

the very essence of what a monument is, stripped from historical or ideological superimpositions. The war makes us realise that a monument is also a material object serving as an inscription of human suffering or loss – actual or past – in a certain landscape.

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## Ukrainian Refugees in the EU Racial Affinity or Selective Securitisation?

Russia's invasion has uprooted more people than any post-Second World War conflict in Europe, including the Yugoslav wars and the 'migrant crisis' of 2015 (Desilver 2022). Still, Ukrainian refugees have been welcomed in Europe more than victims of any recent wars. Although racial underpinnings of the European migration policy are often blamed for this paradox, my research suggests that a shift in the securitisation of migration played the key role in selective hospitality to Ukrainian refugees in Europe. The preferential treatment of Ukrainian forced migrants is due to the fact that they are perceived and (self-)represented as security assets for an externalised containment of the Russian advance into Europe.

In March 2022, The Temporary Protection Directive was activated by the European Commission for the first time since its adoption in the aftermath of the Yugoslav war. It granted migrants from Ukraine the right to stay, work and receive help in any EU country without going through a lengthy asylum procedure. This is a stark contrast with Europe's reaction to migrants from the Middle East, Africa and Afghanistan, who not only do not enjoy such privileges but also experience violent pushbacks from Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, the countries that extended a particularly warm welcome to Ukrainians (Follis, this issue). This prompted many to suspect a racially motivated preference for 'white' Ukrainians. Indeed, numerous reports pointed to the discrimination against Ukrainian residents of colour both in Ukraine and in Europe, in particular students at Ukrainian universities from the Global South, and against Ukrainian Roma (Howard et al 2022).

However, this is only part of the explanation. Hierarchy of deserving and undeserving migrants, including in a racialised form, has historically depended on the state's geopolitical interests (Cantat 2022). My ongoing research in Ukraine and Romania suggests that Ukrainian residents with Belarusian passports, who had to flee the Russian invasion after having escaped repressions at home, have also been discriminated against in Ukraine and in Europe despite being 'white'. Refugees with Russian passports face even more difficulties, as do Ukrainians who attempt crossing the EU border from Russia. Finally, Ukrainians as a traditional pool of cheap labour in the EU and as refugees from the war in Donbas have also been subjected to a racialising discrimination dynamic prior to the 2022 war (Shmidt and Jaworsky 2022: 104–114).

As my work on forced migration prompted by the Donbas conflict shows (Artiukh 2021), explaining the differential treatment of migrants requires accounting for changes in securitisation discourses intertwined with the class and gender construction of migration. As opposed to the previous 'migrant crises', when migrants were represented as dangerous, predominantly male, invaders, Ukrainians fleeing the war are presented in the media and by European politicians as exclusively women and children, even if this is only partially true. This image is further enhanced by the fact that men between 18 and 60 are barred from leaving the country, although many cross the border under various exceptions or (semi-)illegally. Additionally, there is a strong class dimension: those who go to Europe tend to be disproportionately young, urban middle class families with prior experience of mobility. They own cars and have savings, and often speak English. My fieldwork in Romania shows that members of civil society involved in helping refugees feel class affinity with Ukrainians and strive to represent their country as a 'civilised' part of Europe.

This has consequences important for understanding the privileges of Ukrainians in Europe. First, there is an expectation that the current situation is only temporary, that Ukrainian refugees will eventually return to Ukraine, and most importantly to their husbands. Indeed, temporary protection doesn't prohibit people from returning home, as opposed to a refugee status, and many of my research participants in Romania regularly visit Ukraine. Second, supporting women and children while their husbands and fathers are represented exclusively as soldiers is regarded as a supplement to delivering weapons, a form of 'political kinship' (Dzenovska 2022). The support of social reproduction, in which Ukrainian women play a central role, becomes a European security interest comparable to weapons and munitions delivery to the Ukrainian army.

Not only is this image of male defenders and female reproducers cultivated by the receiving societies, it is emphasised by the migrants themselves. In the first weeks following the outbreak of the war, a video recorded by a Ukrainian soldier grateful for the reception his family received went viral in Romanian social networks and media. Female migrants and children dominate Romanian media and public representations, while male migrants are virtually invisible. Additionally, Ukrainian female refugees publicly perform their image as deserving migrants: they stress their links with the Ukrainian army as 'soldiers' wives', often going as far as shaming men who fled abroad.

Thus, if in 2021 migrants from the Global South were securitised as Russia's weapon in its 'hybrid war' on Europe, today Ukrainian migrants are portrayed and self-imagined as an appendage to European weaponry in the fight against Russia. This shows the benevolence towards forced migrants from Ukraine is only partially racially determined. The key factor shaping the response is general securitisation of forced migration (Hammerstad 2011: 251). Negotiating a balancing act between a direct clash with Russia and supporting Ukraine's resistance, Europe delegates the production of security to the predominantly male soldiers, while securing social reproduction through offering temporary protection to mostly women and children.

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