



Solidarity tourism in the humanitarian crisis

Turismo solidario en la crisis humanitaria

Alina Zajadacz¹  , Sergii Iaromenko²  

ABSTRACT

This article examines the contribution of solidarity tourism in war-affected countries, specifically Ukraine. It presents activities undertaken as part of solidarity tourism in Ukraine and Poland with the intent to help overcome the crisis caused by the armed conflict. The research methods were secondary data analysis and participant observation. Results show what actions were taken "from above" at the government level in Ukraine and Poland and actions taken "from below" in social activities. The new knowledge brings new light to the perception of tourism as a tool for sustainable social development and can provide examples of good practices for other countries and regions.

Keywords: humanitarian assistance, international relations, international solidarity, refugees.

JEL classification: F22, F35, F51

Received: 18-02-2024

Revised: 14-04-2024

Accepted: 15-06-2024

Published: 01-07-2024

Editor: Carlos Alberto Gómez Cano 

¹Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland.

²Odesa National University of Technology, Odesa, Ukraine.

Cite as: Zajadacz, A, Iaromenko, S. (2024). Solidarity tourism in the humanitarian crisis. *Región Científica*, 3(2), 2024277. <https://doi.org/10.58765/rc2024277>

INTRODUCTION

Typically, a crisis is considered a series of events that overcomes the organization's capacity and requires a radical response (Coombs & Tachkova, 2022; Moura et al., 2021). These situations have long-term effects on an organization's productivity and the confidence that intern and extern stakeholders may have in its ability to get back to a normal functioning level (Buhagiar & Anand, 2023; Dwiedienawati et al., 2021; Hazaa et al., 2021). In addition, crises must be conceptually separated from catastrophes, as the latter are caused by external factors over which the organization has no control, while the first one is caused by internal dysfunction or inaction (Walby, 2022).

The humanitarian crisis is a particularly delicate one because it is defined by a series of historical events that severely threaten the well-being of a large number of people, including their safety, human rights, and security (Bang & Balgah, 2022). These emergencies are caused by situations to which the affected populations cannot respond with their resources. Furthermore, the impact of these scenarios is usually magnified when it comes to vulnerable populations, especially demographic sectors with limited capacity for action, such as the elderly, children, the sick, pregnant women and new mothers, migrants, or people who have been displaced (Afifi et al., 2020; Nott, 2020).

The aggression of the Russian Federation in Ukraine in February 2022 is an escalation of the armed conflict that



has been going on between Russia and Ukraine since 2014. It caused a crisis and a humanitarian catastrophe unprecedentedly in Europe that has resonated in the world economy and in the global power structure (Mariotti, 2022). One of the forms of assistance provided in this situation is solidarity tourism. The article answers the following questions: What is solidarity tourism, and how can it contribute to alleviating the humanitarian crisis?

Crisis management and disaster management in tourism

Tourism services are one of the most economically crucial industries of the global economy and are at the same time very prone to crises or disasters. Unexpected critical events affecting tourism may include situations with external conditions (e.g. natural disasters, epidemics, terrorist attacks, financial crises), but also internal events such as family crises. To fully understand the impact of a humanitarian crisis on tourism the wide variety of stakeholder must be taken into consideration.

The wide variety of stakeholders must be considered to fully understand the impact of a humanitarian crisis on tourism. For instance, services such as accommodation, transportation, catering, guide services, and many others are affected by war-related crises, even in nondirect conflict areas. Other well-known features of this sector are the seasonality of services and the inability to store them. As a result, crisis management in tourism, both at the enterprise and destination level, is a huge organizational challenge (Zajadacz & Tobolska, 2020).

As a general concept, crisis management involves a process that considers the interests of all interested groups and previously developed action plans. It can be seen and used as a breakthrough moment, initiating the introduction of changes to better adapt the organization to the conditions of a turbulent environment (in this case study, programs to meet the needs of the labor market in tourism services). Such possibilities of interpreting development through overcoming crises are indicated by theoretical models of organizational changes, including the Greiner model (Greiner, 1998). Similarly, Roitman (2014) pointed out Crises are ideal spaces for building narratives about what is true or for validating a certain motive or historical process. Therefore, crises are often conceived as instruments of historical truth (Roitman, 2014).

This kind of perspective was also visible during the COVID-19 pandemic, the period of which some researchers describe as a transformative moment, opening the possibility of “resetting” tourism (Joo et al., 2021; Kock et al., 2024). The crisis caused by the unstable political situation and military actions changes the way in which tourist services are used, and influences the transformation of the socio-economic functions of tourism. Representative articles from the literature indicate that tourism could represent a cornerstone in economic and social reconstruction and an essential pillar in achieving sustainable development objectives. Consequently, the crisis must be studied as a platform to provide the service sector with the opportunity to develop and be better managed, with the priority of sustainable and responsible development in the form of solidarity tourism.

A crisis in the tourism sector can be defined as a set of disruptive events that disrupt the normal functioning of all related activities and have consequences for a large number of related industries. These crises usually impact factors such as safety, attractiveness, and the degree of comfort continuously for long periods of time, decreasing visibility and trust with customers. Regarding local scenarios, the impact of the crisis worsens the sector’s economic performance due to the decrease in visitors and low performance (Ritchie & Jiang, 2021). Especially in countries and regions where tourism is a fundamental economic sector, the crisis can cause numerous social ills, reaffirming the importance of deepening the recovery paths.

Furthermore, the importance of tourism worldwide means that a local crisis can quickly become a factor to consider regarding economic and social impact. This centrality of tourism as an engine of development could be verified in different countries and regions, mainly during the period of COVID-19, which demonstrated that the travel and hospitality industry was the backbone of a large number of countries.

The literature indicates that few emergency plans or predefined systems of procedures exist regarding responses to be offered in a crisis. This is due, among other factors, to the complexity of the local-regional-global context, the characteristics of social systems, and the organization itself. Many natural, social, economic, or political situations affect the functioning or limited access to a given destination. Crises have profoundly affected all destinations and areas that generate tourist traffic. These undoubtedly include the COVID-19 epidemic and the unstable political situation, the effects of which on the service sector are currently unknown, but they will undoubtedly be marked on a global scale in terms of economic and social behavioral changes.

In the difficult period of the COVID-19 pandemic, followed by the war in Ukraine, tourism is vital from the economic and social (including health) point of view as a “return to normality.” Tourism crisis management used

during the COVID-19 pandemic focused on taking advantage of the potential of domestic tourism related to outdoor activities. In 2021, international tourism began to recover, and data from several studies shows that in 2021, Europe's tourism increased almost a 20% compared to 2020 (Orindaru et al., 2021). This recovery was of significant importance on a global scale, considering that Europe is the central tourist region in the world (Gunter et al., 2024). However, Russia's invasion of Ukraine interrupted this revival in Central and Eastern Europe.

Since the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the losses in human life, ecosystem damage, and socioeconomic setbacks have been considerable (Chowdhury et al., 2023; Vorbrugg & Bluwstein, 2022). The actual toll of casualties is much higher. It is impossible to quickly obtain information from places where active military operations are underway. Many reports also require confirmation, and most of the civilian casualties have been killed or injured by large-scale weapons, such as heavy artillery, multiple rocket launchers, or missiles also used by aviation. This situation caused a crisis and a humanitarian catastrophe, which resulted in a massive wave of refugees (Moise et al., 2024; Ociepa-Kicińska & Gorzałczyńska-Koczkodaj, 2022). The central country refugees reach is Poland, bordering Ukraine from the west, which has generated various scenarios and difficulties to satisfy their needs in a context of observation of human dignity, despite the ongoing efforts from Poland people (Malchrzak et al., 2022; Trojanek & Gluszak, 2022).

Solidarity tourism

Solidarity activities are a response to the crisis and humanitarian catastrophe related to the war in Ukraine, the largest since the end of World War II in this part of Europe. In a context of sustained diplomatic failure, even in the face of global pressure and displays of support from numerous social actors, the values of tourism, especially peace and solidarity, can be crucial for the country's recovery.

Within this support framework, solidarity tourism is assumed to be an essential resource for governments, allied companies in the tourism sector, and tourists to participate in these recovery efforts. Solidarity tourism bases its commitment on empathy, the feeling of community, loyalty, and the sense of co-responsibility of critical actors in the face of the suffering of people affected by crisis (Dolnicar & McCabe, 2022).

However, this concept is not exempt from criticism, as various sources point to it as a possible colonizing element associated with extractivist tendencies (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2022). In this article, however, the meaning is not shared. However, instead, the approach of social justice, moral responsibility, voluntarism, and defense of values that truly represent this type of tourism is accepted (Jiang et al., 2022). In this context, solidarity tourism would not only help alleviate the effects of the humanitarian crisis. However, it also contributes to considering returning to sustainable development.

METHOD

The results are divided into two fundamental parts. The first part includes an analysis of the activities classified as part of solidarity tourism before and after the start of the war. The second part seeks to answer various questions from the perspective of the activities carried out in Poland. This second part was based on a group of indicators based on the proposal of Dolnicar and McCabe (2022).

- Government possibilities to empower the tourism industry in offering help.
- Helplines offered by solidarity tourism in contexts of humanitarian crisis.
- Role of tourism in the recovery of the country in the post-conflict stage.
- Role of the ordinary citizen in postwar reconstruction.
- Government support for ordinary citizens in post-war reconstruction.

The study uses the desk research method based on the analysis of statistical data collected by the state administration in Poland, such as reports by the Border Guard, reports on accommodation guaranteed to refugees, as well as legal regulations, information on activities undertaken by offices and state institutions. This method was used to determine the scale and nature of "top-down" – institutional activities. The research design was based on studies that used the analysis of secondary data to adapt these proposals to the purposes of the research (Adam & Dzang Alhassan, 2021; Alam et al., 2021; Lund & Ma, 2021).

The second research tool was the author's participant observation covering various situations in places where refugees were given help, as well as social activities of associations, organizations and private individuals. The activities included guaranteeing stay in private homes, providing food, hygiene products for trains carrying refugees

to the western regions of Poland and Germany, various types of volunteer actions for the benefit of Ukrainian citizens. Participant observation made it possible to determine the differentiation of “bottom-up” – social activities. Meetings with organizers of tourism in Ukraine, such as the director of the Polish Tourist Organization in Kiev, who reported on and explained the current situation, were also an important source of knowledge.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Solidarity tourism in Ukraine: historical background last decades and current situation

The development of the volunteer movement in tourism in Ukraine occurred in several stages and included a wide variety of modalities (Williams et al., 2023). The first stage was associated with an attempt to intensify cultural exchange between the western and eastern regions of Ukraine. These initiatives took place during the 2000s and were primarily aimed at schoolchildren and students. Often, these events involved the opening of summer camps and summer schools with visits to the most famous tourist sites.

In the Carpathian region, these sites included natural reserves, joint hikes to mountain peaks, including Hoverla, the highest point in Ukraine. Lviv transformed into an educational and cultural hub for youth and students. Eastern regions offered visits to industrial areas of Donbas, acquainting people with life in industrial towns, and attractions in the salt mines of Soledar, visits to the largest soda production plant in Bakhmut, and more.

In western regions, such children’s camps were organized through charitable organizations or public foundations. One such charitable foundation is “Friends of Children,” which has been organizing vacations for children, since 1996. Over the years, the foundation’s camps have hosted thousands of children. During this stage, organizations related to charity and religious organizations also became active. CARITAS Ukraine organized more than 20 camps for children and women in different regions of Ukraine, including the Carpathians (Lviv region), the Black Sea coast (Odesa region), and Volyn, which have contributed tremendously to promoting community resilience among refugees in and out of Ukrainian territory (Olcese et al., 2024).

Volunteer support for children’s recreation in various regions of Ukraine, especially in the Carpathians and on the Black Sea coast, was also organized by the Union Forum organization in this period (Lviv). This organization has been conducting annual summer volunteer camps. Similar activities were carried out by the Canadian charity fund “New Generation” together with Ukrainian volunteers in the “Help Us Help” project, which shows the relevance of diaspora collaboration and volunteerism during these complex scenarios (Carment et al., 2021). Amid the humanitarian crisis caused by Russian aggression, these initiatives had a tremendous impact by alleviating the harmful effects of the conflict and promoting the necessary personal and community resilience (Chudzicka-Czupala et al., 2023; Mróz, 2023; Sengupta et al., 2023).

The second stage began in 2014 with Russia’s aggression in the territories of Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk regions. During that period, a significant portion of the population was forced to leave the occupied zones due to persecution and the potential threat to their lives. The largest number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) was in the regions near the occupied zones, including the Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk regions, but there were also IDPs in western and central regions of Ukraine. The number of IDPs exceeded 1.5 million people (Bulakh, 2020). During the second stage, there was an upsurge in the volunteer movement, primarily aimed at supporting the Ukrainian army and providing assistance to displaced persons (Table 1). It was during this stage that a volunteer movement emerged, providing services such as organizing excursions and introducing IDPs to the regions and cities where they had resettled due to the occupation of their home regions.

Table 1.
NGOs activity in Ukraine, 2013-2018 (Ukrstat 2014-2019)

Characteristic	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of organizations	67155	61090	22185 ¹	23237	25988	26630
Number of members, pers.	35459824	45853368	5011360	244338157	19925386	19079855
Charity activities, '000 UAH	653891.9	924969.4	1902970.7	1797611.3	1890796.4	1939233.9

¹changes in number of NGOs because of the methodology of collected statistics and identification of NGOs
Source: Ukrstat

With the beginning of the invasion and occupation of Crimea and partially Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine, a portion of internally displaced persons (IDPs) was temporarily accommodated in state institutions such as hotels, tourist facilities, and resort areas. An example of this is the Kuyalnyk resort near Odessa, where a health resort sanatorium, including one of its buildings, was allocated to individuals from temporarily occupied territories, strategy that has proven to be crucial since the beginning of the conflict and that can help these people reconfigure their lives after the end of this conflict (Harris-Brandts, 2024; Zavisca et al., 2023).

In Kyiv and Mariupol, efforts began to organize courses to train volunteers in tourism to provide information for tourists and conduct free excursions. At the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion, more than 4.9 million people from Donbas and Crimea were residing in areas under Ukrainian control (Ministry of Social Policy MSP, 2022).

The third stage began with Russia's full-scale invasion along the entire border with Ukraine, the demarcation lines with the occupied territories since 2014, and incursions from the territory of Belarus. The initial few months were focused on providing housing for citizens leaving the occupied zones in the north, east, and south of Ukraine. The massive influx of refugees required housing and basic necessities for survival. The Ukrainian tourism business provided accommodation in hotel complexes and organized meals in collaboration with other volunteer organizations (Wen et al., 2023). After the liberation of the Kyiv, Chernihiv, and Sumy regions, local tourism bureaus and tourism societies in safer areas in the central and western parts of Ukraine began organizing free excursions for residents who had been displaced due to the conflict (Balinchenko, 2021).

A volunteer platform was established, uniting over 400,000 individuals. The platform was launched in 2021 with the support of UNICEF and the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine. Five hundred volunteer organizations provide assistance, and more than 1,000 projects have been implemented to help internally displaced persons from conflict zones and occupied territories.

A significant number of civil organizations in the tourism and excursion field organized free excursions for temporarily displaced individuals from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. The main objectives of these excursions are adaptation to the new environment, introduction to the history and architecture of the new region, and fostering communication among the participants. Such excursions were organized in Lviv, Lutsk, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk, Khmelnytskyi, and other regions in the western part of Ukraine, which were located further away from the combat zones. Similar events took place in regions in central Ukraine. Every Saturday, volunteers organized excursions in the city of Kropyvnytskyi, a project supported by the city council, the Department of Tourism and Culture, and the tourist agency WOWalk. Several alternatives like this were implemented, but also they printed an educational and transformative approach to it (Soulard & Lundin, 2023). At present, there is a significant number of volunteer organizations that primarily assist socially vulnerable individuals and those who were forced to leave the occupied zones or areas with active combat (Stepaniuk, 2022).

Top-down activities – institutional actions in the field of solidarity tourism as response to the humanitarian crisis and catastrophic hazard

Estimates indicate that in the period February 24 – May 2, 2022, over 3 million people reached Poland from Ukraine (Byrska, 2023). For example, until the beginning of March 2022, 150 thousand refugees visited Warsaw. People who came to Warsaw in the first wave came to their relatives who already lived in Warsaw, but then it quickly changed. People who came in the next wave do not have guaranteed accommodation with their relatives; they do not know anyone, their physical and mental condition is getting worse, as has been reported by several previous studies (Długosz, 2023; Rizzi et al., 2022).

Government possibilities to empower the tourism industry in offering help

Firstly, the data analysis showed that a regulatory framework for the status of those affected by the conflict is necessary. These regulations make it easier to help legalize displaced people and their families in countries like Poland. In the specific case of Poland, this framework highlights the following aspects:

- A legal framework for assigning work to legally residing Ukrainian citizens.
- Establishment of aid mechanisms through local chiefs, government units, and other similar entities.
- Creation of aid funds to finance or assist in the financing of initiatives aimed at supporting Ukrainian citizens.
- Assessment of the legitimacy of rights of Ukrainian citizens residing in the country.

- Introduce special rules to regulate entry, stay, and issuance of documents certifying the legality of the process for Ukrainian citizens.
- Analysis and protection of the rights of students, teachers, and researchers who enter the country.
- Establish special regulations to guarantee access to education, upbringing, and care for Ukrainian infants and adolescents through collaborative networks between governmental and non-governmental agencies.
- Introduce specific rules to accommodate university students and support the continuity of their studies.
- Design of regulations to accompany the economic activities and ventures of Ukrainian citizens.
- Guarantee the adequate distribution of medicines and other supplies intended for humanitarian assistance.

In the case of local government offices, the specific objectives would be aimed at solving problems of 1) accommodation, 2) daily food for large groups of people, 3) establishing transportation routes for medical cases, 4) financing journeys using public transport and specialized transport enabling the transport of lying persons or intended for persons with disabilities, in particular to places or between places 5) provide cleaning and personal hygiene products 6) establishment of health services and emergency services 7) undertaking other activities necessary for the implementation of the assistance.

Helplines offered by solidarity tourism in contexts of humanitarian crisis

In Poland, it was established that both entities that provide accommodation services and individuals wishing to provide this type of assistance can submit an application to the local office (commune or city). For the accommodation provided, the local office will have one month to process the application for reimbursement of the shelter costs provided to Ukrainian citizens. Benefit will be paid in arrears for the number of days accommodation has been provided. Initially, it was assumed that the starting rate for assisting is PLN 40 per day per person as compensation for the costs of providing refugees with accommodation and meals, which will be granted for a period not longer than 60 days (with the possibility of extension in justified cases). In practice, the rates of benefits are negotiable. They may be increased on the basis of the decisions of voivodes (regional administration offices). The deadline for providing assistance has been extended in accordance with the provisions of the amendment to the law for assistance to Ukrainian citizens displaced by the conflict.

Furthermore, it is necessary to highlight the importance of solidarity tourism and the hotel industry in supporting refugees and displaced people who are not fully supported by laws and regulations. In the case of these people who support the European Union legislation, companies in the sector could offer discounts, free accommodation, or other forms of economic relief while providing a safe space for decision-making. In this order, the case of Airbnb stands out, who offered this support. However, the experience was interrupted due to the impact of Covid 19. In addition, the need for preconceived emergency strategies could be verified, at least in general terms.

In reality, it was assumed that in justified cases, it would be possible to extend the payment of the benefit (the regulations do not specify what these circumstances are). So, if a person wants to receive support for more than 60 days, they must submit an application stating that they are requesting such an extension and describing why they are seeking it. The decision in this matter will not rest with the commune. It will also require the consent of the voivode, who will determine the duration of the longer benefit receipt.

In the collective transport field, journeys are made based on any document confirming Ukrainian citizenship and, in the case of railways, based on a free seat reservation collected at the ticket office or from the conductor's team. In addition, in rail connections, citizens of Ukraine who travel to Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, or Hungary are issued a free additional ticket to the last station in Poland, and the further journey takes place by the rules adopted by foreign railways. This is an excellent example of integration between industries, especially tourism, in the realization of wills.

Role of tourism in the recovery of the country in the post-conflict stage

Ukraine was a very important emission market for foreign tourism to Poland (second place after German tourists, parallel to Great Britain. On the other hand, Ukraine was not one of the main tourist destinations of Poles (apart from the top ten destinations, both one day and longer vacation destinations).

The importance of tourists from Ukraine in foreign tourism in Poland resulted in the adaptation of tourist services to this group of guests. Many trainings on Ukrainian culture and the Ukrainian language were conducted,

information was published in the Ukrainian language version. Many Ukrainian citizens also work in the tourism industry in Poland. These types of activities have prepared a good basis for the social inclusion of Ukrainian citizens who, finding refuge in Poland, can also use the opportunity to spend their free time, travel to tourist destinations – in this case, tourism plays a very important pro-health role, including in terms of mental health, finding balance and return to “normal life.” Thus, the tourism industry, by providing tourist services, may contribute to the improvement of the psycho-physical condition of refugees, as well as financial – as a result of employment in tourism companies and organizations. The tourism industry also cooperates with universities and schools educating the tourist staff. Students from Ukraine constitute a large group at all levels of education in this field. Such activities of the tourism industry create the social potential of Ukrainian citizens to recreate tourism in their country after the end of hostilities. In the present situation, it is not possible to go to Ukraine under conditions of war.

Bottom-up activities– social actions in the field of solidarity tourism as response to the humanitarian crisis and catastrophic hazard

Social and solidarity activities are based on volunteering and include many forms of support provided by critical social actors. Associations of exiles and citizens of the Ukrainian diaspora, companies, social organizations, and other initiatives assisted people in Ukrainian territory, but also those residing in Poland. This help was as comprehensive as it could be organized in the complex context that both countries were experiencing and was aimed at various spheres of the lives of Ukrainians.

Role of the ordinary citizen in postwar reconstruction

The efforts of the Polish population, with the help of different local, regional, and local organizations, produced different forms of assistance. In particular, tourism contributed through material aid and alleviating the physical and emotional damage caused by the conflict. Below is a summary of the forms of assistance currently possible and developed in Poland:

- Material support for displaced people is essential supplies for short periods, such as water, food, medicine, clothing, tents, and other forms of shelter from the elements.
- Accommodation in houses, shelters, or other forms of settlement that can represent a safe space.
- The establishment of a transportation network for people in need, both in Ukraine and outside of it, allows for meeting different needs.
- The creation of support networks through the association of volunteers and aimed at providing all types of material and spiritual support.

Information on collection points and social assistance was made available in social media, on the institution’s website. For example, on the website of the regional office in Wielkopolska, locations of 320 collection points for necessary products were provided.

Government support for ordinary citizens in post-war reconstruction

Current activities related to mitigating the effects of the refugee crisis and preparing for its consequences are undertaken by humanitarian foundations and associations, including Wielka Orkiestra Świątecznej Pomocy, Polish Humanitarian Action, Caritas, and UNICEF. Using the experience of this type of foundation and association makes it possible to organize humanitarian aid based on voluntary work on a mass scale. For example, in Warsaw, for one day (March 7, 2022), municipal information points at railway stations and the Multicultural Center provided aid to 19.5 thousand people. The traffic from 14 trains and 90 buses from the border was handled, and 26 vehicles of Warsaw Public Transport were used to transport refugees in Warsaw and to locations within the Mazowieckie Voivodeship – over 2,600 people benefited from such assistance yesterday. Only in the municipal resources of Warsaw, 2,251 refugees found overnight accommodation on that day, and the municipal hotline received thousands calls for assistance.

Such an organization of support for the arriving inhabitants of Ukraine would not be possible without the support of Warsaw volunteers. Currently, over 8,300 people are willing to act in this way. The capital’s inhabitants are also still offering their help – so far, over 4,300 applications for a flat or room have been sent to the city via the website voluntenicy.waw.pl: one day (03/07/2022).

In addition to material assistance, in terms of living conditions, activities related to psychological assistance for people suffering from war trauma are of significant long-term importance (Henkelmann et al., 2020). The support

for both refugees was involved, among others, by foundations. For example, the Integration Foundation associating people with disabilities outlines the problem in an interview with the Ukrainian psychotherapist Olena Savchuk, who explains that typical symptoms of such a trauma include loss of sense of security and self-confidence, mood swings, urinary incontinence, greater tendency to conflict, feeling of guilt and shame, problems in a relationship, alcohol or other addictions, which have been found in several scientific studies (Chudzicka-Czupala et al., 2023; Kurapov et al., 2023). And in the long run – somatization, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Depression caused by loss of lifestyle, home, work and financial security – is more common than PTSD directly related to traumatic events (Lim et al., 2022). It is also known that people who feel supported by their environment stabilize faster and suffer less from PTSD later on. In this context, the support that refugees from Ukraine in Poland receive from their entourage today is particularly important.

At the same time, there is a group of people who will not be able to cope with the traumatic experience on their own, and the support from the environment is not enough to bring them back to their former form. Such people need psychological help. Moreover, the sooner a person receives them, the more favorable the prospect of recovering from the trauma. There are three types of aid: first aid, crisis intervention (stabilization) and trauma therapy. The observations of participants in tourist places in Poland show that many people hosting refugees from Ukraine also cared about spending time together in cinemas, theaters, concerts, and tourist destinations – which is a way of finding psycho-physical balance and is part of pro-health functions tourism.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed definition of solidarity tourism, extended by the scope of the concepts analyzed in the relevant literature, refers to the activities of many stakeholders involved in the process of tourism development in the new reality related to the crisis caused by the COVID-19 epidemic as well as the crisis and humanitarian catastrophe associated with an unstable political situation. The presented activities and experiences related to the war in Ukraine observed in Poland make it possible to indicate solutions undertaken in the framework of social tourism, which contribute to alleviating the humanitarian crisis. These include Top-down activities – (institutional actions) and bottom-up activities (social actions).

Top-down activities (institutional actions) are guaranteed, through legal regulations, primarily accommodation based on the hospitality of private persons, providing refugees with second homes, as well as commercial accommodation. For the owners of the accommodation facilities, after the lockdown period, this, in many cases, ensured complete and continuous use of the capacity of a given facility. Thanks to the state subsidy, many accommodation facilities could fully use their potential. People from Ukraine, both before the war and now, constitute a significant group of workers in feminized occupations in the tourism and leisure services market. This influences the creation and provision of a wide range of such services as a response to the social needs of Polish society, as well as a significant number of refugees. Actions taken in the field of community tourism show the possibility of the revival of tourism after the lockdown period and the development of the tourism industry through the use of demographic potential.

Bottom-up activities (social actions) aid and voluntary activities undertaken by private individuals are in line with the P2P principles in sharing tourism. They contribute to the dialogue between the cultures of Polish-Ukrainian society, spending free time together and taking tourist trips. Solidarity tourism fulfills many pro-social functions, i.e., integrating and pro-health, facilitating a “return to normality,” and regaining the psychosomatic balance of refugees.

In the current situation, organizing tourist trips to Ukraine as a form of support for the local tourism industry is impossible due to the escalation of the armed conflict. The end of hostilities and the country’s revival will be a chance for the development of this type of support for solidarity tourism of the society affected by crisis and humanitarian catastrophe. The currently possible form of support is guaranteeing employment to refugees in the tourism industry and educating staff in the field of tourist and recreational services so that, after the armed conflict stabilizes, they use the potential of knowledge and skills to revive tourism in Ukraine.

REFERENCES

- Adam, I. O., & Dzang Alhassan, M. (2021). Bridging the global digital divide through digital inclusion: The role of ICT access and ICT use. *Transforming Government: People, Process and Policy*, 15(4), 580–596. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TG-06-2020-0114>
- Affi, R. A., Abdulrahim, S., Betancourt, T., Btedinni, D., Berent, J., Dellos, L., Farrar, J., Nakkash, R., Osman, R., Saravanan, M., Story, William. T., Zombo, M., & Parker, E. (2020). *Implementing Community-Based*

Participatory Research with Communities Affected by Humanitarian Crises: The Potential to Recalibrate Equity and Power in Vulnerable Contexts. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 66(3–4), 381–391. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12453>

- Alam, Md. M., Awawdeh, A. E., & Muhamad, A. I. B. (2021). Using e-wallet for business process development: Challenges and prospects in Malaysia. *Business Process Management Journal*, 27(4), 1142–1162. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BPMJ-11-2020-0528>
- Balinchenko, S. (2021). A dynamic approach to localness in the context of conflict-affected internal displacement and return in Ukraine. *SN Social Sciences*, 1(2), 52. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-021-00057-1>
- Bang, H. N., & Balgah, R. A. (2022). The ramification of Cameroon’s Anglophone crisis: Conceptual analysis of a looming “Complex Disaster Emergency”. *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*, 7(1), 6. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-022-00114-1>
- Buhagiar, K., & Anand, A. (2023). Synergistic triad of crisis management: Leadership, knowledge management and organizational learning. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 31(2), 412–429. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-03-2021-2672>
- Bulakh, T. (2020). Entangled in Social Safety Nets: Administrative Responses to and Lived Experiences of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 72(3), 455–480. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2019.1687648>
- Byrska, O. (2023). Civil Crisis Management in Poland: The First Weeks of the Relief in Russian War on Ukraine. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 25(3–4), 463–470. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623528.2022.2079196>
- Carment, D., Nikolko, M., & MacIsaac, S. (2021). Mobilizing diaspora during crisis: Ukrainian diaspora in Canada and the intergenerational sweet spot. *Diaspora Studies*, 14(1), 22–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09739572.2020.1827667>
- Chowdhury, P. R., Medhi, H., Bhattacharyya, K. G., & Hussain, C. M. (2023). Severe deterioration in food-energy-ecosystem nexus due to ongoing Russia-Ukraine war: A critical review. *Science of The Total Environment*, 902, 166131. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.166131>
- Chudzicka-Czupala, A., Chiang, S.-K., Tan, C. M., Hapon, N., Żywiólek-Szeja, M., Karamushka, L., Paliga, M., Dubniak, Z., McIntyre, R. S., & Ho, R. (2023). Association between mental health, psychological characteristics, and motivational functions of volunteerism among Polish and Ukrainian volunteers during the Russo-Ukrainian War. *Scientific Reports*, 13(1), 20725. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-47840-z>
- Chudzicka-Czupala, A., Hapon, N., Chiang, S.-K., Żywiólek-Szeja, M., Karamushka, L., Lee, C. T., Grabowski, D., Paliga, M., Rosenblat, J. D., Ho, R., McIntyre, R. S., & Chen, Y.-L. (2023). Depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress during the 2022 Russo-Ukrainian war, a comparison between populations in Poland, Ukraine, and Taiwan. *Scientific Reports*, 13(1), 3602. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-28729-3>
- Coombs, W. T., & Tachkova, E. R. (2022). Elaborating the concept of threat in contingency theory: An integration with moral outrage and situational crisis communication theory. *Public Relations Review*, 48(4), 102234. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2022.102234>
- Długosz, P. (2023). War trauma and strategies for coping with stress among Ukrainian refugees staying in Poland. *Journal of Migration and Health*, 8, 100196. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmh.2023.100196>
- Dolnicar, S., & McCabe, S. (2022). Solidarity tourism how can tourism help the Ukraine and other war-torn countries? *Annals of Tourism Research*, 94, 103386. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2022.103386>
- Dwiedienawati, D., Tjahjana, D., Faisal, M., Gandasari, D., & Abdinagoro, S. B. (2021). Determinants of perceived effectiveness in crisis management and company reputation during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Cogent Business & Management*, 8(1), 1912523. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2021.1912523>
- Greiner, L. E. (1998). Evolution and revolution as organizations grow. *Harvard Business Review*, July-August, 76(3).

<https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA20567112&sid=googleScholar&v=2.1&it=r&linkaccess=abs&issn=00178012&p=AONE&sw=w&userGroupName=anon%7E77ed9bae&aty=open-web-entry>

- Gunter, U., Smeral, E., & Zekan, B. (2024). Forecasting Tourism in the EU after the COVID-19 Crisis. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 48(5), 909–919. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10963480221125130>
- Harris-Brandts, S. (2024). Rapid response housing for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine. *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, 30(1), 44–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11926422.2024.2304024>
- Hazaa, Y. M. H., Almaqtari, F. A., & Al-Swidi, A. (2021). Factors Influencing Crisis Management: A systematic review and synthesis for future research. *Cogent Business & Management*, 8(1), 1878979. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2021.1878979>
- Henkelmann, J.-R., De Best, S., Deckers, C., Jensen, K., Shahab, M., Elzinga, B., & Molendijk, M. (2020). Anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder in refugees resettling in high-income countries: Systematic review and meta-analysis. *BJPsych Open*, 6(4), e68. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjo.2020.54>
- Higgins-Desbiolles, F. (2022). The question of solidarity in tourism. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19407963.2022.2107657>
- Jiang, L., Eck, T., & An, S. (2022). A Study on the Effect of Emotional Solidarity on Memorable Tourism Experience and Destination Loyalty in Volunteer Tourism. *SAGE Open*, 12(1), 215824402210872. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440221087263>
- Joo, D., Xu, W., Lee, J., Lee, C.-K., & Woosnam, K. M. (2021). Residents' perceived risk, emotional solidarity, and support for tourism amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 19, 100553. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2021.100553>
- Kock, F., Assaf, A. G., Tsionas, M., Josiassen, A., & Karl, M. (2024). Do Tourists Stand by the Tourism Industry? Examining Solidarity During and After a Pandemic. *Journal of Travel Research*, 63(3), 696–712. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875231164975>
- Kurapov, A., Kalaitzaki, A., Keller, V., Danyliuk, I., & Kowatsch, T. (2023). The mental health impact of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war 6 months after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 14, 1134780. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2023.1134780>
- Lim, I. C. Z. Y., Tam, W. W. S., Chudzicka-Czupala, A., McIntyre, R. S., Teopiz, K. M., Ho, R. C., & Ho, C. S. H. (2022). Prevalence of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress in war- and conflict-afflicted areas: A meta-analysis. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 13, 978703. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2022.978703>
- Lund, B., & Ma, J. (2021). A review of cluster analysis techniques and their uses in library and information science research: K-means and k-medoids clustering. *Performance Measurement and Metrics*, 22(3), 161–173. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PMM-05-2021-0026>
- Malchrzak, W., Babicki, M., Pokorna-Kalwak, D., Doniec, Z., & Mastalerz-Migas, A. (2022). COVID-19 Vaccination and Ukrainian Refugees in Poland during Russian–Ukrainian War—Narrative Review. *Vaccines*, 10(6), 955. <https://doi.org/10.3390/vaccines10060955>
- Mariotti, S. (2022). A warning from the Russian–Ukrainian war: Avoiding a future that rhymes with the past. *Journal of Industrial and Business Economics*, 49(4), 761–782. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40812-022-00219-z>
- Ministry of Social Policy MSP. (2022). Internally displaced persons. Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine. <https://www.msp.gov.ua/timeline/Vnutrishno-peremishcheni-osobi.html>
- Moise, A. D., Dennison, J., & Kriesi, H. (2024). European attitudes to refugees after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. *West European Politics*, 47(2), 356–381. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2023.2229688>
- Moura, G. G., Nascimento, C. R. R., & Ferreira, J. M. (2021). COVID-19: Reflections on the Crisis, Transformation, and Interactive Processes Under Development. *Trends in Psychology*, 29(2), 375–394. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43076-020-00061-z>

- Mróz, F. (2023). Geographies of Care: The Catholic Church in Poland's Assistance to Refugees from Ukraine During Russia's Invasion of Ukraine. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 62(1), 444–464. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-022-01729-9>
- Nott, D. (2020). The COVID-19 response for vulnerable people in places affected by conflict and humanitarian crises. *The Lancet*, 395(10236), 1532–1533. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)31036-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)31036-9)
- Ociepa-Kicińska, E., & Gorzałczyńska-Koczkodaj, M. (2022). Forms of Aid Provided to Refugees of the 2022 Russia–Ukraine War: The Case of Poland. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(12), 7085. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19127085>
- Olcese, M., Cardinali, P., Camilleri, A. P., & Migliorini, L. (2024). Feeling Community During War: Community Resilience of Ukrainian Women Refugees in Italy. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-024-01147-8>
- Orîndaru, A., Popescu, M.-F., Alexoaei, A. P., Căescu, Ștefan-C., Florescu, M. S., & Orzan, A.-O. (2021). Tourism in a Post-COVID-19 Era: Sustainable Strategies for Industry's Recovery. *Sustainability*, 13(12), 6781. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13126781>
- Ritchie, B. W., & Jiang, Y. (2021). Risk, crisis and disaster management in hospitality and tourism: A comparative review. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 33(10), 3465–3493. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-12-2020-1480>
- Rizzi, D., Ciuffo, G., Sandoli, G., Mangiagalli, M., De Angelis, P., Scavuzzo, G., Nych, M., Landoni, M., & Ionio, C. (2022). Running Away from the War in Ukraine: The Impact on Mental Health of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Refugees in Transit in Poland. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(24), 16439. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192416439>
- Roitman, J. (2014). *Anti-crisis [Anticrisis]*. Duke University Press.
- Sengupta, D., Verghese, A. K., & Rys, M. (2023). Motivations of Volunteering during Crises—Perspectives of Polish Youths during the Ukrainian Refugee Crisis. *Administrative Sciences*, 13(2), 53. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci13020053>
- Soulard, J., & Lundin, E. (2023). Docents as transformative educators of travelers. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 103, 103662. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2023.103662>
- Stepaniuk, N. (2022). Wartime Civilian Mobilization: Demographic Profile, Motivations, and Pathways to Volunteer Engagement Amidst the Donbas War in Ukraine. *Nationalities Papers*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2021.82>
- Trojaneck, R., & Gluszek, M. (2022). Short-run impact of the Ukrainian refugee crisis on the housing market in Poland. *Finance Research Letters*, 50, 103236. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.frl.2022.103236>
- Vorbrugg, A., & Bluwstein, J. (2022). Making sense of (the Russian war in) Ukraine: On the politics of knowledge and expertise. *Political Geography*, 98, 102700. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2022.102700>
- Walby, S. (2022). Crisis and society: Developing the theory of crisis in the context of COVID-19. *Global Discourse*, 12(3–4), 498–516. <https://doi.org/10.1332/204378921X16348228772103>
- Wen, J., Hu, F., Zheng, D., Phau, I., Kozak, M., Hou, H., & Wang, W. (2023). Solidarity tourism: A pathway to revitalising the health of vulnerable war-affected populations? *Journal of Global Health*, 13, 03050. <https://doi.org/10.7189/jogh.13.03050>
- Williams, N. L., Wassler, P., & Fedeli, G. (2023). Social Representations of War Tourism: A Case of Ukraine. *Journal of Travel Research*, 62(4), 926–932. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875221146797>
- Zajadacz, A., & Tobolska, A. (2020). Education quality management system in the field of studies “tourism and recreation” including ways of reacting in crisis situations. *Prace i Studia Geograficzne*, 65(4), 95–107.

Zavisca, J. R., Mitchneck, B., & Gerber, T. P. (2023). Housing and integration of internally displaced persons: The case of Ukraine in 2018. *Frontiers in Human Dynamics*, 5, 1086064. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fhumd.2023.1086064>

FINANCING

None

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest are declared.

AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION

Conceptualization: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Data curation: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Formal Analysis: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Funding acquisition: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Investigation: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Methodology: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Project administration: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Resources: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Software: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Supervision: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Validation: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Visualization: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Writing – original draft: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.
Writing – review & editing: Alina Zajadacz and Sergii Iaromenko.