible to turn on the lanterns or light a fire. Good people in the village sheltered us, fed us, and the next morning we drove on through Vasylivka to the Dnipro» (333, woman, Collection of the Online Museum of Civilian Voices, 2023).

In March, it was possible to leave the territory controlled by Ukraine through the occupied Berdyansk. Those who had the opportunity to leave this way, during the interview, talked about the difficulties that arose when leaving further to the territory controlled by Ukraine. «When my whole family and I drove from Mariupol to Berdyansk in our car, only there we managed to get a connection and see all the necessary evacuation details. After that, it was decided to go to the Netherlands. Our journey took nine days.» (P14, 18 y.o., female). The residents of Mariupol said that once they were in the occupied territory, they had no opportunity to quickly leave for the territory of Ukraine. «There were many difficulties, leaving the occupied territories was especially difficult. It was very hard to find transport from the Nikolske village (as the occupiers called it: «Volodarskoye») to Berdyansk. The carriers charged a very high price (from UAH 2,000 to UAH 15,000 per person), but we were lucky to find a person who charged us UAH 500 per person (there were four of us). It was also difficult to find humanitarian transport that takes people to Zaporizhzhia. Due to the lack of communication and information, we had been waiting for a week for any news about transport. We decided to act radically and went on foot to wait for the promised humanitarian buses at the «roundabout» where they were supposed to arrive. We had been waiting for 8 hours on the highway, but no buses ever came. The occupiers ordered us to spend the night in the premises at the gas station, I'll be honest: it was a pretty tiny room in which more than 300 people were crammed. An hour later, we received information that the local authorities from the village of Troyany found out about us. We were taken by bus to the school, where we had been staying for 5 days. After that, we finally got into the humanitarian buses that took us to Zaporizhzhia. It was there that we got on the train and went to visit our friends in the Ivano-Frankivsk region « (P73, female, 19 y.o.).

«Our path to the Dnipro was difficult and consisted of 2 stages. The transfer from Mariupol to Berdyansk was about 20 hours, a huge queue of 1000 cars, Russian roadblocks, checks men for tattoos, phone contents, etc. In the city of Berdyansk, we encountered a lack of gasoline from the word «at all». It could be found at some dealers for 300 hryvnias per liter. We spent the next 10 days trying to find fuel at a lower price and move further out not to stay in the occupied territory any more. And so the journey from Berdyansk to Zaporizhzhia took us about 6 hours: 12 checkpoints: «Kadyrovtsi» together with the DPR and the local collaborators checked cars, documents and people even more thoroughly than when leaving Mariupol. They undressed our son, checked his phone. We were lucky that on that day we finally got to Zaporizhzhia! And in 2 hours we arrived in Dnipro» (No. R-59, 45 y.o., female). On the way to evacuation, Mariupol residents also faced the problems of lack of temporary housing and high prices at the local stores. «When I left for Urzuf on April 2, 2022, it was very difficult to find housing, very difficult. We (8 people) had to live in a 2-room hut, which was not heated at all. It was simply impossible to withdraw funds, as there was only 1 person in Mangush who exchanged funds at 20% from the bankcards. Shops were open, but it was very expensive there» (P70, female, 19 y.o.).

During the evacuation, Mariupol civilians were in constant danger due to continuous shelling, provocations and inspections. Evacuation convoys of Mariupol civilians came under fire. «We stayed in Mariupol for a long time, and on March 24, my colleague was supposed to leave the city, but we needed to find a canister of gasoline. Fortunately, we found it. Our convoy consisted of ten cars.



People had a newborn baby, so it was necessary to somehow agree that there would be at least some kind of “corridor”. We left on March 24 at about eleven o'clock, and when we crossed the exit border from Mariupol in the direction of Melekine, shelling began from the sea. Our convoy came under fire. A man and a dog died. People ran out of the cars, lay down on the roadside, and the shelling continued” (344, man, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023). From the story of another Mariupol woman, we found out that she and her family dared to leave on March 15: “(..) we had a young organizer who gathered all those whose cars were not damaged, and we went in a convoy of 12 cars. But our car broke down and we fell behind. When my husband repaired our car, we lined with another convoy, but did not get to Zaporizhzhia that day - we spent the night right on the highway near Vasylivka. Then we got to the Dnipro and spent the night with friends. During the trip, many horrors were saw. A car blew up in front of us, but everyone drove by, not paying attention to it. Further on the way, another car blew up on a minivan. It was very scary” (374, woman, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023). A woman who always lived in the basement with her relatives and went outside only to prepare food on a fire says that due to constant shelling, they decided to leave the city at “their own risk and fear.” During the departure, they saw many killed, how people were digging graves for their dead loved ones. He says that they still reached Zaporizhzhia normally, but the convoy that was following them was shelled upon from “Grad”. (840, woman, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023).

On the way to evacuation, the civilians of Mariupol faced not only constant danger due to shelling, the need to drive along an unknown mined road, but also constant inspections by the occupiers: «(..) we faced some difficulties while driving the car to the exit from Mariupol, we were repeatedly fired upon, and then our journey was very delayed due to the fact that we had to go through many checks due to the fact that my father had just recently turned 60 y.o. and he was suspected of connections with the Azov. In the end, it took us two weeks to get all the way to Germany.» (P15, 18 y.o., female). «They searched our car, things, stripped the man. It was very creepy. But it was not possible to do anything» (P21, female, 25). «I was in Mariupol from February 24, 2022, for almost 20 days, and after the morning explosion in the Drama Theater, on March 16, I left with my family to the city of Berdyansk, Zaporizhzhia region, as the starting point» (P-59,45, female). «I could not evacuate from the city during hostilities, it was not possible. Therefore, I left the (occupied) city on my own (with the support of relatives living abroad) in the end of June 2022» (No. P-2, 22 y.o., female).

A Mariupol woman, who was one of the organizers of the Mariupol citizens convoy formation to leave the city on March 15, said that the evacuation was very dangerous. There were constant checks of both possessions and phones: “I deleted everything possible from the phone. They (Russian soldiers at the checkpoints) checked the photos in the phones. I had many photos from occupied Mariupol. Our car was the first, they checked it and let us go. But I saw in the mirror that my brother's car had been stopped. They found Ukrainian groups and photos in my brother's phone. And they started clinging to my brother. (..) I had hysteria and started begging, crying. We began to negotiate with them to let my brother go. (..) The senior in rank arrived. He checked my brother and then released” (2094, woman, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023).

According to the residents of Mariupol, the occupiers introduced a filtering procedure for those civilians who wanted to leave the city of Mariupol. This special check was a very stressful moment for people. It included checking documents, questioning and establishing the person's contacts and connections with the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

According to the residents of Mariupol, the only way to leave the city was a surviving car. «We exchanged food for gasoline to leave the city» (887, woman, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023). Residents of Mariupol talked about the fact that some of them had to pay money for the opportunity to leave the city. «20 thousand hryvnias per person to leave Mariupol» (1200, woman, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023). «The difficulties were that the transport did not go from Mariupol at all. Only after private carriers started working, I had to pay money to leave. And for those who did not have money, it was impossible at all» (note: she left in July 2022) (R-3, female, 54 y.o.). There was also mutual help and support of Mariupol residents: «I was in the city until April 10. I left with my neighbors by their car» (R 6, female, 21 y.o.).

There are known cases when relatives or close people organized evacuation trips to the city of Mariupol in order to take out their relatives. The practice of volunteer trips to evacuate Mariupol civilians from the besieged city was also widespread. People who did not have their own car were forced to leave the city on foot. According to a woman from Mariupol who was walking out of the city of Mariupol: «We didn't have a car. We were waiting for evacuation and went to the Drama Theater every day, waited for the buses to come. We had such a hope. Then, when the city began to be shelled from fighter jets, we realized that there would be no salvation. You have to survive. Then on March 24, our grandmother died. And we went on foot. The shooting was already in the center of the city. We no longer had the strength to stay there. We took the cat and left the city on foot. There was no hope of getting out alive. There was no more fear. We went towards the Primorsky district. We were told that it is easier to get out to Ukraine. In fact, we had no information. We did not know what was waiting for us. I want to say that the worst thing is not the lack of water and food. This is information hunger. But we got out of the apocalypse» (1517, woman, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023).

After Mariupol civilians left for occupied Berdyansk, they had to wait for a long time for the opportunity to leave for Zaporizhzhia. In the words of a resident of Mariupol, «When we arrived in Berdyansk, people helped us a lot. Then we tried to leave for Zaporizhzhia, but there were many people going out of there. «We waited for buses, signed up in queues, but there were no buses, because they were not allowed. They tried to leave the sports complex several times, but then they drove us to Novoazovsk. We had been trying to leave there for four days. We had to spend the night in the village. We are thankful to those people who sheltered us» (344, man, «Voices of the Civilians»). With the reference to a Mariupol woman who was first with her family on the Left Bank in Mariupol, then in the center. After the house where they were hiding in burned down, they decided to leave the city. «We managed to get first to Berdyansk, which was also occupied. We stayed there for about three weeks, because there was no communication, no gas, and no safe exit corridors. Somehow we still risked going to Zaporizhzhia, and we succeeded» (856, woman, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023).

Another way of evacuation for the civilians of Mariupol was leaving through the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as Crimea. «It was difficult to leave because the road ran through Russia, where everyone was carefully checked and they languished us in queues at the border for a very long time. Then my path lay through Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany. I had been travelling for 4 days on 7 buses, so I was very exhausted» (P9, 26 y.o., female). «Parents had to overcome the route Mariupol - Uncontrolled territories - Russian Federation - Belarus - Ukraine... The journey from Ukraine to Ukraine lasted for 9 days» (729, male, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023). This evacuation route was possible due to the coordination of those children who were in the territory of Ukraine and whose parents were able to contact them. Departure from the temporarily occupied Ukrainian territory through the territory of Russia to Ukraine or other countries was possible if there were financial opportunities, as well as external coordination from relatives or friends who helped orientate and draw up the evacuation route. But, unfortunately, not everyone had such an opportunity, primarily financial. A Mariupol woman who left the city with her family on the third day of the full-scale invasion, but her brother and his family, who had lived in the Left Bank district, remained in the city, shared; «My brother and his family moved to our apartment in the city center. They hid in basements, had problems with water and food. They were able to leave only on March 28. I was shocked that my brother and his family were «evacuated» to Taganrog. It was impossible to get out to Ukraine at all. They had already made their way to Poland from Taganrog through the whole of Russia. Before my relatives found out that they wanted to send them somewhere to the outback of Russia, they decided to go out themselves» (2086, woman, Collection of the Online Museum of Civillian Voices, 2023).

Motives for choosing a country for a temporary stay. The main motive for choosing a country of temporary stay was the presence of relatives or acquaintances who provided the immediate support after the move. Responses related to the presence of relatives, family members who previously left the occupation, friends, and acquaintances predominate: «We went here with our family, because

we have relatives who agreed to welcome us at their homes» (R15, Greece); «My own aunt lives here, so I decided to go to her place» (R30, Greece); «I have many friends and acquaintances here. There are more prospects and a higher standard of living here than in Prague» (R58, first stayed in Prague for three months, then moved to Germany); «because our relatives live here»(R82); «There are several of our friends here, we trusted their opinion about this country. During the move, there were difficulties arising primarily under leaving the occupied territory» (R101); «Because this is the only city in which we have friends who could shelter us and help us with registration. In fact, it was difficult to get abroad due to the huge influx of people, we were waiting in queue for the evacuation train from five in the evening till six in the morning, there were a lot of people, it was impossible to breathe, let alone sit down normally. It was cold, the trains were delayed, after we managed to get inside, the train still did not move for another hour, and then at the border it stood for six hours. After we got to Poland, we faced difficulties to get to this particular city, but we were greeted very warmly, helped with our possessions. They gave us a lot of humanitarian aid, and at the station they gave out hot food and helped with tickets» (R75, went to Germany with a transfer in Poland). This was the main motive for choosing a country for temporary stay.

According to one of the respondents, it is clear in what a difficult psychological and emotional state there were people who were forced to leave their home city: «...We just left and that's it, and then, well, maybe it would be the Czech Republic, or maybe Bulgaria, or maybe Andorra. Or maybe we'd go to France. Well, all this was also scary. But I did not care anymore, well, it would be better there than it was, we would go nice and easy. So my husband's brother called my sister. And he said that we were coming to Poland, to Lublin, and he would help us find a flat here, there would at least be housing. I absolutely did not want to go to Poland, because there were no payments in Poland, such standard and stable, as in, well, I do not know, Germany, Austria, France, the Czech Republic. At that time, there were still payments in the Czech Republic. That's why I absolutely did not want to go to Poland. But then I decided that I would go to Poland. All this happened on our way from Mariupol» (A38).

Older people left occupied Mariupol later to stay with their children who had already been abroad for some time. According to a 54-year-old woman: «My daughter was here, she left Mariupol earlier. I wanted to be beside her. The difficulty was that there was no means of transportation from Mariupol at all. Only after individual drivers started working did I have to pay money to leave. And for those who did not have money it was impossible at all» (R3, Germany). In general, people during the evacuation were in a very serious psychological and emotional state and at that moment it was the support of a familiar person that was important, which was crucial for many when choosing a country of temporary stay: «We ran wherever the road took us, our friends suggested. The road was hard morally, there was a terrible uncertainty. We didn't know what was ahead of us» (R38, Germany).

Those respondents who had little time to get acquainted with aid programs for Ukrainian forced migrants in different countries chose the country for temporary stay more consciously, taking into account their own needs and the opportunities that the country has: «Now I am in Germany, because there are good conditions for refugees. The organization I joined created emergency assistance committees for its members and their families, and my move was not difficult» (R99); «We found information on the internet that this city accepts many refugees, that there are still many available places to stay» (R102); «I knew German and decided to go here. Also, I came here with my nephews, they had to graduate from school. Germany is famous for its education, so this was also crucial when choosing a place of stay» (R103).

Another important motive for choosing a country was whether the entire family, taking into account men of service age, was able to go abroad. Those residents of Mariupol who were evacuated during active military operations and were forced to leave through the territory of the aggressor, the Russian Federation, and the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, had the opportunity to evacuate as the whole family. These respondents note that they have lost their homes in Mariupol and have nowhere to return, which is why they chose certain countries for integration and a longer stay, they are focused on learning the country's language and further assimilation. During the evacuation, there was an experience when several cars joined their efforts and left the city together as one

column. Further, they also decided to go to a certain country: «Everyone was coming here and we decided to go with them» (R31, Germany).

The next reason for choosing a country of residence was «choice without choice». This category of respondents did not choose either a country or a city for temporary stay. They received help from volunteers who helped them travel abroad through evacuation flights. «I didn't choose this place, the volunteers brought us here and settled us «(R29, Poland);» This city was chosen by volunteers and they helped me cover half of my journey» (R86).

In general, it should be noted that a very small percentage of Mariupol residents went abroad during the first and second waves of migration, that is, in February and March 2022. In March and May, a trip to the countries of temporary stay could last several weeks. «I didn't choose this city, I was re-sent here from the main refugee camp. We traveled to Germany for 10 days by different kinds of transport and first got to the camp where we stayed for 3 weeks, after which we were settled in an apartment» (R55)

In summer and autumn, private carriers special commercial routes were developed for refugees from Mariupol through the territory of the aggressor, the Russian Federation, and the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. The cost of such a trip is from USD 250 to 350 per person. The duration of such a trip is up to three or four days.

Another reason for choosing a country was past work experience in a particular country (for example, experience of seasonal labour migration): «A few years ago, I worked in Germany being engaged in seasonal labour. We like this country. So we decided to go straight to work, to the same employer. The employer helped to legalise the documents, we started working» (R4, Germany).

Life after evacuation from the city of Mariupol and forced migration abroad (based on interviews with Mariupol civilians residing in 17 countries). It is worth noting that this part of the research is exploratory in nature, the analysis was conducted on the basis of 70 in-depth interviews conducted by the author. A comparative analysis of the traumatic experience of evacuation, the date of departure from the city of Mariupol, and the success of the initial adaptation abroad was conducted. The information obtained became the basis for the development of tools for the next stage of the research. At the moment, the author is collecting empirical information. In general, Ukrainian forced migrants abroad received significant support from both the state and the local population. The main reason for choosing a country was the presence of relatives, friends, and neighbors, as well as the acquaintances who have already moved to this country and have been there for some time.

A significant number of Mariupol residents chose Germany as a country for forced migration due to the presence of a social support system for refugees as well as a housing program. «I am very grateful to Germany for helping the emigrants from Ukraine, because they provided good help to my family here. We were provided with housing - a three-room apartment, we receive social benefits every month, which is quite enough for us, we were given the opportunity to take integration courses for learning German with a certificate for free; also before August there had been free fares on all types of transport, there is also the opportunity to enter higher education educational institution and study there for free» (No. R-82, female, 21 y.o.).

Among the problems there is the difficulty of learning German and bureaucracy. «But there is a little lack of digital support for services, in Europe there is a habit of doing everything through postal letters. Postmen bring a lot of letters. Therefore, there is a little bit of bureaucracy, but a lot depends on the local authorities, the mayor's office» (P-8, 33 y.o., female). «Also, there are extremely many documents that are difficult to fill out, because the online translator does not provide an accurate translation. Many things are not clear, the legislation is completely different here, everything is done differently, not as we had it and everything is done for a very long time. If there is no person nearby who would translate, then it is very hard» - (P3, female, 54 y.o.).

A significant percentage of Mariupol residents are also in the Republic of Poland precisely because this country is located next to Ukraine, a similar mentality and language, openness and the desire of Polish citizens to support Ukrainians. Among the main problems faced by Ukrainian forced migrants is an apartment rent «... because a big city, with a large number of foreigners and students

from different parts of the country (and not only Poland), so there are a lot of people willing to rent an apartment here» (P1, same, 22 years).

There is also a significant number of Mariupol residents who are temporarily staying in Greece. Considering the multiculturalism of the population of Mariupol and the significant number of Mariupol residents of Greek nationality, this choice is understandable. The strategic document of the Mariupol City Council named «Strategy for the Development of Mariupol until 2030» states that the city is multinational, with about 100 nationalities living there. As of 2020, the largest ethnic communities who lived in the city were Ukrainians (48.7%), Russians (44.4%), Greeks (4.36%), Belarusians (0.76%), Armenians (0.24%) and others (Strategy for the Development of Mariupol until 2030, 2017). At the same time, residents of Mariupol talk about the lack of systematic support for forced migrants from Ukraine in Greece, about the lack of affordable housing and material support programs. «Most often I get help from my mother, because she has lived here for many years, knows Greek; therefore, she supports me in everything, helps me adapt to Greek society in various spheres of life (household, education, work)» (R2, female, 22 y.o.).

Mariupol residents living in Ireland, Norway, and the Netherlands highly appreciate the social assistance systems for Ukrainians operating in these countries. Almost all respondents said that the main problem is language barrier.

I would also like to draw attention to the changes that have taken place in the family relationships of Mariupol residents. It is worth noting that during active hostilities in the city of Mariupol, most families, even if before that they had lived separately from their parents, united and began to live together. Several families were united in order to have more chances to survive. Then, they evacuated together to a safer city. After the evacuation, difficulties and conflicts began to arise in a safer place. «Changes, of course, have occurred: it is difficult to live under one roof in a two-room apartment with such a large number of people, especially considering that my sister and grandmother used to live separately. Conflicts happen, sometimes they are big, but we all understand that now it is very important to support each other, so we also reconcile quite quickly.» (P14, 18 y.o., female).

Another problem that Mariupol residents call is the difficulties in relations with those relatives and friends who provided them shelter for a short period of time. «I live with my mother, father, aunt, uncle and their daughter. It is quite difficult for us to live together, because our relatives did not expect to help us for so long, after all, six months to live in the house of people with whom we cannot say that we are very close is quite a lot. Therefore, pretty soon we will have to find our new dwelling and move away from them. For this reason, we have repeatedly had quarrels with them, but my parents try not to go into conflict with my uncle and aunt, because it is thanks to them that we are here now. Therefore, although it is difficult for us, we try not to stay negative and look for ways to solve our difficult situation.» (P15, 18 y.o., female).

Someone did not have the opportunity to unite because part of the family was in different areas of the city, communication between the relatives was cut off at the end of February. After the evacuation, they got the opportunity to unite, but not for a long time. Now they live separately again. «At first, we were very worried about each other, we didn't see each other and didn't know whether they were alive or not for a long period of time, we really wanted to see each other, to talk. And when they got used to it, everything fell into place, as it had been before. Currently, I live in the same city with my daughter, but separately. She is giving me some support» (No. R-3, female, 54 y.o.).

But there is also some evidence that the experience of living together in the blockaded Mariupol brought their family together. «I live with three children, and my husband returned to us from a voyage in July. Nothing has changed in my family relationships; even they have become stronger, because my husband is very proud of me for saving our children. He is my support now. Sometimes I see my brother and his family. They live in another city, but such encounters also support me» (P8, 33 y.o., female). «So we began to appreciate each other even more» (R22, 19 years, female). «In my opinion, our relationship has become stronger, we have begun to appreciate the time spent together more. Because at the time of being in the occupation, I did not see my mother for 52 days» (P55, 20 years). «We became closer to each other, the relations between us have become stronger and better

than before. We have a lot of free time, which we spend together, walking around the city and in the forest» (P34, male, 47).

Regarding social protection and support. For example, refugees staying in Germany had the opportunity to receive regular monthly payments, housing, and integration services from the state. «I am staying in Berlin under paragraph 24 as a war refugee, so I am given regular monthly payments» (R75). «In order to receive the first payment, you had to track yourself by the serial number in the Primary camp, and apply to the main office. To continue receiving money, you had to go to the Labour Exchange, and wait for a letter to be invited to an interview, then within two weeks you receive your social payment» (R55). «The financial help here is quite good. Taking into account the fact that we do not need to pay for housing, this money is really sufficient to live on» (R15).

A significant problem faced by Mariupol residents was the language barrier, «after all, not all Germans know and understand English, so it is difficult to make friends, and this results in a lack of live communication» (R75). According to respondents, German is difficult to learn, but there are special integration courses in the country, during which refugees have the opportunity to go deeper and learn German for a certain time. Such courses are free, but the problem is the long wait in line to participate in these courses. «However, you also need to submit an application to the ministry, they must approve it (a month or two), and then wait until there is a place in the group» (R4).

Another problem was the bureaucratization of the country: «there are extremely many documents that are difficult to fill out, because the translator does not provide an accurate translation. Much is not clear, there is a completely different legislation here, everything is done differently, not as we had, and everything is processed for a very long time. If there is no person around to translate, it is very difficult» (R3); «In most cases, they send letters by mail that are difficult to translate due to poor-quality translation by internet translators.... The translator works only on specific days, it is very difficult» (R3); «But there is one problem and this problem is peculiar to Germany, namely the number of these very papers and the number of questions starting from the colour of your eyes and ending with where exactly you studied, etc. And the requirements that must be met. But this is a completely different country with completely different rules, which decided to accept me as a refugee, so I will not mind following their rules. And I'm more than happy» (R26); there is also a lack of quick response to requests: «But if one has an emergency situation, for example, they do not have money, then solve your own problems. The system will not respond quickly» (R4); «bank cards are not issued on the spot, rather by mail, which I also waited for for two months» (R75);». I only applied to the social service, they treated us well and with understanding, but due to the large influx of people, sometimes the nearest reception was only a few months ahead» (R75).

The next problem for respondents was the lack of familiarity with the country's rules and legislation and the difference in mindset: «There is also a very strong sense of difference between countries, i.e. new rules and other laws due to which misunderstandings and even problems occur» (R26). «The situation is complicated by the fact that this is a completely different country and a different mindset. A completely different culture and other customs» (R55).

At the same time, respondents are satisfied with the level of social security they received in the country. «We received all the main aid from the Labour Exchange, which is the main organization that provides aid in Germany. These include social payments, housing, language courses, and health insurance payments» (R61). «We applied to the employment centre (which is responsible for providing financial help to refugees) for assistance in purchasing clothes, we were allocated a certain amount of funds, which is meant to purchase clothes for two seasons (autumn-winter)» (R103).

Special attention should be paid to providing social housing, but after a certain period of stay in places of temporary accommodation for refugees: «...at first, we lived in a temporary refugee accommodation center..»(R71); «Immediately upon arrival, we were settled in a camp where we were provided with all the necessary hygiene products and fed. Now we have been provided with housing» (R55). At the same time, respondents note that there is now a shortage of free social housing in Germany due to the large number of Ukrainian forced migrants: «..but now there are problems with this, because Germany is quite crowded with Ukrainians who fled the war, there is no room for everyone anymore» (R15). «The only thing to pay attention to, I believe, is the insufficient number

of places to accommodate refugees. Many refugees live in «temporary» places of accommodation for a very long time (these are camps with tents or, for example, one large room with mattresses for a very large number of people). Of course, people are grateful for this, everything not to be under fire» (R102).

As for employment, Ukrainian forced migrants have gained access to the labour market and legal employment, but due to the lack of language competencies, they can only apply for certain vacancies: «You can find a job, of course, but due to ignorance of the language, the list of possible jobs is very limited» (R15). « You are also regularly offered a job if you are not a student and are over 25, but it is difficult to find one that you would like because of the language barrier, usually it is a job as a cleaner or handyman» (P75). At the same time, there is experience in integration courses that teach not only the language, but also certain professions (learning the German language together with mastering the profession).

In Germany, the main assistance to refugees is provided by the government of the country. At the same time, there are non-governmental humanitarian initiatives that can provide assistance. For example, there are special stores where you can buy cheap food. «I get the most help from the authorities. There is also a social store «Tafel», where you pay a symbolic amount in gratitude for help, and you are given food for a week. This is a volunteer organization «(R103).

Ukrainian forced migrants have access to medical and educational services: «*There are no problems with studying, except for the fact that it takes place in German: children and teenagers are immediately assigned to educational institutions. Someone to school, and someone to college*» (R15).

Psychological services are also provided for Ukrainian forced migrants: «*I have seen quite a lot of addresses on the Internet of Ukrainian psychologists who also came to Germany after the war (and some of them have been living here for many years) and are ready to help people cope with stress*» (R15).

As for the experience of communication with the local population, it is very different: from positive to sharply negative.

«*There are no problems, everyone is friendly and smiles at us. It seems to me that they are happy to help us, all humane and try not to cause us unnecessary emotions by talking about the war and the like*» (R88).

«*Sometimes people don't really like that Ukrainians live on their taxes. But I think the problem lies also in politics. It is simply not profitable for people to work and they need to learn a language, there is no way without it. But there is no open hostility*» (R4).

«*Local residents are OK, sometimes I heard, of course, mainly from the younger generation, that everyone is already tired of Ukrainians here and that there are too many of us, but mostly no one cares so much and people are sympathetic to our situation*» (P15).

In general, despite the existing problems, respondents are satisfied with the social support of refugees in Germany and are focused on language learning and faster integration into society: «we learn language and take care of our behavior so as not to cause discomfort to others» (R86). The level of employed respondents is not high, most of them are engaged in learning the language and performing temporary work.

Mariupol residents who are temporarily residing in other European countries have the same problems with adaptation and integration. But, for example, in Poland, the language barrier is not as strong as, for example, in Germany. According to respondents, the language barrier in Poland is felt only during the first months: «The only problem was the language, but now everything is clear» (R5); «Imperfect language proficiency of native speakers from time to time hinders full communication and understanding, but this can be solved» (R1).

The majority of respondents had no difficulty adapting to the rules and norms of Polish society due to the mindset closeness of the Polish and Ukrainian peoples. At the same time, it was this confidence in the similarity of the mindsets of the two peoples that caused the disappointment of Ukrainian forced migrants after a longer experience of communicating with the Poles.: «There are

ordinary things of the Poles that are incomprehensible to us, and there are our habits and views that are completely incomprehensible to them» (R1).

In general, Poland has a very developed non-governmental volunteer sector for providing assistance and support to Ukrainian forced migrants. There are a large number of different measures aimed at helping to integrate Ukrainians in Poland. At the same time, the most significant problem remains the problem of providing affordable housing. There is almost no social free housing left, and the cost of rent for apartments is very high due to the high demand. Given that in Poland there are mostly women with children, whose husbands stayed in Ukraine, this problem is very significant.

As for the attitude of the local population to Ukrainian forced migrants, in general, the situation is almost the same as in Germany. There is a positive experience of communicating with the Poles: «The majority of the population treats us well» (R27). There is a negative experience of communicating with Poles, for example, due to the fact that most Mariupol residents speak Russian.»... my husband already had a conflict at work, when they complained about him that he did not speak Ukrainian, and then they got personal and began to speak poorly about people from Donbass....» (A63).

Respondents also had negative experiences related to medical care due to the fact that they did not understand how the medical system works: «*it's hard to call an ambulance. My grandmother, she is a 71 y.o. elderly person. She was often ill and we had to call an ambulance. And the most important problem was that I call an ambulance, explain the situation in Polish, and they tell me that they are redirecting me to another line, that I need to wait, and I am redirected to another person to whom I have to tell everything again. I don't understand why (..)*» (A57).

As for polish language courses, there are many different offers, both online and offline courses, free and paid ones. However, respondents note the lack of systematic and in-depth language learning programs (only some programmes for the unemployed that are officially registered with the relevant state bodies). According to a 50-year-old woman who has been in Poland since March 2022: «I applied to the labour exchange. Now I attend free language courses. Stationary. I come and study every day until three o'clock in the afternoon. I'm learning. I was provided with books, pens, and a computer to learn the language. I also get a scholarship» (231).

Therefore, the analysis of the adaptation and integration problems of Mariupol civilians after leaving the occupied city of Mariupol showed that, in general, host countries are willing to help and support refugees and migrants. The main problems faced by the people of Mariupol are the language barrier, lack of affordable housing, difficulties in employment according to the level of education and qualifications, lack of understanding of the legal and medical systems of the host country. It is worth noting that these are common problems for migrants which are analyzed in numerous scientific publications on migration issues. At the same time, Mariupol civilians who have gone abroad face problems typical of forced migrants who have a traumatic experience of war and difficult and dangerous evacuation.

This is primarily due to the fact that the people of Mariupol were not prepared for emigration, did not plan to leave and build a new life abroad. Forced migrants were not familiar with the peculiarities, mentality, legislation and conditions of living in the country of temporary stay in advance. The majority of Mariupol residents lost almost everything, during the evacuation they did not have the opportunity to take things, sometimes – documents. They did not have savings that would allow them to live for a while, rent an apartment, etc. It is known that the psychological state of a person is also important for adaptation and integration. The people of Mariupol who were surrounded and occupied are in a state of severe stress, which greatly complicates the processes of adaptation to a new place of residence. Family problems and conflicts are also frequent, due to the forced residence of many people in limited areas: «It is quite difficult for us to live together, because our relatives did not expect to help us for so long, after all, six months to live in the house of people with whom you can not say that you are very close, this is quite a lot. So soon we will have to find our own place and leave them. For this reason, we have repeatedly had quarrels with them» (R15). «At first I lived with my daughter and her family, now I live separately in a separate flat. Changes in family relationships. At first, we were very worried about each other, did not see each other and did not know whether we were alive or not for a long period of time, we really wanted to see each other, to communicate.



And when we got used to it, everything fit together, as it was before. Now I live in the same city with my daughter, but separately. She supports me «(R3). «Our relationship is very complex, having different tempers and living in the same room without personal space. We fight very often. There is no person who will support you» (R23).

Another significant feature, which is characteristic for Mariupol residents abroad, is that most of them left with their entire families, together with men of draft age. Such families adapt to new conditions more quickly, are more active in finding work and arranging their own lives in their new place of residence. During the interview, the majority of Mariupol residents said that they are determined to work and provide their family with everything they need. With a reference to a Mariupol woman who left the city of Mariupol with her family in March 2022 and was in Poland at the time of the interview:

“(..) We did not go to the volunteer center.. to complain or asking.. We decided to rent a house and go to work. We are from Mariupol. We are not used to living at someone’s expense. We are used to working. We will work. Therefore, we decided not to ask for help. Let’s start life over from a scratch. And we will earn a living by our own work. I believe that women with small children should seek help. All others should work. We counted only on ourselves. (..) I translated all my diplomas into Polish. I turned to the labor exchange. Now I attend free language courses. Offline. I come and practice every day until three o’clock in the afternoon. I’m studying. I was given books, pens, and a computer to study the language. I also receive a scholarship. Next, I plan to enroll in a college to become a dentist’s or cosmetologist’s assistant. Next, I plan to learn the language and confirm my medical qualifications. My husband also found a job at a construction site. We have nowhere to return. We don’t have a home. Therefore, we decided to become worthy citizens, not a burden. Therefore, now we are doing everything for this. The youngest son goes to a Polish school. Not in the nearest one, unfortunately. We had to go through three schools before he was admitted. Online education did not continue in Mariupol. It was not possible to attend the Ukrainian school online. We found ourselves in such a situation. Therefore, they went to a Polish school and began to study. Yes, it was difficult. I don’t know the language. But we do not give up. We have no choice. Only forward we go “ (231, woman, 50 years old).

Of course, there are certain difficulties in employment associated with the need to learn the language of the country, and time to confirm qualifications, study the legislation or protocols inherent in the country for a particular profession. Besides, there are cases when refugees are resettled from temporary shelters to other places, and then people spend time looking for work again or putting their children in educational institutions.

All these problems are in many cases related to the fact that Ukrainian forced migrants are forced migrants, they did not prepare for moving in advance and did not study the history and traditions, culture and mentality of this people. Due to such lack of preparation, as well as the difficult psychological and emotional state of civilian residents of Mariupol who survived the siege and escaped from the occupation, there are difficulties in integrating and adapting to new cities of residence. At the same time, Mariupol residents, in most cases, do not have surviving housing in Ukraine, have experience of high-cost rental of flats in the western regions of Ukraine after the evacuation from Mariupol, which is why they try to adapt to new conditions, learn the language, obtain a new education and look for work.

Mainly, the people of Mariupol, who survived the war and evacuation from the war zone, are in a difficult emotional state and could not adapt in the first months after the evacuation: it was difficult to learn the language, communicate with other people, and think about the future. From the words of a Mariupol woman who had a traumatic experience of evacuation from the city of Mariupol in March 2022: «Unfortunately, now in the current conditions, no country can guarantee us any permanent shelter, and the situation here is much more complicated (for Mariupol residents) than for refugees from other cities. At least, they have a place to return, that is Kyiv, Lviv... they have their own housing, there are relatives, whereas a quarter of the population died in Mariupol. And to return to look at crosses, graves, destroyed houses - the psyche simply can not stand it. Therefore, personally, I feel that I also have mental health problems, and I don’t want anything to remind me of this terrible war,

at least during the next 5 years, this is for sure, and then we will see» (A63). They needed psychological help, care and support. Those Mariupol residents who received this help and support were later able to find strength in themselves and began actively looking for work and learning the language. Respondents spoke about the special attitude of the local population due to the fact that the refugees are from Mariupol, because they are aware of the situation that developed in the city during the blockade and occupation. «In general, we did everything quickly, even faster than it could have been, because an employee of an organization found out that we were from Mariupol and made the document as quickly as possible» (R27).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, it is worth noting that the traumatic experience of war, evacuation from occupied territories and forced departure abroad for the safety of one's family are significant factors that negatively affect the process of adaptation and integration of migrants in the host country.

During the research, the following features of the evacuation of Mariupol civilians were established: Due to the encirclement of the city, the rapid deterioration of the security situation, constant shelling and humanitarian disaster, civilians found themselves in a state of crisis, were unprepared and did not understand how to act in order to survive. The information vacuum and life in constant danger led to the fact that many Mariupol civilians did not dare to leave the city. The longer the stay under the blockade was, the more difficult it was to make the decision to leave.

People did not have the opportunity to choose evacuation routes and used any opportunity to leave the surrounded city. Those who ended up in the Left Bank district of the city evacuated through the temporarily occupied territories and Crimea, they left through the territory of the Russian Federation and then went either to Ukraine or to other countries. Those who were in the Central and Primorskyi districts of the city had the opportunity to leave through the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia regions to the territory of Ukraine.

Evacuation was difficult and dangerous. People were forced to drive along mined parts of the road, under fire and through numerous enemy checkpoints.

An important condition for evacuation was the presence of an undamaged car and fuel. There was also mutual assistance through the people of Mariupol. They tried to save as many people as possible. The evacuation route was improved by the presence of an external coordinator, who could be contacted already after leaving the surrounded Mariupol and who further assisted and directed the further departure from the temporarily occupied territories. For those who were forced to travel through the territory of the Russian Federation, it was important to have financial opportunities to pay for their trip. In another case, there was a forced evacuation to remote regions.

On the way to the evacuation, the people of Mariupol felt the help and support of people.

The choice of a country for a temporary stay was generally spontaneous. Already during the evacuation, the people of Mariupol contacted their friends, read the news and made decisions about where exactly they would go and in which country they would receive temporary protection. Most often, Mariupol residents left without belongings, documents and money. The psychological condition of people who had been in an environment on the verge of survival for a long time was extremely difficult.

Social security of Ukrainian forced migrants abroad is carried out depending on the specifics of the social policy of each individual country. However, it is common that even when crossing the border, Ukrainians are informed where they can apply for registration, what documents are needed for this, the validity period of social protection and the conditions for its termination, where to get examined by doctors, which benefits and rights are available to Ukrainians.

Ukrainian forced migrants receive the following:

First, the right to legal stay, and in some cases, the right to free accommodation. There are examples when the state reimburses utility bills in various ways, and provides housing for free. These can be shelters only for Ukrainians in the form of dormitories, as well as separate apartments and houses. It all depends on the availability of unoccupied premises on a particular territory. However, living

under such conditions is limited in time and refugees who live in the host country for a long time are forced to rent housing. The cost of renting a housing is too high.

Secondly, the right to social care. This includes obtaining a residence permit and financial help. In each country, the amount of financial help depends on the average unemployment benefits in the country. But there are countries that do not provide monthly financial help to Ukrainian forced migrants.

Third, the right to medical care. Medical insurance is provided to Ukrainians in a simplified format. However, when going to private doctors and clinics, the displaced person pays for services independently.

Fourth, the right to education. Ukrainians under the age of 18 get the opportunity to study abroad for free on an equal basis with local children. Schools for Ukrainian children are also being opened (for example, in Poland).

Fifth, language learning and access to the labour market. There are countries where people over the age of 18 are required to attend language courses. For example, in Germany, such courses last about 9 months and are divided into several sub-courses. Each such lesson lasts 3 hours and is held 3 times a week. The aim of the courses is for displaced persons to quickly learn German and adapt to this environment. At the same time, Poland does not oblige Ukrainian forced migrants to attend the Polish language courses.

Also, in each of the countries there are centres for providing psychological assistance and support to forced migrants. In some countries, for example, in Poland, there were separate non-governmental programs on support of refugees from Mariupol.

Social support systems for Ukrainian forced migrants abroad are constantly changing and being modified in response to new realities and threats. It is indisputable that the support of Ukrainian forced migrants, both from the governments of European states and from the citizens of the respective countries, is high. In most countries, Ukrainian forced migrants have received almost the same rights as citizens of these countries. At the same time, there are certain problems with communication between Ukrainians and citizens of these countries, which is definitely worth paying attention to.

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