# MAPPING UKRANIAN CIVICNESS ABROAD IN THE WAR EFFORT: A CASE STUDY OF POLAND

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## PeaceRep's Ukraine programme

PeaceRep's Ukraine programme is a multi-partner initiative that provides evidence, insight, academic research and policy analysis from Ukraine and the wider region to support Ukrainian sovereignty, territorial integrity and democracy in the face of the Russian invasion. PeaceRep's Ukraine programme is led by the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) partnering with the Kyiv School of Economics (KSE) in Ukraine, the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (IOS) in Germany, the Institute of Human Sciences (IWM) in Austria and Jagiellonian University in Poland. Through our collaboration with KSE we work closely with researchers, educationalists and civic activists in Ukraine to ensure that policy solutions are grounded in robust evidence and are calibrated to support democratic outcomes.

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# Foreword from Luke Cooper

I am pleased to present this new research report for PeaceRep's Ukraine team, which tracks the extraordinary civic response to the challenge of migration since the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine. It is published as part of our efforts to investigate the civic capacity and networks that are forming 'from below' to support Ukraine, and the concrete roles they are playing in Ukrainian and regional security. These networks are raising substantial resources, and are shaping narratives and political discourses in the international sphere. They have emerged as a quasi-political actor undertaking advocacy among Ukraine's partners, they have acted as a central lifeline of aid for Ukraine's state and society, and are continuously interacting with their 'homeland', e.g., through circular migration patterns and as a source of goods and money. In short, these civic networks are asserting an indirect agency on the war itself.

The report highlights several important features of this civic mobilisation:

- The critical role played by the self-activating and mobilising Ukrainian diaspora in Poland;

- How traditional institutions become embedded in highly informal networks based on interpersonal trust. This may be referred to as a 'post-Fordist' model of humanitarian relief;

- A blurring of the distinction between humanitarian and military aid, which sees this civic community abroad providing direct support for the material needs of the Ukrainian military.

Existing research has shown the ubiquity of 'civicness' in conflict sites.[1] This refers to a logic of public authority based on mutual obligation, or an implicit social contract, between individuals and groups, which may act as an alternative to (or become entangled with) types of political authority based on sectarianism or rent-based transactional politics. It sees individuals and groups produce forms of civic behaviour, networks and organisations as a means or survival, or to mitigate the absence of a state and rule of law system protecting citizens.[2] As this suggests, existing research has for the most part explored civicness in sites of intractable conflict, with a multiplicity of armed groups, often utilising violence as a means to extract resources from vulnerable populations. By contrast, Ukraine is conducting a conventional war – and the scale of the civic mobilisation behind the war-effort, both inside and outside Ukraine, is a key factor in ensuring its resistance retains a democratic character.[3]

Civicness includes but is broader than 'civil society', which is a term associated with NGOs and grassroots movements, and may be expressed in the behaviours of unorganised individuals.[4] The present study contributes to deepening our understanding of civicness as a transnational, networked phenomena among migrant

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[1] See the special issue of the Journal of Civil Society (Volume 18, 2022 - Issue 2) on 'Civicness in Conflict'.

[2] Kaldor, M. and Radice, H., 2022. Introduction: Civicness in conflict. Journal of Civil Society. Vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 125–141.

[3] Kaldor, M., 2022. Old War Logics, New War Realities. Koerber Stiftung. https://koerber-stiftung.de/en/projects/koerber-history-forum/e-paper-a-new-global-order-history-and-power-politics-mary-kaldor/ (Accessed 3 April 2023).

[4] Kaldor and Radice 2022.

communities.[5] It illustrates the vital role of interpersonal trust, as a pragmatic means of 'getting things done', in the difficult, challenging and often personally traumatising circumstances produced by war and conflict. The report may also be read as supporting existing scholarship[6] that has shown how diasporas do not simply respond to, or reflect, their country of heritage or 'home', but also act as transformative transboundary agents shaping its development.

Forthcoming work for PeaceRep's Ukraine team will give greater consideration to how this civicness is directly impacting the Ukrainian war-effort 'at home' in material terms (e.g., through the provision of resources). We will also investigate the way in which debates over Ukraine's post-war future are occurring both outside and inside Ukraine at the same time. This may be a potentially 'dynamic' contradiction, a sign of how the *national* liberation struggle is being fought on *transnational* lines, which will need to be effectively understood and harnessed for Ukraine to prosper in the war.

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[5] Ibreck, R., Seeka., A., (2022) Civicness in exile: The solidarities and struggles of South Sudanese refugees in Cairo. Journal of Civil Society. Vol 18, No. 2, pp.219-238.
[6] Voller, Yaniv, 2020. Advantages and challenges to diaspora transnational civil society activism in the homeland: examples from Iraqi Kurdistan, Somaliland and South Sudan. Conflict Research Programme, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK.

# Introduction

*"We are a society of networks where horizontal communication among people is essential. It helps us to create effective volunteer movements, to organize maidans. This is part of the answer to why Ukraine remains so resilient despite 400 years of war with Russia."*

- Olena Pavlenko, EU Ukraine Civil Society Platform, Recovery of Ukraine Conference, Lugano.

Civil society in Ukraine has flourished in the decades after independence – a bright spot in a country that sometimes struggled with other aspects of democratic nation-building, including electoral politics and the battle against corruption. It is therefore not surprising to see civil society emerge as a critical player in the war effort, sheltering internally displaced persons, providing humanitarian aid in occupied territories, supporting soldiers on the front lines, and more. But Ukrainian civil society isn't active only inside Ukraine. The Ukrainian diaspora in neighbouring countries has also given rise to a vibrant third sector, and it too has transformed itself in the year since the full-scale Russian invasion.

This research report is the outcome of research looking at 20 civil society organizations active in neighbouring Poland since the invasion of February 2022, including nine in-depth interviews and one focus group, and offers some modest recommendations for policymakers seeking to leverage grassroots groups to strengthen democracy in post-war Ukraine, including by enhancing ties between Ukraine and the rest of Europe.

## Ukrainian Civicness Abroad: A Brief Background

Before the full-scale invasion in 2022, 1.3 million Ukrainians had established themselves in Poland, mostly with short-term residence permits based on economic grounds.[7] After the full-scale Russian invasion in February 2022, 1.5 million more Ukrainian inhabitants applied for Temporary Protection in the country, the highest number in Europe.[8] Ukrainian nationals now account for more than 80% of foreigners residing in Poland[9], and it appears that the Ukrainian diaspora in Poland is now the largest in the world.[10] Ukrainians are transforming Polish society, and the Polish Ukrainian community is reshaping the Ukrainian diaspora and transnational ties to Ukraine.

Of the 20 registered organisations observed, one third were established between 1990 and 2014, focusing their activities mainly on Polish-Ukrainian dialogue, the development of Ukrainian cultural centres and acting as a voice for the Ukrainian minority in Poland.

*"The main goal is to help integrate Ukrainian migrants with Polish society, to support the development of cultural, educational, economic and political contacts between Poland and Ukraine, and to promote democratic values and civil society. [...] From the beginning, the foundation has been involved in activities to support Ukraine, especially in its efforts to integrate with the European Union."*

- Our Choice Foundation / Ukrainian House: Warsaw (established 2009)

Between 2014-16, following a significant wave of emigration from Ukraine, Polish cities saw a flourishing of Ukrainian civil society organisations – they account for another one-third of those we observed. They catered predominantly to Ukrainian migrants, providing support in practical adaptation and integration into Polish society, supporting, promoting and maintaining Ukrainian cultural identity abroad. This wave also saw increasing political advocacy, civil rights protection and more inclusive approaches to diversity, sometimes expanding to include other migrant communities.

*"The activities of Zustricz Foundation focus on strengthening Polish-Ukrainian cooperation, breaking down barriers to integration and tackling stereotypes, building modern, multicultural and democratic communities based on shared values. [...] The promotion of culture and education is of particular importance to the Foundation."*

- Zustricz Foundation: Krakow (established 2016)

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[7] Pędziwiatr, K., Stonawski, M. & Brzozowski, J. (2022). Economic and forced immigrants in Krakow in 2022. *Multiculturalism and Migration Observatory*, Krakow University of Economics [in Polish].

[8] UNHCR (2023). United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Operational Data Portal: Ukraine Refugee Situation. Accessible at: https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine

[9] Up to date statistics available on the Government of Poland website, information from the Office for Foreigners: https://www.gov.pl/web/udsc/obywatele-ukrainy-w-polsce--aktualne-dane-migracyjne2

[10] Own calculation based on statistics provided by the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs: https://mfa.gov.ua/en/about-ukraine/ukrainians-worldwide

The period between 2014-16 coincides with a boom in civic movements within Ukraine, which saw on one hand the strengthening of formal civil society organisations after Euromaidan, and on the other, the rise of a 'dormant' grassroots civil society[11], something of a reserve civic army, ready to activate in times of crisis. Wide-scale migration from Ukraine to Poland at this time brought with it these elements of formalised civil society as well as dormant grassroots, both of which became critical in the response to the next stage of Russian aggression.

On the eve of 24 February, 2022, Ukrainian civil society actors in Poland – leaders of NGOs, religious communities, active participants in the public sphere, civic-minded private people within the dormant grassroots – were at the forefront of mobilisation efforts. Poland's successful efforts in the first year of the war to host refugees in private homes, provide humanitarian aid and support, not to mention organising large-scale aid to Ukraine, cannot be understood without the pivotal role of Ukrainian civil society in Poland. Led predominantly by women (75% of the organisations observed are run by women), many of whom have fled from the war in the past year (one third of organisations observed), their activities can be divided up into those **on the ground** in Poland (humanitarian aid, education, psychological support, cultural diplomacy, long-term integration strategies), and those **towards the war effort in Ukraine** (military aid, humanitarian aid, relocation).

*"Our goal is to **provide quality continuous offline education** to children who have been forced to leave their homeland. After all, it is for them to build the future and rebuild Ukraine after the victory! They need to learn well, think creatively, make non-standard decisions and make the impossible possible. After all, the whole world will be watching them!"*

- Unbreakable Ukraine: Warsaw, Wrocław, Kraków (established 2022)

*"Our goal is to promote the development of Ukraine, to share information about our motherland and its culture. Now we have shifted the focus from culture to helping the country in times of need. The funds collected by our volunteers and organisation, go to the army and its needs. "*

- Foundation of Mass Performances, Krakow (established 2014)

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[11] Zarembo, K. and Martin, E. (2022) 'Did Ukraine's civil society help turn back the Russians?' *New Eastern Europe*, 4 May, 2022. Available at: https://neweasterneurope.eu/2022/05/04/did-ukraines-civil-society-help-turn-back-the-russians/

# On the Ground in Poland

In the first three intense months of humanitarian aid in Poland, 'everyone did everything' and 'learned while doing' – there was very little coordination between organisations and authorities in terms of service provision, and know-how was built on the fly. Ukrainian civil society actors took the lead in providing many of the essential services at that time. In Krakow, for example, two leading Ukrainian organisations, one that formerly focused on cultural activities (Zustricz) and the other that ran an information portal for Ukrainian migrants before the full-scale invasion (UA in Krakow / Institute Poland-Ukraine), teamed up with another local NGO (Salam Lab) to open the first major reception point and shelter for incoming refugees. As Olha Menko, director of the Institute Poland-Ukraine Foundation put it: *At the beginning there was a lot to do and a lot of needs, but then more and more organisations appeared and started dealing with these needs. We have been doing a lot of advocacy work, although this is not in our mission statement. It's my dream to return fully to providing information [for Ukrainian migrants] and leave behind activities we aren't familiar with, such as running a shelter. I would never get into that again, thanks very much.*"

After this initial burst of humanitarian aid there was a specialisation in activities by local NGOs and civic initiatives, and many Ukrainian organisations went back to offering support in areas they had previously worked: education, integration, information sharing and cultural activities. What changed was that these activities were scaled up and adjusted to the needs of newcomers, aided in part by international donors.

First among these are educational opportunities for Ukrainian children outside of the Polish public education system. These range from private schools, afterschool classes, hybrid educational formats, as well as more alternative, democratic school formats and arts initiatives. The *Unbreakable Ukraine* foundation, for instance, has set up Ukrainian schools in Warsaw, Krakow, and Wrocław, catering to 1500 students with 130 female teachers, supported by UNICEF and Save the Children, among other donors. After one year of existence, they have grown twice in size and continue to provide free education for those displaced by the war.

Second, psychological support remains key to the well-being and dignity of those fleeing the war as well as those workers and volunteers within the humanitarian response. While the demand is far greater than the supply, this key service is being run largely by Ukrainian-speaking psychologists and will continue to be in demand for many years to come. While many formalised Ukrainian organisations now provide some form of psychological support, bottom-up initiatives are also trying to fill in the gaps. 'Martynka', for instance, is an online Telegram project focused on supporting Ukrainian women who fled to Poland, with 11 hired psychologists and a network of therapists in different Polish cities, focusing particularly on women experiencing sexual violence. During the first year of the war psychological support was among the most frequent requests, and overall the team managed to help more than 600 women.[12]

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[12] Statistics obtained from Safonova, K. (2023) 'Invisible' migrants Ukrainian refugees in Poland brace themselves for a long war. *Meduza*, March 09, 2023. Available at: https://meduza.io/en/feature/2023/03/09/invisible-migrants

Third, the promotion and preservation of Ukrainian language, culture and national identity has been given an acute sense of urgency in the face of Putin's attempts to eradicate them. At the same time, culture is also a tool of integration into the host society, although this must come with a sense of reciprocity and in incremental stages. As Nadiia Moroz-Olshanska, director of the Foundation for Mass Performances points out:

*"If at the beginning the main aim was just to present Ukrainian culture, later it changed, transformed, and we realised that culture is this soft power that can change the mindset of society. It can build interpersonal communication, which can also help to integrate Ukrainian society in Poland through very simple actions, like going to the cinema, or the theatre. Essentially we can use culture as a tool for social change."*

Ukrainian culture in Poland has indeed gained political saliency, although the perception persists that there is a large dose of tokenism that misses the point of meaningful exchange. As Nadia continues, *"sometimes cultural institutions or regional authorities get funding to put on events that would integrate migrant communities with the host society, and for them integration means an audience that is 50% Polish and 50% Ukrainian. It doesn't work that way."* Yet things are changing, and formats like the CultureLab in Krakow, an arm of the local public authority, which has put on a series of events and panel discussions to critically debate how cultural institutions can be in solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian diaspora in Poland, have taken a step beyond mere tokenism, putting Ukrainian cultural leaders centre-stage in the discussions. This type of initiative, which extends to the international Forum Europa: Ukraine: Culture and Resistance, has highlighted that the active participation and co-creation of Ukrainian civic actors in rethinking cultural activities in Poland is critical, and it seems like some cultural institutions are catching on to this.

*"We are not only helping migrants, we are also the voice of the migrants in speaking to the public authorities, and we help the public authorities manage the migrant situation. We are always looking in two directions."*

-   *Artem Zozulia, Foundation Ukraine, Wrocław*

Advocacy has also become a tool for many established Ukrainian organisations in Poland, and relations with local and regional Polish authorities is visibly improving. One Wrocław organisation observed has a $4 million USD collaboration with the local authorities, and this is not an exception. The role of Ukrainian civil society organisations abroad, as one respondent put it, is "active advocacy", so that European states don't forget about their responsibility as democratic countries.

Yet political lobbying is not without its difficulties. Those Ukrainian civic leaders with political capital have more lobbying power, but their access to centres of decision-making remains limited. Consultation processes are often seen to be rather pro-forma only, activists say, and state institutions are slow, bureaucratic, and open to political biases. Current social anxieties, from inflation, housing shortages, and energy costs, make the presence of a large number of refugees ripe for political manipulation, particularly in an election year. While according to a public survey conducted in December 2022 by CBOS, Poland's Public Opinion Research Centre, 79% of Poles think

that Poland should still accept refugees from Ukraine[13], downwards trends can already be traced, particularly when it comes to anxieties about access to social and public services.[14] Public perceptions are easily swayed, and many of our respondents expressed anxiety about future scenarios where the presence of a large number of Ukrainian migrants and refugees can be instrumentalised for political purposes.

What will be key is to balance the feeling of safety and security of newcomers with a sense of security of the host society. Civil society has a critical role to play. As Roksolyana Voronovska, head of the Ukrainian Catholic University Foundation in Wrocław highlights:

*"Poles have already helped tremendously. And I think they also discovered something about themselves . . . They used to be a very closed society . . . But that changed this year, and I think they can feel very good about themselves.' […] 'Of course, there will be some [backsliding] in this good relationship […] and there will always be politicians ready to remind people of past issues between Ukraine and Poland […] 'But that's why institutions like ours will be important – to keep the dialogue going."*

[13]Scovill, J. (2023) 'Poles on the war in Ukraine one year after its outbreak', February 2023. CBOS report. *Public Opinion Research Center*: Warsaw. [in Polish].

[14] Sadura, P. & Sierakowski, S. (2022). Polacy Za Ukrainą, Ale Przeciw Ukraińcom. Raport Z Badań Socjologicznych. [Poland with Ukraine, but against Ukrainians]. Stowarzyszenie im. Stanisława Brzozowskiego: Warszawa [in Polish].

# Civic Mobilisation for the War Effort in Ukraine

The humanitarian mobilisation towards Ukraine had been quick to mobilise and specialise, particularly amongst those Ukrainians who were not involved in education and practical integration activities in Poland before the outbreak of the war, or those who had well developed connections with Ukraine. In this interconnected, yet distinct arm of the mobilisation efforts, several elements stand out. First, **the ad hoc and decentralised nature of the distribution of aid**. Aid generally happens not through hierarchical chains of command and equitable processes of redistribution, but through decentralised, bottom-up and personalised connections. We have seen this at work particularly within grassroots civil society structures away from state-level and supranational actors.[15] Activists believe this is the key to why humanitarian aid has worked: it is quick, targeted, and largely circumvents traditional aid structures. These findings are echoed by recent research hailing a 'post-Fordist' 'distributive' humanitarianism.[16]

As Olga Tkachuk from the Mission-U Foundation explained: "*All the partner organisations and collaboration are created ad hoc: as we work, these partner ties develop accordingly. (…) Everything works like natural selection. It happened spontaneously – no one finances it, no one helps. It all works on trust now. The first thing is trust, and the second is contacts, which are already friendly enough that we communicate with each other. Everyone knows everyone else, and that's just happened – there's less chaos.*"

Second, we note new forms of **accountability, particularly in the most informal of networks**. Somewhat paradoxically, the more informal the chain, the greater the emphasis on accountability, through the use of QR codes to track goods, photo documentation disseminated on social media, and paperwork to get across the border and through military lines. Some groups use techniques taken from IT companies, multinationals, and private entrepreneurs who have become involved in the humanitarian aid chain, employing their know-how in what is now one of the most complex logistical efforts in the region. This could not happen without the cooperation of an array of collaborative groups, not only from organised civil society, but also entrepreneurs, businesses, and private individuals.

Third, rarely noted but significant, there has been a **blurring of humanitarian and military aid**. From protective military equipment and clothing, to drones, night-vision glasses, and other materials, Ukrainian civic actors, women at the forefront, have become overnight experts in military parlance and procurement. This has happened on account of the very personal connections with frontline military personnel, amongst whom are regular civilians working army shifts. Supply chains run from bottom-up refugee-led initiatives to formalised organisations in Poland and elsewhere through a personal contact in this and that brigade, on account of a son, husband or father being stationed there. Transports of goods are accounted for, signed off officially, and redistributed ad hoc.

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[15] Czerska-Shaw, K., Krzyworzeka-Jelinowska, A. & Mucha, J. (2022). 'The Mobilisation of Help to Ukrainian Refugees in Krakow'. *Multiculturalism and Migration Observatory*, Krakow University of Economics [in Polish].

[16] Cullen Dunn, E. & Kaliszewska, I. (2023). 'Distributed Humanitarianism. Volunteerism and aid to refugees during the Russian invasion of Ukraine. *American Ethnologist,* 50:1, pp: 19-29. https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.13138

## Civil Society: From Cultural to Security Actors

In the past year of humanitarian mobilisation, we have seen Ukrainian civil society actors in Poland take on the role of front-line workers in the protection of human life, dignity and integration processes. A useful lens to analyse these developments is the concept of human security, which calls for an extension of individual rights beyond domestic borders, developing a capacity at regional or global levels to provide emergency services.[17] Beyond hard security, there is an emphasis on economic, social, environmental and health protection, with human life and dignity at its heart. The humanitarian reaction in Poland offers a promising example of the development of this capacity at a regional level, from providing emergency services, to social and health protection, as well as support with labour market integration and public service provision.

Civil society actors engaged in fighting for Ukraine's freedom may also offer a critical self-reflection for Western democracies and their positioning vis a vis 'new' democracies. As one respondent put it, *"old [European] democracies have somewhat forgotten what democracy is. They are impervious to change, yet they are susceptible to propaganda. Because they view propaganda merely as another point of view, and not as what it is – propaganda. They often have a very superficial approach to so-called young democracies, forgetting that they can also learn from these countries. This is the role of civil society organisations like ours – to be representatives of Ukraine on different levels, but also watchdogs of organisations and institutions in Ukraine. We know the context well, but we also see the weaknesses that are not apparent from the inside. We also see the weaknesses that are apparent here [in Poland]."*

The complex historical relations of power between 'West' and 'East' also bring to light the relations with (mostly western) donors that need to be critically re-examined. The first sticking point is the humanitarian principle of neutrality, which strictly separates humanitarian aid from military aid – neutrality becomes a sort of imposition in a context where there are many grey areas. International donors, humanitarian charities chief amongst them, clearly do not fund activities for military purposes. Yet there is a significant blurring of these types of aid on the ground, and this has excluded many Ukrainian civic actors from donor support. There is also a great deal of inflexibility in traditional funding models, which are reliant on donor approval, or sometimes dictated by donors' wishes without fitting the local context. While international organisations are careful to frame their actions through terms like accompaniment, walking alongside, agency-building or gap-filling – and there are some good examples of this – there are still rigid structures and mounting frustration of local organisations, including Ukrainian-led ones. As one respondent noted: *"We very often come across this, that some large international organizations come with their scenarios of solutions and money for these scenarios. And then you take this scenario and understand that it will not work and you are not able to do something to change it, and you have to think creatively about how to use their scenario to implement the solutions that will work."*

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[17] Kaldor, M. (2020). '*Human security: practical possibilities*', *LSE Public Policy Review*, 1:2. ISSN 2633-4046

The protection and empowerment of minorities amongst the Ukrainian population also requires more attention and support. The precarious situation of Roma refugees from Ukraine, for instance, has been side-lined in the funding and support frameworks. Finally, the gendered dimension of both refugee flows and Ukrainian civil society movements in Poland needs to be taken into account at all levels of support.

# Conclusions and Recommendations

Aid fatigue is mounting within Polish society, and long-term social and economic solutions are needed, not only to assure support in the war and reconstruction efforts in Ukraine, but to ensure the human security of Ukrainians abroad as well as peaceful co-existence and stability in host countries. The stability of the region will depend on the strength of transnational social networks to support the war effort and rebuilding process in Ukraine. This includes transformative relationships between newcomers, mediators, and host societies, and the inclusion of civil society actors in political dialogue at all levels, particularly women who make up the vast majority of those fleeing the war.

While the reality on the ground is dynamic and unpredictable, we may offer a few points of reflection and future orientated recommendations which come from the observation and analysis of the civic mobilisation of Ukrainians in Poland.

1. **Civil society abroad matters, also for security. Let's not forget them in the reconstruction efforts.**

The Ukrainian diaspora in Europe has doubled in the past year, and even if many of the million plus Ukrainians who fled to Poland in 2022 eventually return home, much of the impetus for post-war social transformation and democratic rebuilding in Ukraine will come from economic as well as social remittances from abroad. There is a well-founded need to continue supporting Ukrainian civil society abroad, not just with humanitarian aid, but in developing networks of cooperation, advocacy and democratic checks and balances, also in their host societies. This includes social security, such as through the provision of education and support for Ukrainian children and youth. We see promising educational activities developing in Poland, but quality education that links Ukrainian and Polish curricula is expensive. Without the targeted support of international donors, some initiatives have had to charge high tuition fees and others still are struggling to get off the ground.

Individual well-being is paramount to immediate and long-term social development. A generation of Ukrainians is facing collective trauma and individual tragedy, experienced on many different levels. Polish mental health services are in dire straits, not able to cope with the demand even from the Polish society. While support networks and access to free psychological help for Ukrainians and those on the frontline of aid have mushroomed – provided almost exclusively by civil society organisations – there will need to be a long-term strategy to sustain them, to strengthen awareness campaigns and social support networks. A cross-sectional lens is critical, focusing on the empowering women, minorities, children and youth.

It is also important not to forget the critical role of the cultural and intellectual sovereignty of Ukraine. Ukrainian society, including Ukrainians living abroad, have underscored this as a fundamental question of survival. This highlights the importance of providing a space for dialogue and dissemination of cultural and intellectual activities abroad as key to the war effort.

*'A lot of children would love to return to Ukraine. I want to serve a generation that is brought up with a European mindset, then goes back to Ukraine to make it a European state, not the post-Soviet one. . . . A new generation of Ukrainian Europeans or European Ukrainians.'*

- Viktoriia Gnap, Director, Unbreakable Ukraine.

## 2. Synergy between bottom-up and formalised civil society movements is key. Agency and partnership is everything.

There is a need to harness the energy of grassroots movements and diversity of stakeholders with structures that are sustainable. This is not an easy task. While flexibility and speed are of the essence in crisis situations, more sustainable and transparent frameworks will be needed for the long term. The modes of humanitarianism are changing, and so is Ukrainian transnational civil society – it has shown to be diverse, flexible, and resilient. International donors may need to reconsider their approach, as traditional funding models and development strategies are too rigid and highlight asymmetrical power relations. The spirt of partnership and agency-building should be at the forefront of solutions, with partners involved in the process from start to finish, with the ability to make decisions in a collaborative process.

There has been a distinct blurring of humanitarian and military aid in the civil society responses to the full-scale Russian aggression. This development provides a perspective on the 'triple-nexus approach' (development, humanitarianism and security cooperation) first developed at the UN Humanitarian Summit in 2016[18] and the subject of some academic and political debate.[19] This approach calls on greater cooperation between these traditionally siloed dimensions of action in conflict and post-conflict zones to achieve lasting peace. The 'hybrid' humanitarian / hard security mobilisation of civil society within Poland and Ukraine offers a compelling prototype of this type of cooperation, particularly within the 'dormant' grassroots level activated in times of crisis. This remains an observation at this juncture, which could be turned into a future orientation of analysis.

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[18] Inter-Agency Standing Committee and UN Working Group on Transitions (2016). Background paper on Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus. Available at: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/peace-hum-dev_nexus_150927_ver2.docx

[19] See for example: DuBois, M. (2020). The Triple Nexus: Threat or Opportunity for the Humanitarian Principles. Discussion Paper. *Center for Humanitarian Action*; Howe, P. (2019). "The triple nexus: A potential approach to supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals?," *World Development*, Elsevier, vol. 124(C), pages 1-1.

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