

International conference organized with support of the International Visegrad Fund with the project *Ukrainian refugees in Central Europe and the Balkans - lessons learned and policy recommendations*

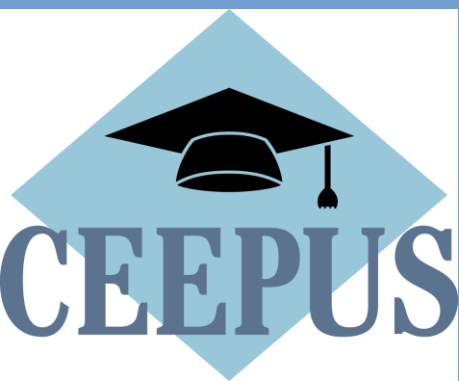
Country study: case of Poland

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The main points to be addressed (based on the analytical framework)

1. General description of country's immigration policy
 - refugees received before 2022
2. Ukrainian diaspora characteristics before and after 2022
 - demography, legal status and economic position
3. Political institutions' reaction
 - government and its agencies + international organizations interference/impact
 - regional and local government role
4. Receiving society's reaction
 - civil society
 - public opinion
5. The main conclusions

1. General description of country's immigration policy

1. Poland for long time was a country with long historical record of emigration, without any significant experience of receiving and integrating immigrants – **now it is country of emigration and immigration** (the process accelerating in 2004/2014)

2. Since 2015 we observe politicization of the immigration policy – it has become **conflicting issue** where values of security were confronted with economic necessities (compensating for labour shortage) and human rights agenda

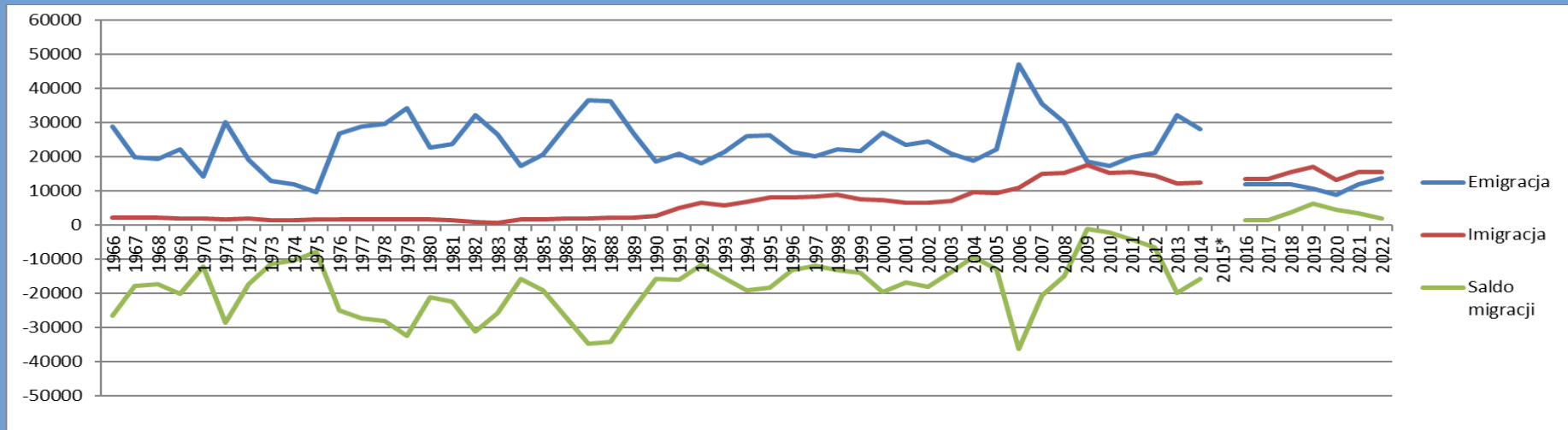
3. Politicization of immigration and shift towards anti-immigrant rhetoric in public discourse **was accompanied by growing number of labour immigrants** (2021 – 504 thousand working permits issued)

4. The first (since the 1989) official document formulating priorities of the Polish migration policy was adopted in 2012, however in 2016 it was rejected by the new government and work over such document in 2016-2022 has failed - **for October 2023 Poland does not have cohesive, long-term programme on the field of migration policy**

5. Experts say **about the “garbage policy”** - a lack of compromise on the main priorities, absence of one leading institution and clear rules of cooperation between governmental agencies involved into elaborating of the programme (Łoziński, Szonert, 2023).

1. General description of country's immigration policy: refugees received refugees before 2022

Table 1. Emigration and immigration: Poland 1966-2022



Source: Główny, 2023

Table. Foreigners applying for granting international protection in Poland



Source: Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców (Office for Foreigners)

Resident permits(in millions) Poland (EU27):

- 2018 – 0,65 mln (2,79 mln),
- 2019 - 0,72 mln (3,02),
- 2020 – 0,6 (2,3),
- 2021 – 0,97 (2,9) (Eurostat)

1.General description of country's immigration policy: refugees received refugees before 2022

2020



Table. Decisions about refugee status or subsidiary protection



Source: Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców

2021

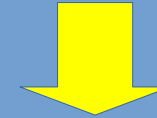


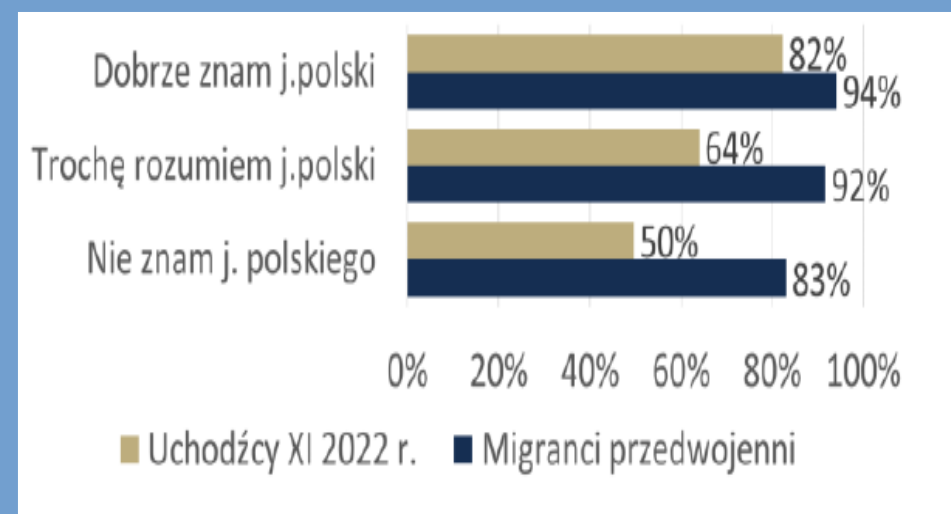
Table. Decisions about international protection in Poland



Source: Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców

2. Ukrainian diaspora characteristics before and after 2022: economic position

Table. Employment vs. Polish language knowledge

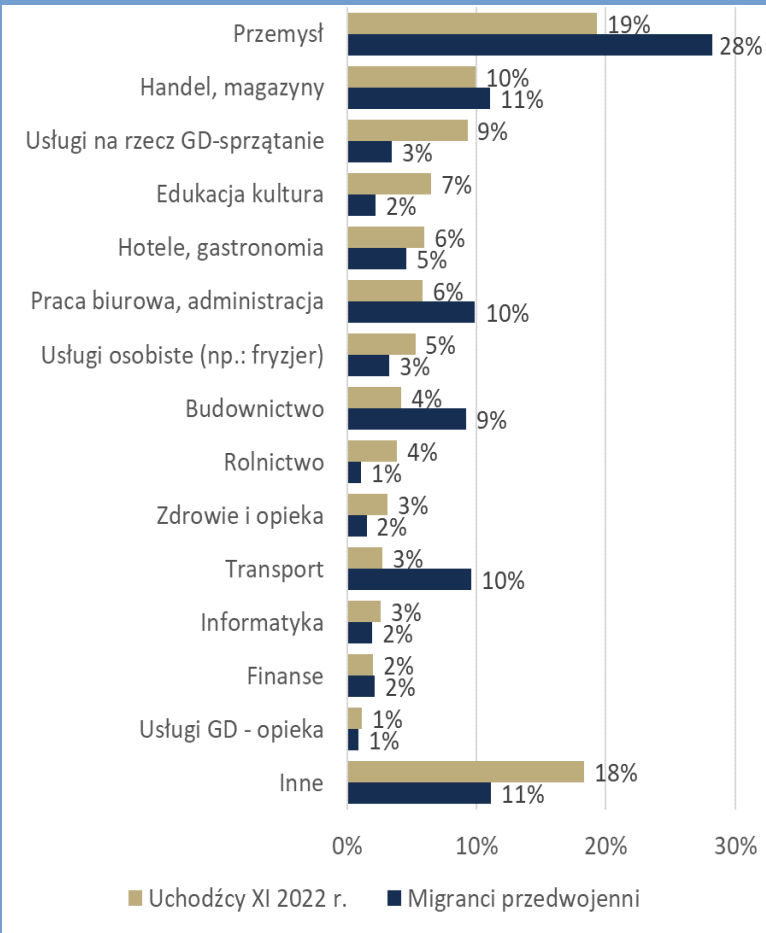


Source: Chmielewska-Kalińska, Dudek, Strzeleck 2023

In 2022 Ukrainians opened

- 17,5 thousand enterprises (sole proprietorship)
- in case of 4 thousand new companies Ukrainian capital was co-present.
- together there were 24 thousand companies with the Ukrainian capital,
- in the first 5 months of 2023 it was already 13 thousands.

Table. Sectors of employment



Source: Chmielewska-Kalińska, Dudek, Strzelecki 2023

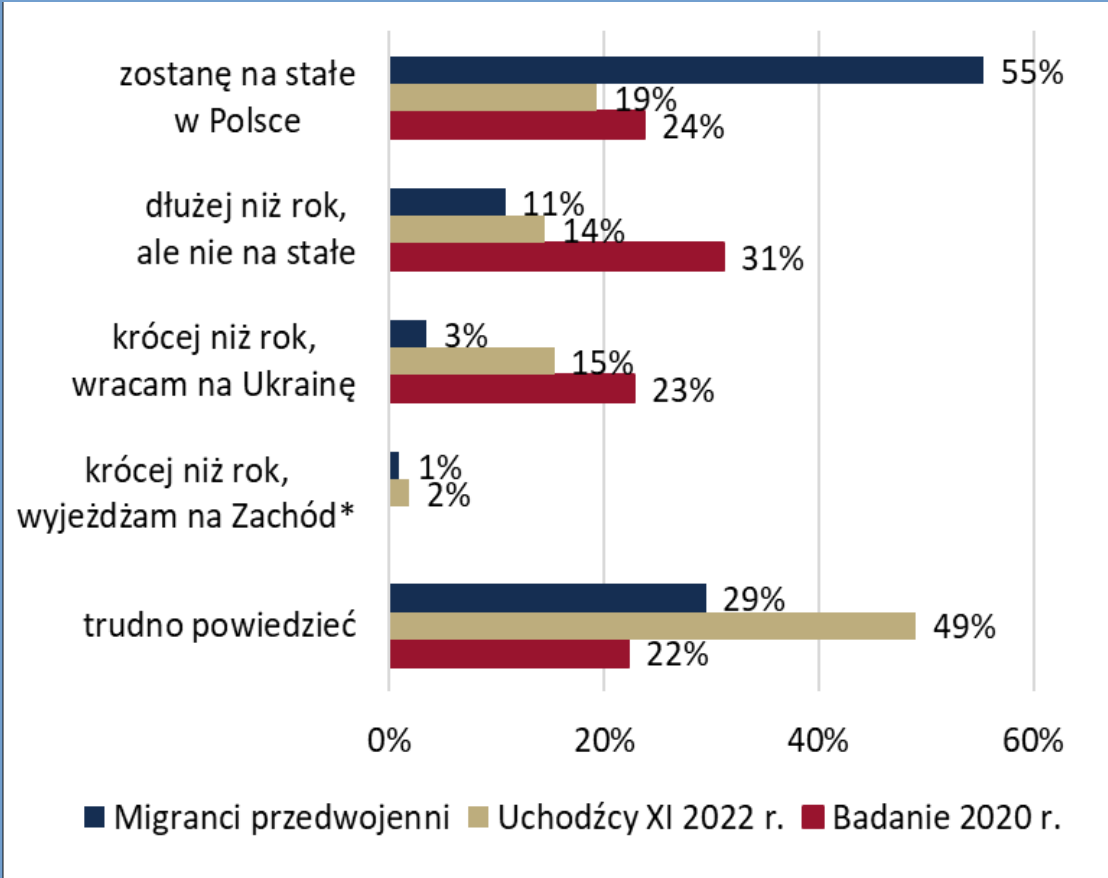
2. Ukrainian diaspora characteristics before and after 2022: demography and legal status

State of art for February 24, 2023:

- **1,4 mln** Ukrainian citizens with the resident permit
- Ukrainians **constituted 80%** of all foreigners legally settling in Poland.
- About **1 mln** are a subject of temporary protection mechanism (ochrona czasowa) (Obywatele 2023).
- Ukrainians under temporary protection mechanism obtained the Polish identity numer (PESEL).
- **About 87% of this group are women and children.** Among adults 77% are women. 43% persons with granted temporary protection are children (Obywatele 2023).
- About 360 thousand of Ukrainian citizens have temporary residence permit (zezwolenie na pobyt czasowy), most with regard to the work purpose. About 65 thousand hold permanent residence permit (zezwolenie na pobyt stały) or long-term EU resident permit (rezydent długoterminowy UE) (Obywatele 2023).
- Most of the Ukrainians concentrated **in regions with big metropolitan areas**: Mazovia (Warsaw) 21%, Lower Silesia (Wrocław) 11%, Bigger Poland (Poznań) 11%, Lesser Poland (Cracow) 10%, and Silesia (Katowice) 9% (Obywatele 2023).

2. Ukrainian diaspora characteristics before and after 2022: diaspora attitudes

Table. Planned stay in Poland



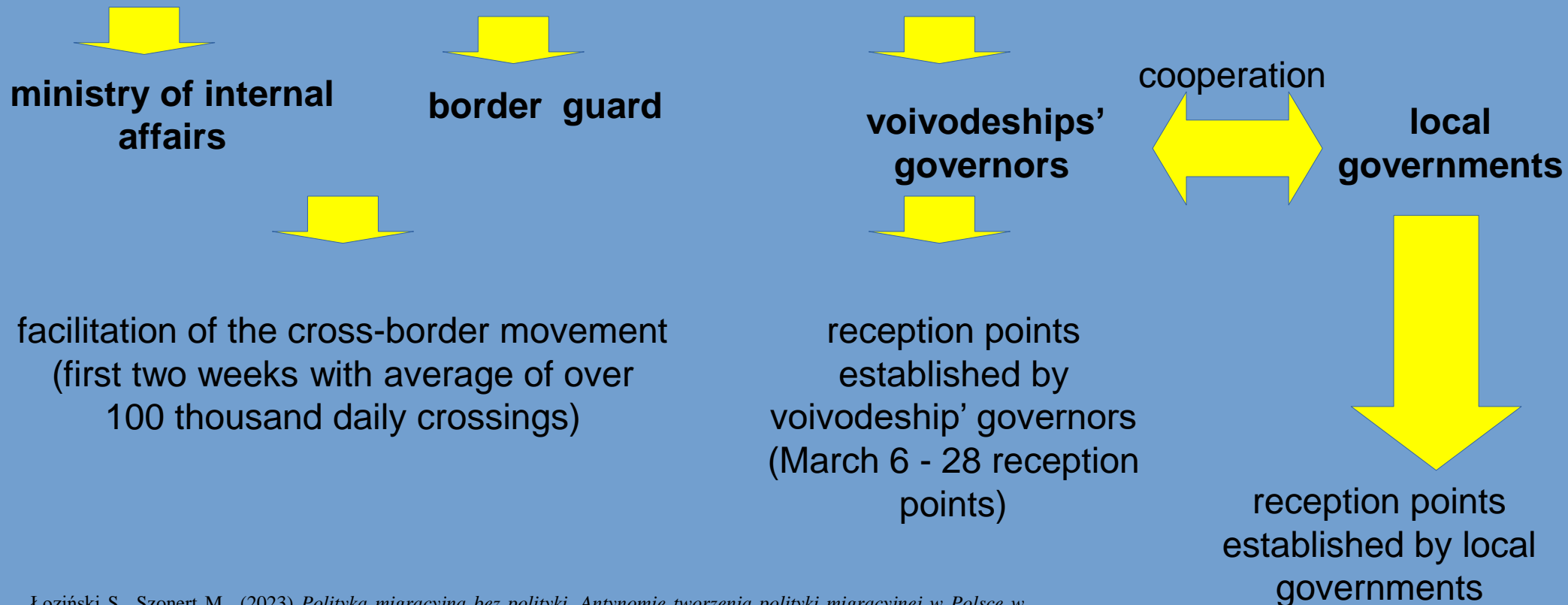
350 thousand refugees left Poland
(persons with temporary protection), most moved to Germany

Source: Chmielewska-Kalińska, Dudek, Strzelecki 2023

3. Political institutions' reaction: government

‘institutional bricolage’ as reaction to the massive influx of refugees (Łoziński, Szonert, 2023)

government suddenly faced necessity to organize/improvize actions aimed at reception of the massive influx of refugees, these actions being spontaneously implemented by variety of actors from different sectors and levels



3. Political institutions' reaction: government

The Council of European Union - March 4, 2022 activation of the Temporary Protection Directive



The Polish parliament - March 12, 2022 **adopted the law on assistance to Ukrainian citizens in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of this state** (amended in January and April 2023)

support from almost all parties in the parliament: 439 in favour vs 12 against



- legalization of stay for 18 months since the February 24, 2022
- simplified procedure of applying for PESEL number (Polish registration number)
- access to social benefits e.g. 500+ scheme, which is 500 PLN paid on monthly basis for each child below 18
- access to free healthcare
- right to work and right to set up private enterprise as all other Polish citizens
- financial support for 120 days for the citizens and entrepreneurs providing accommodation to refugees



9 MP from the far right

Confederation:

- disseminating anti-Ukrainian narratives
- criticizing access to social benefits



2023 elections
result: 7% (18 MP)

3. Political institutions' reaction: international organizations

three main forms of engagement of international organizations into support of refugees and interacting with the domestic institutions



providing financial support



EU: Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund for 2021-2027 (273 million Euro) and Border Management and Visa Instrument (162 million Euro)

UNHCR, UNICEF: cash assistance programme – in August 2022 approx 260 thousand of refugees received payment



improving institutional capacities (sending staff, training, establishing reception and support centres, providing standards and facilitating cooperation)



establishing 12 so called Blue Dot Hubs by UNHCR and UNICEF/establishing Refugee Response Plan



monitoring activities combined with advocacy



reports of the Amnesty International on: Roma People from Ukraine, anti-Ukrainian propaganda, access to education for children, housing conditions

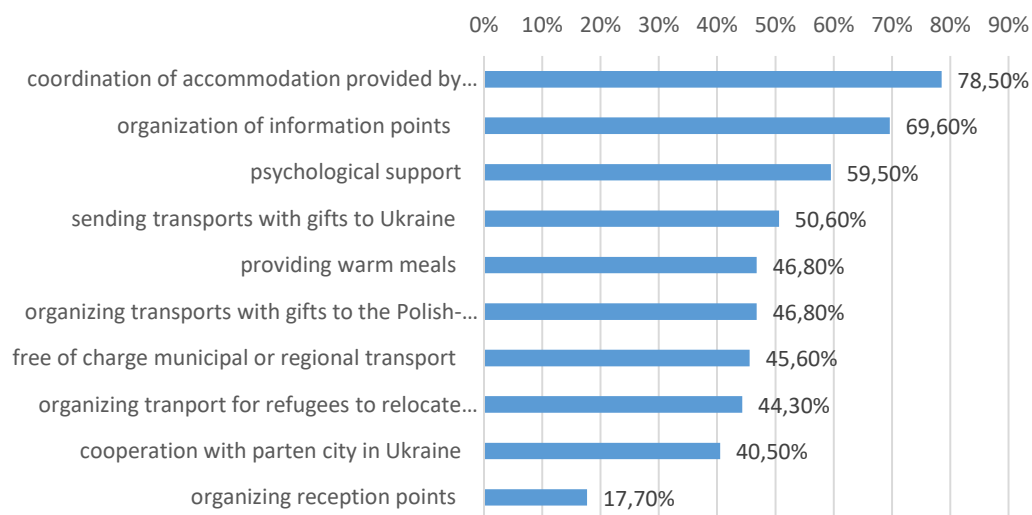
3. Political institutions' reaction: local government

The local governments were the main actors in receiving Ukrainian refugees taking the biggest burden, however the burden was not equally distributed

cities located close to the border with Ukraine and the biggest cities received the highest share of refugees (70% of Ukrainians stayed in 12 biggest Polish)

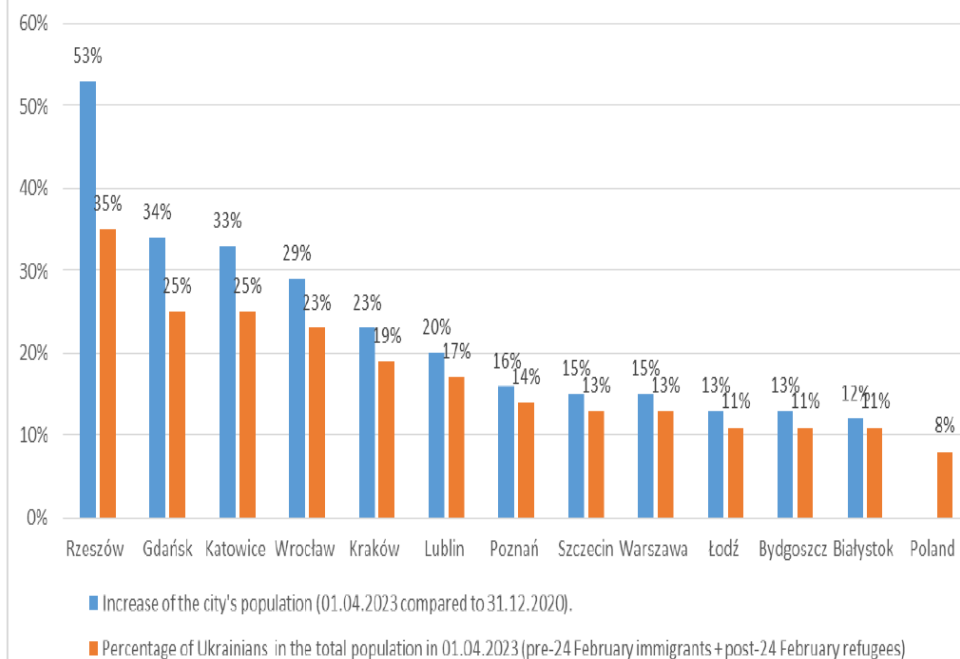
The reception phase

The most common forms of supporting refugees by local governments (% of communes declaring given type of support)



Source: 31 dni wojny w Ukrainie. Raport na temat pilnych zmian w organizacji państwa polskiego (2022) Ruch Samorządowy TAK! dla Polski, March 30

Ukrainian population in the 12 biggest cities (estimated influx and share in the total population in 01.04.2023)



Source: Cywiński P., Wojdat M., (2022) Urban hospitality: unprecedented growth, challenges and opportunities. A report on Ukrainian Refugees in the largest Polish Cities, April, Union of Polish Metropolises

3. Political institutions' reaction: local government

The second phase was aimed at providing mid-term and long-term help by inclusion of refugees into social and economic life

proposing systemic solutions to integrate refugees



May 2022, Wrocław (120 people) - the local government movement 'Yes for Poland' organized 'Territorial Government Round Table' in order to work on recommendations for changes

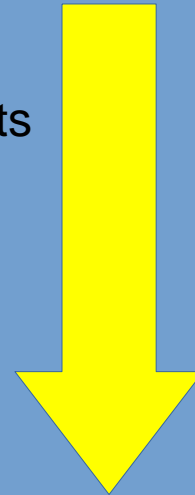


White Paper handed to the prime minister, president and Senate

financial and organizational challenges above the capacities of the local government



distribution of social benefits to newly entitled group, however without financial transfers from central budget to cover them



housing problem of refugees (March 2023 – 86 thousand stay in collective accommodation centre)



inclusion of Ukrainian children into the Polish educational system (November 2022- 190 thousand) without proper preparation and financing

4. Receiving society's reaction – civil society

three groups of actors within the civil society

actions undertaken by NGOs having already professional experience in approaching immigrants

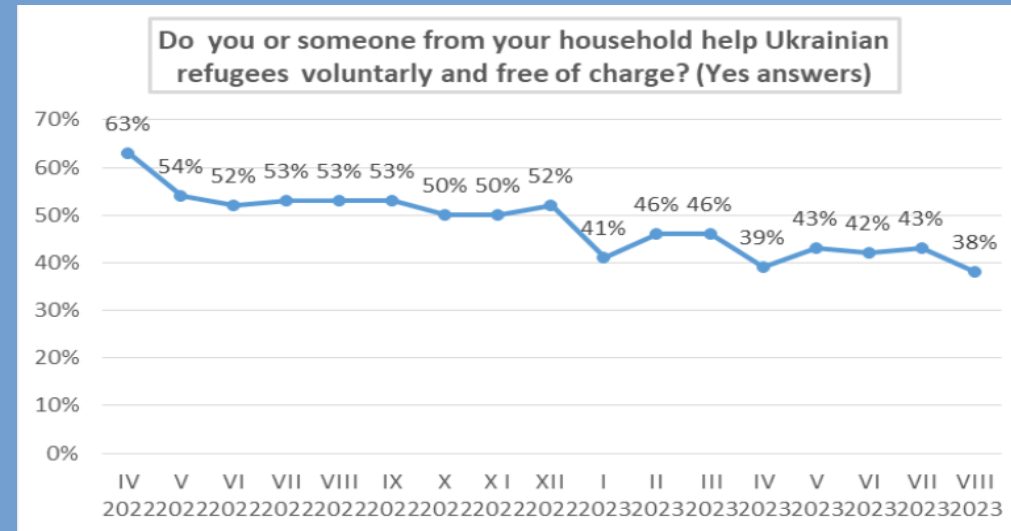
(according to the Migration Consortium there were 55 NGOs with migration-related experience)

- providing humanitarian help during the reception phase
- watchdogging and advocacy in favour of human rights agenda (pointing at double standards)
- advocacy in favour of systemic approach to immigration policy (sending recommendations, facilitating cooperation between NGOs)

other NGOs which changed their profiles and started to use their capacities for helping refugees

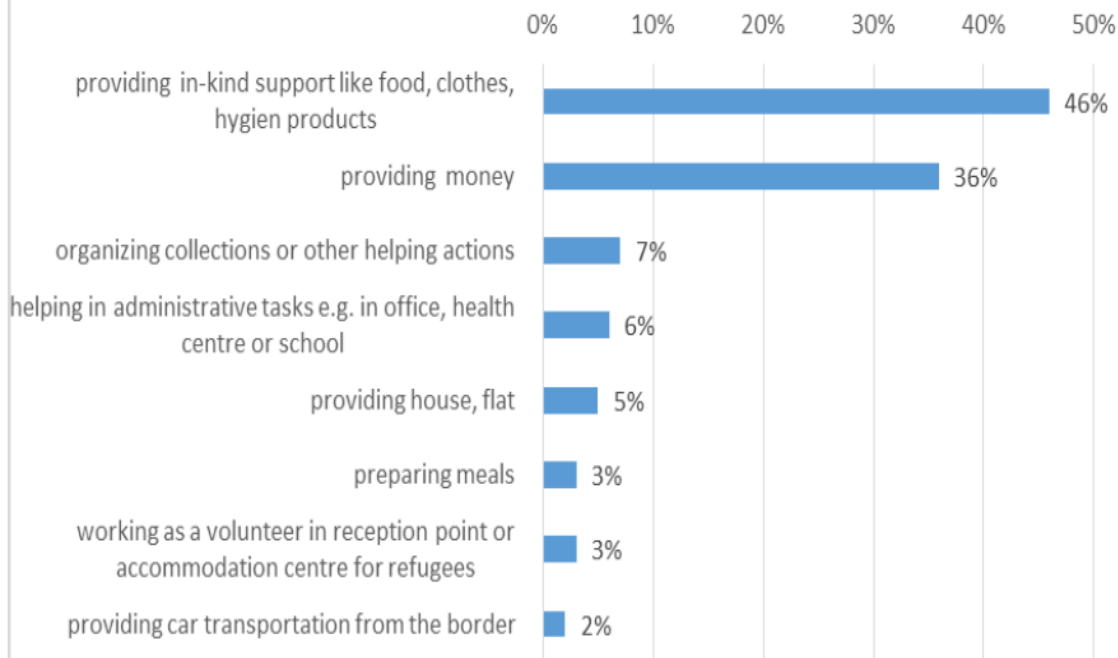
(May 2022 in the Greater Poland voivodeship out of 108 surveyed NGOs supporting Ukrainian refugees 65% was not engaged in such actions before February 24)

voluntary activity of huge number of private individuals and entrepreneurs



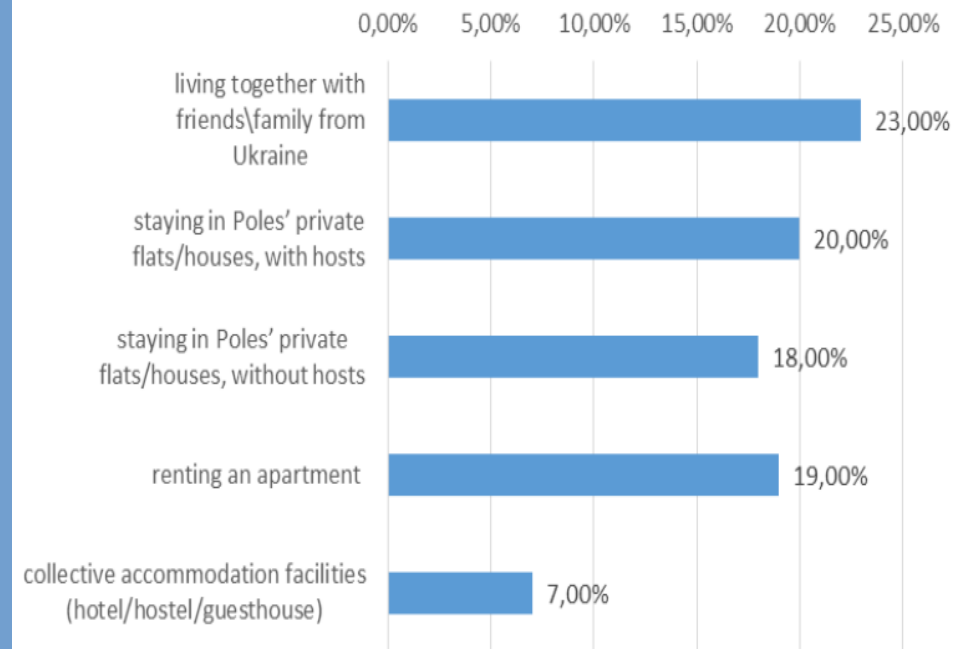
4. Receiving society's reaction – civil society

The most common forms of supporting refugees declared by the Polish citizens (March 28-April 7, 2022)



Source: Polacy wobec uchodźców z Ukrainy. Komunikat z badań nr 62, April 2022, Warszawa:CBOS.

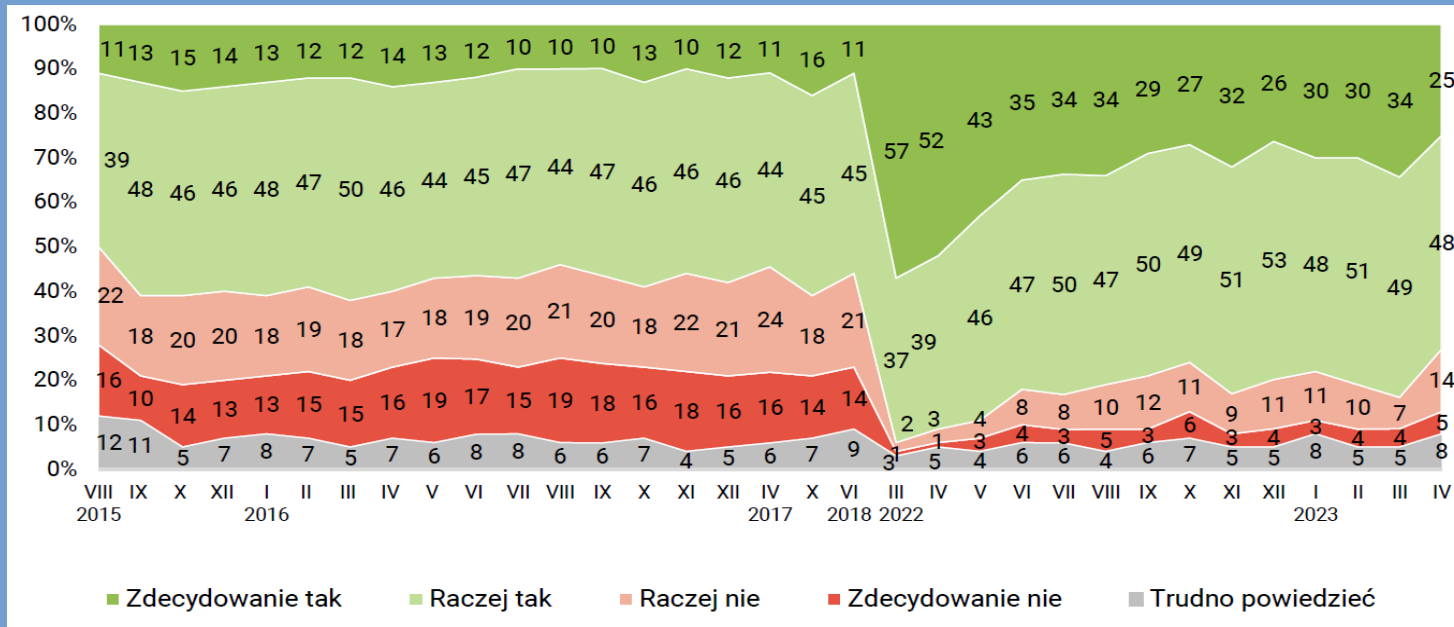
Refugees in 12 biggest cities at the end of April 2022 according to the type of accommodation



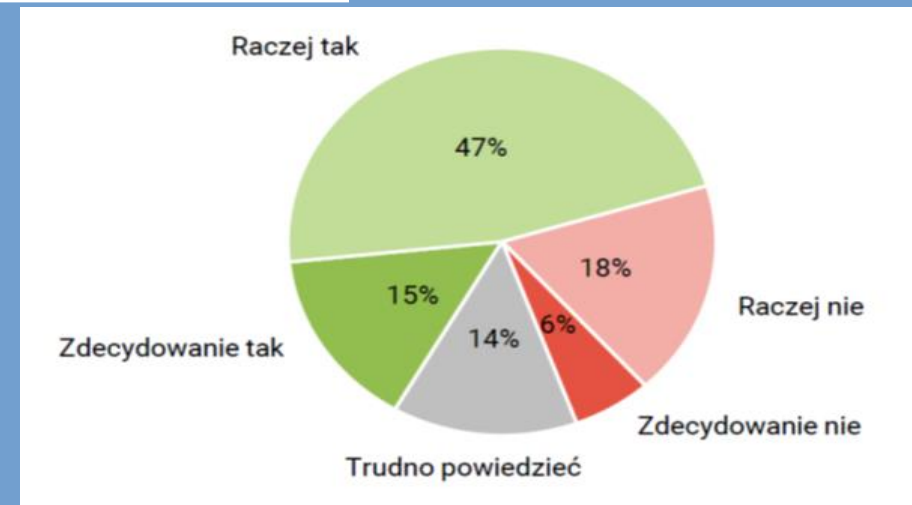
Source: Mędrzecka-Stefańska J., Petrof-Skiba A., Wieczorek A., (2022), Social and psychological effect of selected housing solutions for refugees from Ukraine, September, Union of Polish Metropolises.

4. Receiving society's reaction – public opinion

Table. Shall Poland accept Ukrainian refugees from the regions affected by the war?

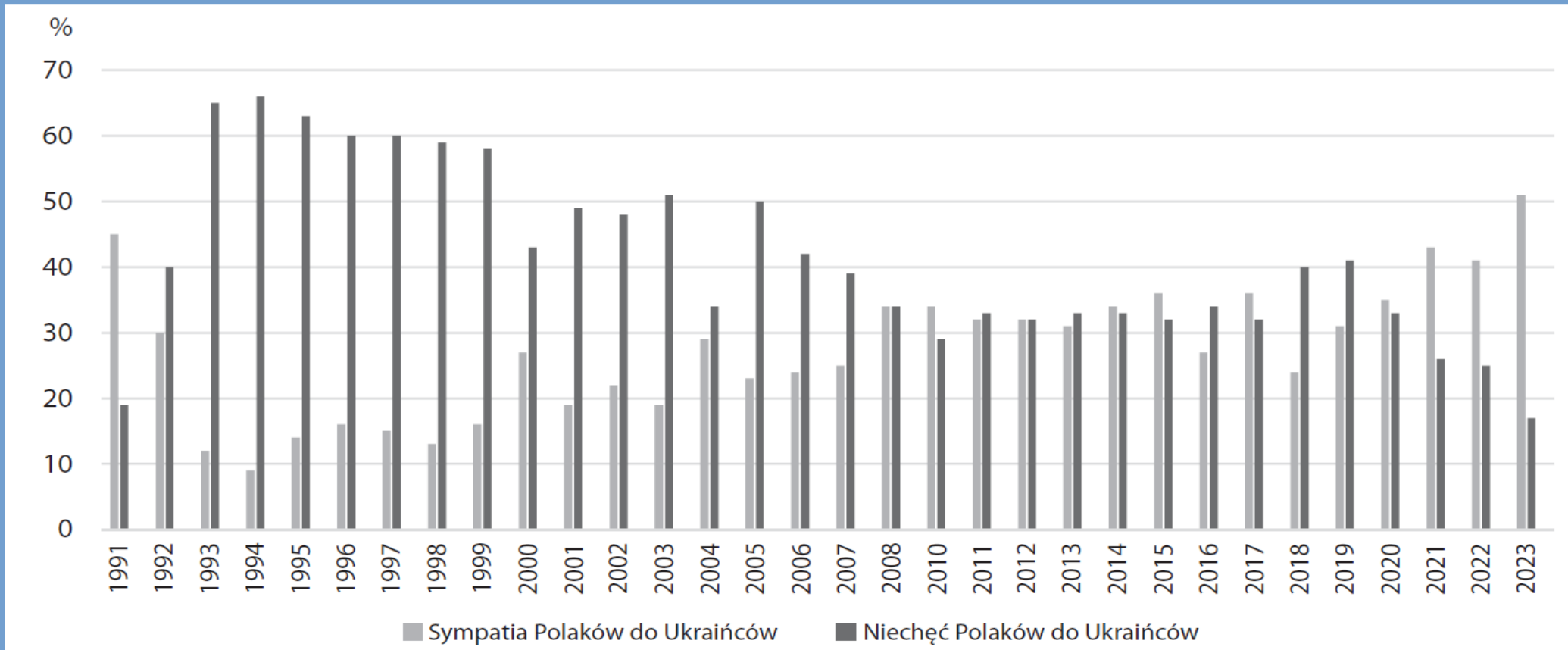


Source: (Polacy, 2023)



4. Receiving society's reaction – public opinion

Table. Sympathy and dislike of Poles towards Ukrainians.



Source: Zaręba, 2023

Conclusions

1. Poland evolved from the country of emigration to the country of both emigration and immigration, this transition not being accompanied by building any cohesive, long-term programme on the field of migration policy
2. All the most important institutional actors expressed a huge support and openness towards Ukrainian refugees, however a lot of these actions were improvised and have not been transformed into a long-term and cohesive strategy for integrating immigrants
3. The local governments and civil society were the main actors allowing for fast reception of refugees and now these are the main actors pressing for long-term integration policies, however without any systemic reaction from government (aside of expanding temporary protection for next 6 months)
4. Patterns of public opinion has changed towards less enthusiastic