



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Understanding Ukrainian society before and after the Russian invasion

Martsenyuk, Tamara; Gugushvili, Alexi; Ersanilli, E.; Präg, P.

DOI

[10.1080/14616696.2024.2350780](https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2024.2350780)

Publication date

2024

Document Version

Final published version

Published in

European Societies

License

CC BY-NC

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Martsenyuk, T., Gugushvili, A., Ersanilli, E., & Präg, P. (2024). Understanding Ukrainian society before and after the Russian invasion. *European Societies*, 26(2), 173–177. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2024.2350780>

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).





Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, P.O. Box 19185, 1000 GD Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

INTRODUCTION





Understanding Ukrainian society before and after the Russian invasion

Tamara Martsenyuk ^a, Alexi Gugushvili ^b, Evelyn Ersanilli ^c and Patrick Präg ^d

^aMohyla Academy, National University of Kyiv, Kyiv, Ukraine; ^bDepartment of Sociology and Human Geography, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway; ^cDepartment of Political Science, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands; ^dCREST, ENSAE, Institut Polytechnique de Paris, Palaiseau, France

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 was a watershed moment in modern European history. It quickly became evident that the war would have significant consequences for Europe's security, politics, and economy. Ukraine is shaken by the invasion to an extent comparable to the devastation during the Second World War. As Editors of *European Societies*, we realized that there was little sociological research on Ukraine, one of the largest European countries. Only a handful of articles were ever published on Ukraine in *European Societies* or other leading general sociological journals. Thus, we initiated a Special Issue on 'Understanding Ukrainian Society Before and After the Russian Invasion', co-edited by two Ukrainian sociologists, Tamara Martsenyuk from the National University of Kyiv Mohyla Academy and Tymofii Brik from Kyiv Schools of Economics.

This Special Issue was a large collective effort lasting for more than two years. The Editors received 53 extended abstracts in response to the initial call, out of which 28 were invited to submit a full manuscript. After the peer review process, *European Societies* accepted for publication the 17 manuscripts that make up the articles of this issue. Writing up manuscripts and reviewing them offered hurdles, as some Ukrainian authors stayed in the country while others left and became refugees. Furthermore, recruiting Reviewers for the Special Issue manuscripts was a challenge due to the necessary area-specific knowledge. We also want to thank two Associate Editors of the journal, Turkey Nefes and Conrad Ziller,

CONTACT Alexi Gugushvili  alexi.gugushvili@sosgeo.uio.no  Postboks 1096, Blindern, 0317, Oslo, Norway

© 2024 European Sociological Association

who handled a number of manuscripts. First and foremost, we are particularly grateful to the following Reviewers who contributed to peer review and decision-making:

Akaliyski, Plamen
Aksyonova, Svitlana
Andžāns, Māris
Barrie, Christopher
Boersma, Kees
Burljuk, Olga
Byelikova, Yuliya
Carlsen, Hjalmar
Dimitrova, Antoaneta
Draznova, Lenka
Drbohlav, Dusan
Fedorenko, Kostiantyn
Hernández Aguilar, Luis
Hrycak, Alexandra
Jarosz, Ewa
Katchanovski, Ivan
Khanenko-Friesen, Natalia
Khutkyy, Dmytro
Koikkalainen, Saara
Krakhmalova, Kateryna
Kreis, Ramona
Kulyk, Volodymyr
Lazarenko, Valeria
Makhortykh, Mykola
Marchenko, Alla
Mikolai, Julia
Muszalik, Marta
Mykhnenko, Vlad
Narvselius, Eleonora
Nelson, Laura K.
Pawlak, Mikołaj
Phillips, Sarah
Popova, Maria
Pozniak, Oleksii
Radomska, Marietta
Riabchuk, Anastasia
Romanova, Valentyna

Schmäing, Sophie
Siim, Birte
Stecker, Christian
Stepurko, Tetiana
Stewart, Susan
Strelnyk, Olena
Umland, Andreas
Wallaschek, Stefan
Wynnyckyj, Mychailo

We do not intend to summarize the wide variety of studies included in the Special Issue here, but rather, we will outline the authors' characteristics and a number of key topics that the articles cover. The Special Issue achieved a good balance of gender and institutional and national representation as 19 out of 34 authors are female, while half of the authors have either institutional affiliations in Ukraine or are Ukrainians who work in other countries.

Regarding the topics covered, Zaiets (2023) provides one of the first ethnographic accounts of the war from the frontline in the initial months of the Russian invasion. A number of contributions on local democracy (Schmäing 2023), civil society (Zaremba and Martin 2023), and fighting against corruption (Yanchenko and Zulianello 2023) give us some tentative answers about the resilience of Ukrainian society and newly-identified challenges during the war. Three articles of the Special Issue deal with various aspects of inequalities, such as the discourse on intellectual elites in Ukraine (Shchepetylnykova 2023), class conflict and regional differences (Ishchenko 2023), and health inequalities experienced by refugees after fleeing the country (Mazhak *et al.* 2023).

Types of solidarity is another central topic of this Special Issue; articles highlighting the comparison of Ukrainian and Syrian refugees on Twitter (Weber *et al.* 2023), the online mobilization of informal civic society in Denmark (Bang Carlsen *et al.* 2023), specific support given to Ukrainian refugees in two Polish cities of Lublin and Lutsk (Podgórska *et al.* 2023), as well as the unique challenges experienced by the members of the Ukrainian LGBTIQ community after leaving the country in the wake of the war (Shevtsova 2023). Górny and van der Zwan (2024) examine the wave of labor migration in the context of the early stage of Russian aggression against Ukraine that started in 2014. Two contributions explicitly examine forced displacement as the result of the ongoing war and explore the drivers behind the decision-making processes (Maidanik 2023; Tarkhanova and Pyrogoва 2023). Further, Kuzmuk (2024)

qualitatively explores post-migration Ukrainian refugee women's experiences in Poland in the initial phase of the war. A contribution from Akaliyski and Reeskens (2023) maps Ukrainian values and places them between the Slavic-Orthodox and European contexts, while Goshylyk and Goshylyk (2024) explore the role of the Ukrainian–American non-profit organization in constructing diasporic Ukrainian identity through personal and collective narratives.

At the time of completion of this Special Issue, we do not know how long the war will last and how specifically it will end, yet we are convinced that increasing understanding of the Ukrainian society through a sociological lens will be important in the long process of Ukraine's post-war reconstruction.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

ORCID

Tamara Martsenyuk  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4785-5618>

Alexi Gugushvili  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3933-9111>

Evelyn Ersanilli  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6286-1688>

Patrick Präg  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6175-8470>

References

- Akaliyski, P. and Reeskens, T. (2023) 'Ukrainian values: between the slavic-orthodox legacy and Europe's allure', *European Societies*: 1–30. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2206901.
- Bang Carlsen, H., Gårdhus, T. and Toubøl, J. (2023) 'Ukrainian refugee solidarity mobilization online', *European Societies*: 1–12. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2177704.
- Górny, A. and van der Zwan, R. (2024) 'Mobility and labor market trajectories of Ukrainian migrants to Poland in the context of the 2014 Russian invasion of Ukraine', *European Societies*: 1–31. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2298425.
- Goshylyk, N. and Goshylyk, V. (2024) 'Ukrainian-American non-profits in 2014–2022: constructing diasporic Ukrainian identity through personal and collective narratives', *European Societies*: 1–22. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2298432.
- Ishchenko, V. (2023) 'Class or regional cleavage? The Russian invasion and Ukraine's 'east/west' divide', *European Societies*: 1–26. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2275589.
- Kuzmuk (2024) "'Ukrainian refugee women's experiences in Poland in the first months of Russian invasion: a qualitative account'", *European Societies*. currently in production.

- Maidanik, I. (2023) 'The forced migration from Ukraine after the full scale Russian invasion: dynamics and decision making drivers', *European Societies*: 1–12. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2268150.
- Mazhak, I., Paludo, A. C. and Sudyn, D. (2023) 'Self-reported health and coping strategies of Ukrainian female refugees in the Czech Republic', *European Societies*: 1–27. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2203230.
- Podgórska, K., Jekaterynczuk, A., Yarosh, O., Kuzmuk, O. and Liubchuk, V. (2023) 'Support for Ukrainian refugees after Russia's invasion of Ukraine: aid structure and resilience factors. Case studies of Lublin and Lutsk', *European Societies*: 1–25. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2206892.
- Schmäing, S. (2023) 'Urban democracy in post-maidan Ukraine: conflict and cooperation between citizens and local governments in participatory budgeting', *European Societies*: 1–23. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2183972.
- Shchepetylnykova, I. (2023) 'Mending the divide: intellectuals and intelligentsia in Ukrainian scholarly discourse', *European Societies*: 1–18. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2188084.
- Shevtsova, M. (2023) 'Solidarity test: challenges of forced LGBTIQ migration and activism in central-eastern European countries in the context of Russia's war on Ukraine', *European Societies*: 1–23. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2181372.
- Tarkhanova, O. and Pyrogoва, D. (2023) 'Forced displacement in Ukraine: understanding the decision-making process', *European Societies*: 1–20. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2280680.
- Weber, M., Grunow, D., Chen, Y. and Eger, S. (2023) 'Social solidarity with Ukrainian and Syrian refugees in the Twitter discourse. a comparison between 2015 and 2022', *European Societies*: 1–28. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2275604.
- Yanchenko, K. and Zulianello, M. (2023) '“Not fighting corruption, but defeating it”: the populism of Zelensky's servant of the people in comparative perspective', *European Societies*: 1–26. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2203214.
- Zaiets, D. (2023) 'Kharkiv's shattered landscapes: observations from the front line of the war in Ukraine', *European Societies*: 1–25. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2180152.
- Zarembo, K. and Martin, E. (2023) 'Civil society and sense of community in Ukraine: from dormancy to action', *European Societies*: 1–27. doi:10.1080/14616696.2023.2185652.