THE WAR IN UKRAINE IN THE OPINION OF POLES

LBM UW CATI SURVEY
The War in Ukraine in the Opinion of Poles
LBM UW CATI Survey

Warsaw, August 2022
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KEY FINDINGS

- **The war in Ukraine has caused Poles to share fears about their future:**
  o A feeling of anxiety was declared by 70 percent of respondents: 42 percent strongly agreed and 28 percent agreed with the statement "The war in Ukraine has made me worry about my future."
  o Women were significantly more likely (50 percent) than men (34.6 percent) to indicate that they were worried about their future because of the outbreak of the war.
  o The age of respondents influenced concerns: the older the respondents, the larger the group who "strongly agreed" with the statement in the question.
  o Poles share concerns about the future fairly consistently, regardless of their level of education. However, it can be noted that (ignoring primary education) the percentage of people who are definitely worried about their future in the context of the war in Ukraine decreases with subsequent levels of education.

- **Poles unequivocally agree that refugees have been well received in their local community:**
  o As many as 67 percent of respondents said they strongly agreed, and another 25 percent said they agreed with the statement. With 7 percent answering "it's difficult to say," it should be noted that as many as 99 percent of respondents did not argue with the statement that Ukrainians were well received in their community.
  o The perception of refugee acceptance was clearly dependent on the gender of respondents: women were more likely than men to rate it as definitely good (70.1 percent of women versus 63.6 percent of men). This is an important observation, since in the context of previous surveys showing women's greater involvement in aid than men's, it can be assumed that they have better orientation on the subject.
  o The age of respondents also proved to be important: the older the respondent, the more they agreed with the statement made, as well as their education. Relatively, young people with vocational education gave the worst assessment of the reception of refugees.

- **Poles are divided in their opinion on the level of exposure to the topic of war in the media:**
  o Almost one in three Poles (31 percent of respondents) "strongly" or "rather" agree with the statement that the Polish media pay too much attention to the
war in Ukraine. 15 percent have no opinion on this, while the majority (nearly 54 percent) disagree with such an opinion.

- "Fatigue" with the war narrative was particularly evident among the young and less educated. Those aged over 45 did not show similar symptoms. In the case of this phenomenon, gender did not affect responses.

- In general, Poles are convinced that Russia is poorly prepared for war:
  - The statement that "the Russian Federation was well prepared for war" is disagreed with by the vast majority (62.9 percent) of Polish respondents - almost 38 percent strongly disagree, and more than 25 percent rather reject it. One in five Poles (19.9 percent) has no opinion on this, while just over 17 percent of respondents agree with the statement.
  - Gender was the most important factor influencing this assessment, followed by education and age of respondents.
  - Men were more likely than women to "strongly disagree" with the statement that the Russian Federation was well prepared for war (47.6 percent to 27.9 percent). Women, on the other hand, were more likely to choose "rather agree" (5.5 percent to 10.9 percent) and "strongly agree" (7.1 percent to 11 percent) in this question.
  - The higher the respondent's education, the rarer the opinion that the Russian Federation is well prepared for the conflict.
  - The largest number of responses confirming that the Russian Federation is well prepared for war was among respondents over 65 years of age (7.8 percent "tend to agree" and 16 percent "strongly agree").
**METHODOLOGY**

A CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview) survey was conducted at the Laboratory of Media Studies of the University of Warsaw (LBM UW) from May 30 to June 2, 2022. Over four consecutive days, 30 hours in total, the interviewers managed to interview 1609 respondents.

The survey was designed to help answer questions about what Poles think about issues related to the war in Ukraine: fears about their future, the reception of refugees by local Polish communities, Polish media interest in the war, and Russia's preparation for the conflict.

The following table illustrates how many telephone interviews were conducted on consecutive days (Monday through Thursday).

Table 1: Number of interviews conducted on each day of the survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of interviews conducted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 30, 2022</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 31, 2022</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 2022</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2, 2022</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1609</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own study.

All interviews counted in the table were complete, and respondents met the criteria established in the survey (being an adult and residing in Poland). Therefore, no record was excluded from the database at the calculation stage - 1609 interviews form the basis of the percentages in the entire report.

The telephone interview included a metric and a proper part. In the proper part, Poles were asked to respond to the following statements (written in full):

1. *The war in Ukraine has made me worry about my future.*
2. *Ukrainian refugees have been well received in my local community.*
3. *I believe that the Polish media pay too much attention to the war in Ukraine.*
4. *I believe that the Russian Federation was well prepared for war.*
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Next to each question-statement respondents marked on a five-point scale how much they agreed with the statement (scale: strongly agree - rather agree - difficult to say - rather disagree - strongly disagree).

The statements above are the result of multifaceted sociological, political and media studies by the Laboratory of Media Studies team, conducted since the first hours of the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. The analyses cover both the space of the mainstream media (news channels and evening news broadcasting), and the online space - social media and their different contents - from posts, comments, and polemics to memes, collages, and other kinds of manifestations of remediation in the alternative media stream (an important axis of these analyses is the study of the activity of not only politicians and government institutions, but also journalists, important think tanks, NGOs and opinion leaders). Finally, within the framework of linguistic and political science analyses, we examine speeches and interviews of the most important protagonists of the conflict, e.g., Volodymyr Zelensky. In the course of the consultations, the LBM UW research team felt that the above statements - in light of the numerous surveys and reports that have been published in recent weeks - would be an important and interesting approach to issues concerning the war in Ukraine, referring in part to topics that have already been and are being studied by such centers as CBOS and PIE. Here, we have in mind both the questions of a sense of fear for one's future in connection with the war and assessments of the manner and nature of the reception of Ukrainians in our "small homelands." The second question is about the recent experience of Poles, which is not the result of mediated knowledge (usually gained through the reception of various media messages) but observation of their immediate environment. It is also a good measure of attitudes toward Ukrainian refugees. At the same time, analyzing the evaluation of the above statements, which we can also find in other studies, we added two novel statements (questions 3 and 4).

The third question is devoted to the phenomenon of information overload (media fatigue) in relation to news in the media about the conflict in Ukraine. News is understood broadly, without specifying the sources of this information, since such specification, based on our previous research (including CATI surveys), strongly conditions the vector of answers through media-political sympathies, rather than the media coverage of events.

Question four, meantime, refers to respondents' mediated knowledge. We asked Poles to prejude - wiser for nearly three months of observing the course of the conflict - how well Russia was prepared for war. We assumed that it was unlikely that our respondents included people who had military training and knowledge of Russia's actual preparation for war. The answers to these questions will reflect the media messages that reach them. Are they currently
dominated by a sense of insecurity against the might of Russia, or is Ukrainian propaganda ridiculing Russian actions effective?

It seems that by cross-analyzing the evaluation of the statements in question, we add another interesting aspect to the common understanding of the historical moment in which we have come to live and how we feel and find ourselves in all this.

In the metric, meanwhile, the interviewer asked for five details about the respondent:

5. Gender (female, male, other);
6. Age;
7. Postal code of the place of residence (or, if the respondent did not remember the code, the city of residence);
8. Education (higher, secondary, basic vocational, primary, no answer);
9. Political preferences (the question was: “If the elections were held this Sunday, which party would you vote for?”; the response cafeteria: PIS - Zjednoczona Prawica, Koalicja Obywatelska, Polska 2050, Konfederacja, Lewica, PSL - Koalicja Polska, Kukiz’15, Porozumienie Jarosława Gowina, Other, No answer)*.

* This part of the results was not translated into the English version of the report; it can be found in Polish edition of the report. It should be noted that most of the respondents taking part in the survey, as soon as the last question in the metric (political preferences) was read out, pointed out that they were surprised by this question and did not want to answer it. Meanwhile, some respondents directly questioned the appropriateness of this question in the context of the survey whose topic is the war in Ukraine. This is an important circumstance that should be noted at the outset of this report. Nearly 41 percent of respondents did not answer this question. This important caveat limits the possibility of drawing any conclusions through the prism of this variable. It is worth noting that this attitude among a large proportion of respondents may be a premise for the claim that the war in Ukraine and our attitude to it appears to be largely cross-party, escaping the typical divisions and segmentation among voters. It may also show a certain fatigue with political life, a manifestation of apathy, demotivation, and reluctance to present opinions related to party political preferences. It is possible that a question about general political views (using the Left, Center, Right and Hard to say cafeteria) would have yielded better results.

The results included in this publication were subjected to a weighting process in order to reflect the statistical proportions in the population of adult Poles presented in the databases of the Central Statistical Office for 2021 [1]. The following pages of the report will show the answers
to the four questions constituting the research part of the interview in several statistical approaches - overall, by gender, age, and place of residence (urban or rural, geographical division).

The structure of the survey sample is described in the tables below.

Table 2: The structure of the survey sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender structure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>835</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education structure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>915</td>
<td>56.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic vocational</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age structure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-24</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy preference structure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PiS - Zjednoczona Prawica</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koalicja Obywatelska</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polska 2050</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konfederacja</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewica</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSL - Koalicja Polska</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kukiz’15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porozumienie Jarosława Gowina</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional structure (voivodeships)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podkarpackie</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazowieckie</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubelskie</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Małopolskie</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Łódzkie</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubuskie</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opolskie</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wielkopolskie</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podlaskie</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świętokrzyskie</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomorskie</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachodniopomorskie</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolnośląskie</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The report includes the following sections:

- An introduction recalling previous LBM UW research on events in Ukraine;
- Four thematic sections, presenting the results of the survey in relation to four consecutive survey questions and by metric variables;
- Expert comments by prof. Tomasz Gackowski and dr. Karolina Brylska on the results of the survey.

[1] Bank Danych Lokalnych GUS. Available at: https://bdl.stat.gov.pl/bdl/start [access: 03.08.2022].
INTRODUCTION

For many years, the Laboratory of Media Studies (LBM UW) has been conducting research related to the media and public reception of the conflict in Ukraine. The following research have been published, among other things, in this field:

- **Polacy o konflikcie na Ukrainie - sondaż LBM UW, luty 2017** (sondaz przeprowadzony w maju 2016 r.). [Poles on the conflict in Ukraine - LBM UW survey, February 2017 (survey conducted in May 2016).] (https://tinyurl.com/5pffxm6)
- **Konflikt na Ukrainie oczami Polaków. Jak patrzą i co widzą w memach?; luty 2017.** [The conflict in Ukraine through the eyes of Poles. How they look and what they see in memes; February 2017] (https://tinyurl.com/2ye4jp34)

The Russian Federation's aggression on Ukraine's territory, which began on February 24, 2022, led the LBM UW team once again to conduct a survey dedicated to the opinions of Poles on the events beyond our eastern border. The escalation of the armed conflict to a scale unprecedented in Europe for decades also provokes verification of conclusions drawn from previous surveys. Many of them are proving disturbingly accurate. Others, read in the current context, seem downright unbelievable and even demonstrate a certain naiveté on the part of Poles in assessing the situation at the time.

In a previous poll on Ukraine, conducted by the Laboratory of Media Studies in May 2016, 60 percent of Poles indicated that Russia was responsible for the conflict in Ukraine. Nearly 10 percent held Ukraine itself responsible, while 6 percent pointed to both countries. The current survey indicates that pro-Ukrainian and anti-Russian attitudes, initially evident in the 2014 diagnosis of the conflict, have clearly polarized and

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1 Empirical reports section LBM UW: [https://www.lbm.uw.edu.pl/18-publikacje/raporty-empiryczne][access: 03.08.2022].
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strengthened. This is evident in the widely positive assessment of the response of local communities to the unprecedented wave of refugees and also in the highly critical attitude toward the armed forces of the Russian Federation.

Interestingly and somewhat prophetically, one in five Poles indicated at the time that the duration of the conflict in Ukraine would exceed five years. Statistically, the biggest pessimists on the subject of predicting the duration of the conflict in Ukraine were men over 55, living in cities with a population over 500,000. At the same time, the respondents remained skeptical about the credibility of the coverage provided by the Polish media. 41 percent of Poles believed that the media were unreliable in their coverage of the conflict in Ukraine. By contrast, 31.25 percent thought quite the opposite.

A number of interesting and noteworthy reports on refugees from Ukraine and their fate in Poland have been published in recent weeks and months. It is worth mentioning at least some of them: CBOS [1], Polski Instytut Ekonomiczny [2], Narodowy Bank Polski [3], Unia Metropolii Polskich im. Pawła Adamowicza [4] or WiseEuropa [5].

As an introduction to this report on the CATI survey on the war in Ukraine, it is worth sketching a picture of the situation in which we came to ask respondents our questions in May/June 2022. Based on a report by the National Bank of Poland [3], we know that in May there were around 1.5 million refugees from Ukraine in Poland. Most of them were women and children. Half of the Ukrainians fleeing the war had a university education, and one in three considered staying in Poland longer. In the case of Ukrainian women, as many as 60 percent of them came together with their children. Nearly 24 percent of women fled alone, primarily those under 29 and over 60. People who came to Poland were mostly (men and women combined) aged 30-44 (41 percent) and 18-29 (25 percent). Refugees from Ukraine are very active in the labor market - about 30 percent of them have already worked or had a job arranged, and about 50 percent are looking for work, including very often part-time work due to taking care of children [3].

Moreover, based on the PIE report [2], we can conclude that Poles are universally engaged in helping Ukraine by allocating at least 5.5 billion zlotys from their own resources for this purpose, although the actual value of this aid might be even twice as high. The aid provided was most intense in the first days of the war (77 percent of the Polish population became involved), but more than half of Poles consistently continued these efforts. Women were more active than men in this regard.


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WAR IN UKRAINE - WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO US?

QUESTION 1. THE WAR IN UKRAINE HAS MADE ME WORRY ABOUT MY FUTURE.

Figure 1. Distribution of answers to question 1

Source: own study.

Most Poles were worried about their future due to the outbreak of war in Ukraine. Approximately 42 percent of Poles strongly agreed and 28 percent agreed with the statement. This shows that the feeling of anxiety was quite widespread. In only one other question (No. 2) were Poles more single-minded.

Russian aggression has caused great anxiety among Poles. This is reflected both in the survey conducted and the phenomena observed immediately after the attack of February 24. Examples include reported queues at gas stations or mass withdrawals of money from ATMs [1]. Concerns may also have been influenced by direct reports from Ukrainian refugees and family members who had already worked in Poland. Also, the drop in stock prices on the Warsaw Stock Exchange or the collapse of the zloty had an impact on Poles' pessimistic predictions about the future [2].

The issue of replenishing the supply of energy resources after the import ban from Russia and rising fuel prices may also have been a source of concern discussed in the public debate.
Inflation, already noticeable at the time of the survey, was also referred to by some economists and politicians as "putinflation," which unambiguously linked the unfavorable economic phenomenon for Poles with the Russian invasion, could also have had a powerful impact [3].

**Figure 2: Distribution of responses by gender**

Source: own study.

Analyzing the responses to this question, it should be noted that women were significantly more likely (50 percent) than men (34.6 percent) to indicate that they were worried about their future because of the outbreak of war. Such feelings may be related to women's culturally conditioned greater sensitivity to exposure to violence or political upheaval. It may also stem from greater concern for the family and its fate in times of conflict, as well as the compassion shown to refugees arriving in Poland.

Indirectly, according to the study [4], the fact that women are more likely than men to watch television, which increases their exposure to negative information about the war, may also be relevant.

The previous publications have also pointed out that women could prove to be more economically disadvantaged by the war. Klub Jagielloński described the possibility of their radicalization through possible deficits in educational services as a result of a larger population than before, as well as risks arising in the labor market [5]. It is worth noting that the topic of helping refugees from Ukraine and the possibility of their functioning in Poland, in the context
of such vital aspects as the labor market and economy, accommodation, education, health care and other public services (through issues related to administration, law, the actions of the government, local government and civil society itself, to integration policy and risks related to disinformation and cyber security - in the context of the propaganda wars that Russia is waging around the world, including, of course, in Poland), is presented in the report Gościnna Polska 2022+, edited by M. Bukowski and M. Duszczyk [6].

Figure 3: Distribution of responses by age

![Figure 3: Distribution of responses by age](image)

Source: own study.

When examining a chart showing the age diversity of respondents, it can be seen that the older the respondents, the larger the group "strongly agreed" with the statement given in the question.

Those aged 65+ were the only group who chose this option in the majority. The reason may be this group’s vivid memories of World War II and its aftermath. At the same time, these are the people who lived the longest in the reality of communist Poland, a non-sovereign state under the direct influence of the USSR. On the other hand, it should be noted that pensioners are also an indigent group, exposed to the negative effects of social and economic risks that intensified after the outbreak of war in Ukraine.

The younger the respondents, the less often they answered "strongly agree". Therefore, the younger the group, the less concern declared. This may be due to the lack of similar life
experiences, the diminishing influence of memories of the communist era, and the lack of experience of economic crises. Indeed, the youngest respondents do not remember economic crises from their own experiences - whether those of the early 1990s transition period or (in the case of the youngest age category) even the 2008 financial crisis. At the same time, these are people who were already economically active at a time when the Ukrainian minority was becoming more numerous in Poland. This may make younger respondents feel less apprehensive about migration.

**Figure 4: Distribution of responses by education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>% Strongly disagree</th>
<th>% Rather disagree</th>
<th>% Difficult to say</th>
<th>% Rather agree</th>
<th>% Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic vocational</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own study.

It is worth noting that concerns about the future are shared fairly consistently by Poles - regardless of their level of education. However, it can be observed that (ignoring primary education) the percentage of those who are definitely worried about their future in the context of the war in Ukraine decreases with successive levels of education. Those with higher education were least likely to indicate the answer "I strongly agree" (35.9 percent).

People with primary education were least likely to indicate the answers "strongly disagree" and "rather disagree" (a total of about 13 percent), which means that they were noticeably least likely to respond in this way compared to other groups (where the total percentage of such answers is 19-21 percent). At the same time, people in this group most often indicated the answer "it is difficult to say," which may reflect a certain confusion in assessing current
events and a lack of certainty about possible developments and their impact on the labor market situation and the economy as a whole.

It is possible that the lowest percentage of "strongly agree" responses for those with higher education is due to the relatively low competition in the labor market from immigrants as perceived by people in this group. The reluctance in the assessments of some of the best-educated people, working in occupations requiring higher specialization and/or cultural capital, is due to the fact that they are not worried about labor market turbulence, and inflation may also prove less troublesome for them [7]. It may also be significant that those with higher education mainly reside in large urban centers, whose local labor markets had already absorbed Ukrainian workers. Therefore, the arrival of refugees was not so unusual for them, and thus the phenomenon was not identified as a future threat.

Figure 5: Distribution of responses by place of residence

![Distribution of responses by place of residence](image)

Source: own study.

The distribution of responses among urban and rural residents was similar, with a slight indication that rural residents were more concerned about the future in the context of the war (46.4 percent of "strongly agree" responses versus 40.6 percent of such responses among urban residents). One in five residents of both rural and urban areas declared that they are not worried about their future in relation to the situation in Ukraine.
Illustration 2: Distribution of responses by province

The war in Ukraine has made me worry about my future.

![Map of Poland showing distribution of responses by province]

Source: own study.

Analysis of the survey results by the respondents' province of origin leads to the conclusion that most voivodeships do not differ in expressing their concern for the future in the context of the war in Ukraine. Slightly higher than average anxiety is expressed by residents of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Opolskie, Śląskie and Podkarpackie voivodeships. Residents of Podlaskie and especially Lubuskie declare themselves to be the most worried about the prospect of the following months and years (although this region has the smallest number of respondents answering the survey and the specific distribution of respondents – a high share of men from smaller urban centers – may significantly affect the survey results). The least
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Concern is expressed by residents of the Dolnoslaskie Voivodeship. Statistical analysis of the ‘eastern wall’ and the rest of Poland showed a possible difference between Podlaskie, Lubelskie and Podkarpackie voivodeships and the rest of the country, but the result was not statistically significant (p-value = 0.07656).


MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

QUESTION 2. UKRAINIAN REFUGEES HAVE BEEN WELL RECEIVED IN MY LOCAL COMMUNITY.

Figure 6: Distribution of answers to question 2

Source: own study.

The support provided to Ukrainian refugees was an unprecedented mass phenomenon in Poland not previously witnessed in modern history. The numerous civic actions in the form of collections of needed items, trips to the border, and the organization of a system for welcoming Ukrainians into private homes are noteworthy. Since February 24, around 4.8 million Ukrainian citizens have arrived in Poland. The reception of Ukrainians into private homes has also been repeatedly discussed in public debate, including by key Polish and Ukrainian representatives [1].

Also noticeable is the organization of aid campaigns, managed both by large organizations such as the Polish Red Cross, Polish Humanitarian Action, or Caritas, as well as many smaller organizations. An important role was also played by spontaneous aid actions of individual citizens or small groups, communicating through social media platforms [2].
Poles agree that refugees have been well received in their local community. As many as 67 percent of respondents said they strongly agreed with this statement, and 25 percent said they agreed. With 7 percent answering "it's difficult to say," it should be noted that as many as 99 percent of respondents did not argue with the statement. Poles' declarations are confirmed by mass assistance to Ukrainian refugees.

Poles mostly shared this assessment, regardless of political views, age and education. This shows that this topic was distinguished by an unusually strong consensus. The question is also a good test for anti-Ukrainian attitudes (which, due to strong interviewer error, we could not ask directly in the survey). The universally positive assessment of community response and refugee integration indicates that explicit anti-Ukrainian attitudes should be considered marginal with a very low (less than 2%) share of the total survey population. Interestingly, other analyses conducted at the same time by the LBM team show that the exposure of such attitudes is significantly higher on social media than their actual internalization in the entire Polish population. This difference (which may have a variety of sources, ranging from exposure to deliberate manipulation and pro-Russian propaganda to high activity of those opposed to refugees on social media) is a very interesting direction for research and ongoing monitoring in the context of the actual susceptibility of the Polish population to deliberate propaganda directed against refugees from Ukraine.

It is worth mentioning, following the NBP report cited above [3], that the main form of assistance indicated by the refugees themselves was help with accommodation. In this case, their compatriots already living in Poland help them significantly, in addition to the government, local governments, and Polish families. The NBP survey results indicate that approximately one-third of refugees paid for rent with their own funds. A relatively large group of refugees declared that they received no assistance other than housing (43%). About 1/3 of the refugees also had the means to support themselves for more than three months. These circumstances, of course, influenced and are influencing the way Poles perceive the need for aid, the way it should be provided, and finally, the perception of how we Poles have succeeded and are succeeding in helping refugees from Ukraine.
Figure 7: Distribution of responses by gender

Ukrainian refugees have been well received in my local community

Source: own study.

Highlighting the high degree of agreement in all categories of respondents, apparent differences between particular groups must be noted. These become significantly apparent by gender. "Strongly agree" was answered by 70.1% of women and 63.6% of men. At the same time, negligibly few women (a total of 0.3 percent) answered "strongly disagree" and "rather disagree."

The reasons for these differences can be seen in several aspects. The most important of these seems to be the effect of solidarity of Polish women with Ukrainian women, who constituted the overwhelming majority of refugees arriving in Poland.
While analyzing the responses by age, it should be noted that the older the respondent, the more they agreed with the statement. "Strongly agree" responses dominated in each age group. For those aged 19-24, it was 48.6 percent, the 25-34 age group accounted for 54.2 percent, among those aged 35-44 the percentage was 59.1 percent, 45-54 – 69.6 percent, 55-64 – 75.4 percent, and over 65 it was 74.7 percent.

Young people were slightly more skeptical in terms of perceived acceptance of refugees in the local community, which may be related to a slightly different definition of acceptance - it is likely that young people define "good reception" of those fleeing war more broadly. This may also be due to an impression partly conditioned by social network discourse. It may have included messages critical of Ukrainians [4], which, given that young people are the group most likely to use the Internet in Poland [5], may have had a particular impact on them. Moreover, older people may have had fewer opportunities to observe Ukrainians in work or educational situations. As a consequence, less face-to-face contact reduced the likelihood of observing situations where Ukrainian refugees were socially unacceptable.
Figure 9: Distribution of responses by education

Source: own study.

Seen through the lens of education, it is apparent that those with primary education were the most reticent to agree with the statement indicated. This group had the highest percentage of "it's hard to say” responses (14.9 percent). It should be noted that those with primary education were also most likely to indicate this answer in the first question. This may support the thesis that their opinions are due to having relatively little interest in the subject and/or consuming limited information on it.

It may seem interesting that the groups with secondary and vocational education were generally the most enthusiastic about the statement; however, at the same time, 2.9 percent of respondents with basic vocational education strongly disagreed with it.

Those with higher education were the second most likely group to choose the "hard to say” option (7.2 percent). This may be due, for example, to a higher level of understanding of the concept of acceptance. This, in turn, may also be related to the fact that a relatively large percentage of this group are employees of large companies, where there has been much talk in recent years of (including systemic) acceptance of minority groups in the broadest sense.
Both urban and rural residents were mostly positive about the acceptance of refugees in their local community. The rural population was slightly more likely to "strongly agree" with the statement (68.7 percent) than the urban population (66.1 percent).
An analysis of the results by province clearly shows unanimity among respondents across Poland - residents of all regions expressed agreement with the statement that refugees from Ukraine were well received in local communities. The residents of border provinces, especially in the east of the country agreed most strongly with this assessment (Podkarpackie, Podlaskie, but also Lubelskie, Małopolskie, Śląskie and Opolskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie and Pomorskie voivodeships; Lubuskie voivodeship was also included in this group, although one should bear in mind the limitations of inferring from the low number of respondents from this region). It can be assumed that respondents' answers were linked to their own activity and direct observation.
of their immediate surroundings - the highest rates of agreement with the surveyed statement were recorded in provinces whose residents, by their geographic location, were most strongly involved in providing aid to refugees. Statistical analysis between the eastern wall and the rest of Poland showed a possible difference between Podlaskie, Lubelskie and Podkarpackie provinces and the rest of the country, but the result was not statistically significant (p-value = 0.05983).

It is also worth referring here to the report of the Unia Metropolii Polskich im. Pawła Adamowicza [6], in which we view more closely the situation of refugees in 12 cities (of different sizes) which are members of the Unia Metropolii Polskich: Białystok, Bydgoszcz, Gdańsk, Katowice, Kraków, Lublin, Łódź, Poznań, Rzeszów, Szczecin, Warszawa and Wrocław.

A report by the Polish Economic Institute (PIE) [7] also contains crucial findings. According to the Institute, the estimated value of the total annual spending by public authorities to help refugees, together with the amount of private spending by Poles for this purpose during the first three months of the war alone, is a total of 25.4 billion zlotys, which is equivalent to 0.97 percent of Polish GDP in 2021. 77 percent of adult Poles have been involved in helping refugees from Ukraine since the Russian aggression, while 35 percent of Poles have been involved in formal and organizational assistance to refugees and various forms of volunteering. According to PIE, only in the first three months of the war, Poles spent 5.5 billion zlotys from their own private funds on behalf of refugees from Ukraine. 8 percent of Poles in the period in question allocated more than 1,000 zlotys to Ukrainians fleeing the war, while 7 percent of Poles took refugees into their homes. The above figures and breakdowns seem to be a significant commentary on the suggestion of Daily Telegraph correspondent Matthew Day, who, back in March, wrote that "Poles, by providing extraordinary help to war refugees from Ukraine, show that humanity also has the capacity to do good, and there is no better way to honor this than by awarding Poland the Nobel Peace Prize." [8]


WAR AND WAR - CAN WE WATCH SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

QUESTION 3. I BELIEVE THAT THE POLISH MEDIA PAY TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO THE WAR IN UKRAINE.

Russia’s attack on Ukraine was one of the main topics in Polish news outlets throughout the first months of the war. According to Nielsen Audience Measurement data, since February 24, leading news stations have almost doubled their viewership [1]. In the first weeks of the conflict, Poles looked to the media for in-depth information on current events - not only in print, radio, and television, but also on the internet. A Mediapanel survey shows an increase in viewership for most thematic categories - especially on the mobile screen, reflecting the need to stay up-to-date with the latest news everywhere [2].

88 percent of Poles in the period from February 28 to March 10, 2022, admitted in a CBOS survey that they were closely following events in Ukraine [3]. This is an increase compared to 2014, when the result was 65 percent. Interest in events in our neighborhood was virtually independent of the socio-demographic characteristics of the people surveyed. One in four respondents (28 percent) said they were very interested in these events [4].

The data above are also confirmed by research that takes into account global interest in the topic of the war in Ukraine. The highest percentage of respondents who followed the events in Ukraine in real time during the period March 25-May 5, 2022, was recorded in Japan (89 percent), Sweden (83 percent) and Poland (77 percent) [5].
In a survey conducted by LBM UW, respondents were asked their opinion on the statement: I believe that the Polish media pay too much attention to the war in Ukraine. It should be noted that a broad understanding of the term "media" was used; the question was not narrowed down to a specific type of media or selected editorial offices, but applied to all media coverage.

Nearly 31 percent of respondents "strongly" or "rather" agree with this statement. 15 percent have no opinion on this, while the majority (almost 54 percent) disagree.

These results show that several months after the conflict began, Poles are still interested in the topic of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. The majority of respondents disagreed with the statement about overexposure of this topic in the Polish media. However, Poles' "fatigue" with the topic of war in the media is also apparent. Media reports, analyses, opinions, or predictions that deal with the Ukrainian-Russian conflict are ubiquitous, and thus can be overwhelming to the viewer and affect his or her sense of security, especially when the war narrative is based on the portrayal of the war through the prism of human stories. It is worth noting that the National Broadcasting Council received complaints from viewers dissatisfied with the way Russia's invasion of Ukraine was portrayed in news services. Among other things, viewers complained about overly violent images or the reporting of information that could affect Ukraine's national security [6]. Experts note that the situation of "topic fatigue" is a favorable environment for creating propaganda narratives. The deputy head of the Foreign Ministry,
Marcin Przydacz, called for such a situation to be actively countered, as it is in Russia's interest for the public to become tired of the conflict [7].

**Figure 13: Distribution of responses by gender**

![Distribution of responses by gender](image)

Source: own study.

There was a similar distribution of responses to question 3 in the groups of women and men, with slight differences in the proportions of responses strongly and somewhat agreeing with the statement. Among both men and women, the predominant responses were "rather disagree" and "strongly disagree." Women were slightly more likely than men to choose the answer "it is difficult to say." A noticeable difference was found in the responses "rather agree" and "strongly agree." The greatest difference was noted for the answer "I strongly agree," which was indicated by almost 20 percent of men and 15.6 percent of women.
Older respondents (age groups over 45) were more likely to "strongly disagree" that the Polish media gave too much attention to the war in Ukraine. The response "rather disagree" was at a similar level among all age groups (except the youngest respondents). The 19-24 age group, more often than those older than them, "strongly agreed" with the statement. The highest number of "rather agree" responses was observed among those over 65. Those in the 35-44 (21.5 percent) and 25-34 (20.2 percent) age groups were the most hesitant to respond.

The differences between the youngest group of respondents (19-24) and older respondents may be due to differences in media use and choice of information source. In particular, the dominance of online media messages and less involvement in media content consumption for younger people, were combined with a significant saturation of social media channels with information, comments, and memes about the conflict in Ukraine.
If we divide respondents by education, we can observe significant differences in their responses. As many as 41 percent of those with primary education "strongly agree" that the Polish media pay too much attention to the war in Ukraine, while only 5 percent "strongly disagree". Other responses in this group are as follows: 21.5 percent "rather disagree," 9.4 percent "difficult to say," and 23.2 percent "rather agree."

Among respondents with basic vocational education, the predominant responses were "strongly disagree" (26.4 percent) and "rather disagree" (24.7 percent). 22.2 percent of respondents "strongly agree," 16.8 percent "rather agree," and one in ten respondents chose the answer "difficult to say."

There are noticeable similarities for respondents with secondary and higher education, and the differences in individual responses are small in their case. Most "rather disagree" and "strongly disagree" with the statement. In these groups, the largest percentage of respondents indicated the answer "difficult to say" (14.4 percent; 18.7 percent). 12.4 percent of respondents with high school education and 11.4 percent with a college education "rather agree" and 17.4 percent and 12.6 percent, respectively, "strongly agree" that the Polish media pay too much attention to the war in Ukraine.

It can be noted that the lower the level of education, the more often respondents believe that there is too much media coverage of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Such a distribution of responses may be influenced primarily by the chosen source(s) of information - previous

Source: own study.
Research indicates a difference in the education of groups of consumers of different media. For example, the most listened-to radio stations among people with higher education in the first quarter of 2022 were RMF FM, Radio ZET, and Radio Eska [8]. In the context of news services and news channels, "Wiadomości" is most likely to be watched by people with primary education. An upward trend is observed here (50.68 percent in 2021) [9], as is TVP Info (45, 77 percent in 2021) [10]. TVN24, on the other hand, is most likely to be watched by those with a college education (40.95 percent of the station's total viewers in 2021 [11]). Although media exposure of the war in Ukraine was high regardless of the editors, respondents' perceptions of the subject matter may also have been influenced by the way the conflict was presented, the media narrative conducted, the form of the message, etc. We can also suppose that people with lower education are more likely to focus on a single source of information, which influences their "fatigue" with the topic of war. In the context of discussions about the strategic importance of "fatigue" with conflict coverage for a democratic society's commitment to the war effort, this distribution allows us to capture the groups most prone to forming anti-war attitudes. As the survey shows, these are primarily younger people with lower levels of education, whose attitudes, especially in the context of the possible escalation of the refugee crisis, should be the object of special attention by researchers.

Figure 16: Distribution of responses by place of residence

![Response Distribution Chart](image)

Source: own study.

The differences in responses by respondents' place of residence are not significant, both from the urban/rural perspective and by inhabited province. Slightly more "rather agree" and "strongly agree" responses were given by residents of rural municipalities (15.1 percent and
20, 3 percent, respectively). Responses of "strongly disagree" and "rather disagree" were at comparable levels (with urban residents having an advantage for the most extreme negative response - 26.9 percent to 23.1 percent).

Concluding this section of the report, it is reasonable to refer to the media image of Ukraine, which had changed compared to 2013 and 2014, when there was a significant increase in coverage of Ukraine [12]. When covering the events in Crimea in 2014, the media did not present a clear image of Ukraine as a victim. The image of Ukraine drawn in the Polish press during this period was that of a weak, crisis-ridden, "dying" state [13]. Until then, Polish media viewed Ukraine mainly through the prism of history (World War II), its internal problems, Ukraine's relations with Poland, the European Union, and Russia, as well as in the context of the presence of Ukrainian labor migrants [12]. The media narrative after the outbreak of war in 2022 is far more explicit, directly identifying Russia and Vladimir Putin as the aggressor.
The respondents' answers by province lead to interesting conclusions. The residents of Podkarpackie, Lubelskie, and Świętokrzyskie (as well as Kujawsko-Pomorskie and Lubuskie) provinces were relatively most likely to agree with this statement. It seems that this can be explained by a certain fatigue with refugee aid and exposure of the residents of these regions to the direct consequences of the war. Border areas are necessarily the hardest hit by the effects of the war across our eastern border and the most heavily involved in aid efforts. Hence, perhaps, the impression that there is too much talk about the war, including in the public sphere and the media. Statistical analysis between the eastern wall and the rest of Poland showed no significant differences between these regions for question three.

[1] Stacje newsowe dzięki wojnie biły rekordy oglądalności, ale ich wyniki obecnie spadają (analiza.) Available at: https://www.wirtualnemedia.pl/artykul/ogladalnosc-stacje-
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QUESTION 4. I BELIEVE THAT THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION WAS WELL PREPARED FOR WAR.

In discussing the results of Question 4, it is worth starting with some remarks about the previous LBM survey on the events in Ukraine. At that time, it was found that Polish journalists in both 2014 and 2015 predicted that the lack of a decisive response from the West would contribute to the encroachment of the Russian Federation on Ukrainian territory, as well as other neighboring countries [1]. Journalists predicted that the conflict could be global, and there was also the possibility of nuclear war [2]. The journalists pointed out how Russia, which has a military advantage over other countries, played a significant role in this conflict. According to them, talks between Western leaders and Vladimir Putin were a sign for Central Europe that it was most likely in danger of war [3]. They predicted that there would be an increasing number of casualties, and peace would become uncertain. The Russian march on Western Europe would begin. Vladimir Putin would carry out further offensive actions, in which provocations, such as the use of American weapons, might occur [4].

Such predictions were confirmed by experts, on the one hand pointing out that many years after the collapse of the USSR it might seem that local conflicts in the post-Soviet area would be "frozen" and calm would prevail, and on the other hand pointing out that events in Ukraine changed predictions of calm in this part of Europe. There were signs that Russian nationalists would like to expand Russia's territory after the annexation of Crimea, which is directly related to the ideology of "Russky mir" [5].

Experts also pointed to the Russian Federation's preparedness for a potential conflict. According to them, Russia, after the collapse of the USSR, has repeatedly proven that it can constantly and with impunity destabilize and politically blackmail its neighbors in the name of its interests. This had to do with the message about the "near abroad," "post-Soviet space," or the "Russian sphere of influence." It was emphasized that Russia's advantage is its experience in hybrid warfare, which uses, among other things, a disinformation campaign [6] - including in the context of its preparation for a potential armed conflict. This context is also pointed out by the authors of the report of Gościnna Polska 2022+ [7].
Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the statement that "the Russian Federation was well prepared for war." In a broad sense, this statement refers not only to Russia's military preparedness, but also to political, economic, and social preparedness.

The statement that "the Russian Federation was well prepared for war" is disagreed with by the vast majority (62.9 percent) of Poles surveyed - almost 38 percent strongly disagree, and more than 25 percent rather reject it. This distribution of responses can be affected by several factors, in particular, presumably, the sources of information chosen by respondents (the above question is therefore strongly related to the question on media coverage).

The analyzed statement - unlike the others in the survey - required respondents to have prior knowledge to assess Russia's preparation for war, or at least the belief that they have such knowledge. It can be assumed that this is the reason why respondents were more likely, compared to previous questions, to indicate the answer "it is difficult to say" (almost every fifth respondent). Only 17 percent of Poles agree with the thesis that Russia was well prepared for war.

It can be said with a high degree of probability that these results demonstrate the effectiveness of Ukraine's information and propaganda efforts, which highlight incidents that demonstrate the ineptitude and inefficiency of the Russian military.
It is interesting to see the responses according to the gender of the respondents. Men were more likely than women to "strongly disagree" with the statement that the Russian Federation was well prepared for war (47.6 percent to 27.9 percent). Women, on the other hand, were more likely to choose "rather agree" (5.5 percent to 10.9 percent) and "strongly agree" (7.1 percent to 11 percent) in this question.

Differences are also noticeable in the "it's hard to tell" answer - women were more likely to choose this answer (a difference of 12 percent), which may be due to cultural factors. Research confirms that men are more likely to be interested in military topics, which may have made it easier for them to answer this question accurately. In addition, this question may also be an indirect indicator of exposure to content ridiculing and casting doubt on the prowess of the Russian Federation army published on social media (memes, compilation videos, YouTubers' comments, satirical content), which would suggest a much higher exposure of men to materials of this kind.
As for the distribution of responses by the age of respondents, there were no significant differences. Each age category was dominated by the answer "strongly disagree," with the largest number of responses among those aged 19-24 (46.6 percent).

The largest number of responses affirming the Russian Federation's good preparation for war was among the group of respondents over the age of 65 (7.8 percent "rather agree" and 16 percent "strongly agree"). The poorer assessment of the preparedness of the Russian Federation's army among younger people may be a product of the construction of their media diet, clearly dominated by social media, where content that criticizes and ridicules the Russian Federation's preparation for war is very widely available.
Another variable analyzed is education. It is noticeable that there are significant differences between the responses of those with primary education and those with basic vocational, secondary, and higher education.

32.2 percent of respondents with primary education "strongly agree" that the Russian Federation was well prepared for war. By comparison, 12.7 percent of respondents with basic vocational education, 7.5 percent with secondary education, and 5.5 percent with higher education chose this answer. Thus, a noticeable trend is that the higher the respondent's education, the rarer the opinion that the Russian Federation was well prepared for the conflict.

Those with primary education also most often chose the answer "it's difficult to say" (26.2 percent), but the difference in this answer compared to respondents with higher education is only less than 3 percentage points (23.5 percent). This response was least frequent among those with basic vocational education (10.4 percent).

The responses of "strongly disagree" and "rather disagree" for the three groups of respondents - basic vocational education (38.9 percent; 27 percent), secondary education (40.2 percent; 23.6 percent), and higher education (36.5 percent; 27.6 percent) - were at comparable levels.
There are noticeable slight differences between the responses of urban and rural respondents, with 4 percentage points more respondents living in rural municipalities "strongly disagreeing" with the given statement (40.4% to 36%). Urban residents were more likely than rural residents to choose the answer "rather disagree" and "difficult to say."

Positive responses ("rather agree" and "strongly agree") were at a similar level in both groups of respondents. There were no significant differences between urban and rural residents.
When it comes to assessing the Russian Federation's preparation for war, residents of the various provinces tended to agree with each other. As a whole, only the assessments of residents of the Podkarpackie and Lubuskie provinces stand out - these are relatively least likely to reject the claim that Russia has prepared well for the conflict. Thus, it can be concluded that they do not underestimate Russia's preparation, and thus strength - perhaps because (especially in the case of the Podkarpackie voivodeship) they are eyewitnesses to the tragic consequences of Russian military actions, and this voivodeship is most involved in the transfer of military equipment and support for Ukraine's armed forces. Statistical analysis
between the eastern wall and the rest of Poland showed no significant differences between these regions for this question.

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SUMMARY

An analysis of variance was performed as a statistical summary of the report. We used the following variables as explanatory factors:

- Gender of the respondent
- Education of the respondent
- Place of residence of the respondent
- Age of the respondent

Province of residence was excluded from this analysis, as this variable had significant deviations from the structure of the Polish population, which could distort the interpretation of the final results.

When asked about a sense of fear for one’s future in the context of the war in Ukraine, two factors proved to be significant: gender (F = 49.341, p = 3.23e-12) and age (F = 6.869, p = 2.38e-06). Women and older people generally feel more anxious about the future in the context of the war than men and younger people.

In the case of the question about assistance to refugees from Ukraine in the local community, the effect of gender (F = 11.014, p = 0.000925) and age (F = 7.963, p = 2.03e-07) were again significant, as was the interaction between education and age (F = 4.209, p = 1.08e-07). Refugee assistance is generally rated better by women and older people, and slightly worse by young people with vocational education.

When it came to assessing “fatigue” with the war media narrative, the influence of education (F = 11.161, p = 3.02e-07) and age (F = 3.315, p = 0.00555) was significant. Younger and less-educated people are more likely to feel saturated and fatigued by the current media narrative on the war.

Regarding the question about the preparedness of the armed forces of the Russian Federation, the most important factor influencing this assessment was gender (F = 63.194, p=3.61e-15), followed by education (F = 4.951, p = 0.0020) and age of respondents (F = 2.324, p = 0.04091). Women, people with secondary education, and those younger than 55 years old rated the Russian army’s preparedness for the war in Ukraine as worse.

From the above analysis of the non-coincidental correlation of the various segments among our respondents, a picture emerges that shows that it is older Poles and women who feel more
anxious about the war in Ukraine. At the same time, people from the same segments, the elderly and women, are better at assessing how Poles have welcomed refugees from Ukraine into their "small homelands" (as we know from the NBP or PIE reports cited earlier, most refugees are women with children). On the other hand, if we look at the segments of respondents when asked about “fatigue” with media exposure of the war in Ukraine, with a general negation of such a state of affairs, the most frequent over-saturation with war topics in the media was declared by young and less-educated respondents.

Trying to combine these observations, one could say that it is younger people, stereotypically more impatient, who show “fatigue” with the topic of the Russian Federation’s assault on Ukraine, or in their case, the way the "media diet" is constructed, based on social media, which condemns them, somehow, to greater exposure to this topic. It is worth deepening and clarifying this observation more extensively in the months to come, also using other research instrumentation (focus studies, individual in-depth interviews, or biometric research - we also conduct such research at the Laboratory of Media Studies, including topics around war, but also related to the (post)pandemic social and political world. We will soon be publishing more scientific articles and studies based on this research\(^2\).

\(^2\) We invite you to follow regularly the site [www.lbm.uw.edu.pl](http://www.lbm.uw.edu.pl) and Facebook profile: [https://www.facebook.com/lbmuw](https://www.facebook.com/lbmuw).
COMMENTARY BY PROFESSOR TOMASZ GACKOWSKI

The Russian Federation, by invading Ukraine, has ensured that nothing will be the same again, and the pre-invasion world is irretrievably lost. Moreover, such an opinion is repeated not only by Western representatives with Joe Biden and Olaf Scholz at the forefront. Vladimir Putin says the same thing. When we examined the discourse around Russia's annexation of Crimea at the University of Warsaw's Laboratory of Media Studies in 2014 - both the press and the online space, including memes - we had no illusions, and neither did Polish respondents in our May 2016 CATI survey, that the path Russia then embarked on would lead to nothing good, and that the conflict in Ukraine would, sooner or later, take a terrible turn. Unfortunately, this is what has happened. In our latest CATI survey, we asked Poles how worried they are about their future. More than 70 percent of us are full of anxiety because of the regular war in Ukraine. Poles almost unanimously agree that refugees from Ukraine have been well received in Poland by our local communities, small homelands. There is no doubt that Poles rose to the occasion and stood on the right side of history, fully opening their hearts and homes to Ukrainian women and their children fleeing the war. At the same time, though, bear in mind that the survey was conducted in early June of this year, which is more than three months after the outbreak of the war. In reference to the statement that the Polish media give too much attention to the war in Ukraine, more than 30 percent of respondents said they agreed with this attitude. Thus, it can be seen that we detect the first signs of "fatigue" with this difficult situation of constant tension, ongoing assistance, and finally following - day after day - the events at the front. After two years of fighting a pandemic, during a period of great uncertainty, it seems that the war in Ukraine might be seen as the straw that broke the camel's back; in the coming months this may cause many breakthroughs and reevaluations, in social, economic, and political life.

The last statement that our respondents evaluated concerned their opinion on whether the Russian Federation was well prepared for the war. We are in the fourth month of the conflict. The Ukrainians have pushed the Russians back from Kyiv and have concentrated their front in eastern Ukraine. The internet is full of images, videos, and texts describing the heroic actions and heroic battles of the Ukrainians against the Russians, who have repeatedly dealt and are dealing severe blows to the supposedly invincible army of the Russian Federation. More than 60 percent of Poles disagree with the statement that Russia was well prepared for war. We can see with our own eyes that the myth of a powerful and effective Russia is being dispelled. We admire Ukrainians for their heroism and tenacity.

Meanwhile, when President Zelensky says that Ukraine is fighting for Poland, the European Union, and the West, we Poles, who understand the struggle "for Our freedom and Your freedom" like no one else, know that this is true. We know that it is impossible to be indifferent...
to this conflict. Moreover, the Ukrainian President says that, in the case of Russia's attack on Poland, if Putin assumes that he will fight only Poland, he is badly mistaken because Poland will not be defended by 40 million Poles but by 80 million Poles and Ukrainians. When we hear such utterances, we also know that we are witnessing history being written, and new geopolitical and fraternal alliances are being built that can change the regional and global system of security, politically, but also economically, and socially.
COMMENTARY BY DOCTOR KAROLINA BRYLSKA

The survey, conducted by the Media Studies Laboratory team, is an interesting illustration of the opinions of Polish women and men on how the Russian-Ukrainian war looks as seen through the windows of their homes and the screens of their smartphones. In the study, we asked - directly and indirectly - about the reception of media content and respondents' personal experiences related to the conflict.

The high percentage of people convinced that the Russian Federation was poorly prepared for war proves the (still high) effectiveness of Ukrainian propaganda - and this is good news for Ukraine and the democratic world in terms of the progress of the war. The vast majority of us think of the war with images and slogans from internet memes, which tend to inform us of wartime incidents rather than the real, entire course of the conflict. These memes, mainly referring to Russia's ineptitude and the heroism and cleverness of Ukrainians, combined with clickbait titles of articles on portals, give a vast part of Poles a sense of "being up to date" on the conflict across our eastern border. Of course, as Poles, we very much want Ukraine to prevail in this war, so it is satisfying to read and reproduce the narrative about a clumsy Russia and an effective Ukraine. This also demonstrates quite well the interesting function of media - especially social media - during wartime conflict: providing hope and, at the same time, catharsis, which we badly need after weeks of cognitively and emotionally burdening information vigilance. The creators of memes – both grassroots, ordinary internet users, and the system broadcasters (including the governments of the countries involved in the war) understand our perceptual needs well and provide us with this type of content.

As expected, we differ in our opinions about the media in Poland (or, more precisely, in our belief about whether the Polish media pay too much attention to the war in Ukraine). One in three Poles is of the opinion that Polish editors cover the conflict too much, too often, and perhaps too accurately. This is, of course, evidence of audience fatigue with the subject, resulting from months of exposure to war topics in the headlines of portals, newspapers, and television stations. On the other hand, some hope is offered by the fact that more than half of those surveyed hold the opposite view, and thus, presumably, maintain an interest in the reporting of the war, recognizing its fundamental importance and relevance.

The respondents were more unanimous in expressing concern about their future in the context of the war. More than 70 percent of Polish women and men are more worried about their future now than before the war. A similar proportion of Poles regularly asked by CBOS about a similar issue say that the war in Ukraine threatens Poland's security - 77 percent in June 2022 (a decline compared to 85 percent in March, but a rise to 73 percent in May). This proves that armed conflict so close to our border has shattered the foundations of the sense of security of
our country's citizens. We fully understand that the (seemingly) safe world we knew just a few years ago has just ended.

Just as we have provided solidarity and widespread assistance to those fleeing the war in Ukraine, we widely share the view that our local neighborhood has properly welcomed war refugees. More than 90% of respondents have no doubt that refugees from Ukraine have been well received in their "small homelands." Less than 1 percent (!) of respondents have a different opinion. In fact, this is the result that we are most pleased with in the entire survey.
The survey by the Laboratory of Media Studies is an important, necessary, and remarkably timely study of how a representative sample of Poles view the war in Ukraine and its impact on their lives. We learn from it that Poles are very concerned about the war and remain interested in its course. It is worth noting that the question about party preferences was met with surprise and some reluctance by respondents. As the authors of the report write, this may indicate that the war in Ukraine and the pervasive mobilization of Polish society is a cross-party issue. This is an important and interesting finding. However, the longer the war lasts, the longer Poles hear about it in the media, and the more they interact with Ukrainian refugees, the more these opinions may change. It would be worthwhile for studies such as the one presented by the LBM UW team, with the same methodological reliability, to be repeated in the months to come, as the world seems only to accelerate, and yet without analysis and reflection, it is difficult to talk about understanding what is happening around us.

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The war in Ukraine and the accompanying events (such as the mass flight of people seeking protection in other countries or the growing risk of a global energy and food crisis) have drastically affected the daily lives of Poles. In this context, any analytical attempt to gain deeper insight into how the dramatic events beyond Poland's eastern border affect the lives of our country's citizens and how they assess reality is of particular importance. The LBM UW survey just presented is an interesting attempt in several respects. First, due to methodological limitations, it focuses on only a few selected aspects and, in addition, those that concern different spheres of social life (sense of threat, assessment of real aid efforts, presentation of war issues in the media, and finally, arguably the most controversial topic, reference to the state of preparations for war by the Russian Federation). Second, it turns out that these themes are linked by much more than just the outbreak of war, which is evident not only in the discussion of the study's context but also in the socio-demographic profiles that emerge from the analysis presented. Third, the results of the report indicate a major change that has taken place in the level of perception of Ukraine itself and the Russia-induced conflict since 2014 (an apparent strengthening of pro-Ukrainian attitudes and almost unequivocal views on the current war). Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, the report's authors make it clear that it is only an invitation to further research and analysis, which will require much more detailed research material and varied analytical methods. This is evident in the case of the thread that, given my research interests, is closest to me. The survey shows that the vast majority of respondents give a positive assessment of how people from Ukraine have been received in local communities. Closer analysis, however, reveals that this simple question raises a whole range of additional issues, including what were the sources of such a massive eruption of individual and social involvement, and whether the gender differences are in fact due to the effect of solidarity with women fleeing the tragedy of war, whether and what are the political connotations of the answers given to this question (this, for example, in the context of the fact that those fleeing from the war primarily reached large cities), whether and to what extent the very positive assessment was due to the respondents’ own experiences (as the map of answers would indicate). Fifth, and finally, the results presented have an important practical dimension. It relates, for example, to the assessment of media exposure, the obvious issue of the gradual increase in the level of war fatigue, but also the related vulnerability to external influences, including disinformation. In particular, however, they relate to current and future perceptions of Ukraine and Ukrainians, which may be crucial for the future of our part of the world.

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