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Polish humanitarian aid for ukraine under full-scale russian aggression

Abstract

Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine significantly affected the nature and dynamics of Ukraine's regional and global relations. Ukraine's collaboration with its neighbors entered a special phase, with relations between Ukraine and the Republic of Poland taking a prominent place in it. At the highest international level of strategic partnership, Poland supported Ukraine, strongly condemned Russian aggression, and joined the international community's anti-Russian political and economic sanctions. Ukrainian-Polish political, diplomatic, economic, financial and military-technical relations, as well as humanitarian cooperation, are highly important. This study is focused on Poland's humanitarian aid for Ukraine under Russia's open armed aggression. This assistance of the Polish state and society has become essential to Ukrainian war refugees and in overcoming the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. After 24th February 2022, Poland opened its borders to Ukrainians, who were forced to flee the war in Ukraine. In total, more than 6.7 million Ukrainian refugees left Ukraine, whereof more than 1.7 million found permanent shelter in Poland, along with material and medical assistance. The Polish government responded quickly and effectively to the humanitarian crisis and launched a system of refugee reception and accommodation. Polish public organizations, NGOs and bottom-up volunteer movements have played an important role in providing support for Ukrainian refugees. They have been key participants in arranging accommodation, transportation, care and integration of immigrants into Polish society. A large-scale campaign to collect funds and resources was among the most important initiatives of the Polish state and society in delivering humanitarian aid to Ukraine. Over more than three years of the full-scale war, Ukraine received, in total, more than PLN 100 billion worth of humanitarian, financial and military aid from Poland. This assistance is a vivid expression of Poles' solidarity with the Ukrainian people in the fight against Russian aggression.

Keywords

Ukraine, the Republic of Poland, Russo-Ukrainian war 2014–2025, large-scale armed aggression, humanitarian aid

Abstrakt

Atak Rosji na Ukrainę znacząco wpłynął na charakter i dynamikę relacji Ukrainy na poziomie regionalnym i globalnym. Współpraca Ukrainy z państwami sąsiednimi weszła w szczególną fazę, a wwwrelacje między Ukrainą a Rzecząpospolitą Polską zajmują w niej istotne miejsce. Na najwyższym międzynarodowym szczeblu partnerstwa strategicznego, Polska wsparła Ukrainę, stanowczo potępiła rosyjską agresję i przyłączyła się do sankcji politycznych i gospodarczych, którymi społeczność międzynarodowa obłożyła Rosję. Ukraińsko-polskie stosunki polityczne, dyplomatyczne, gospodarcze, finansowe i wojskowo-techniczne oraz kwestie współpracy humanitarnej mają ogromne znaczenie. Niniejszy artykuł skupia się na pomocy humanitarnej udzielanej przez Polskę Ukrainie w trakcie otwartej rosyjskiej agresji zbrojnej. Pomoc ze strony państwa i społeczeństwa polskiego stała się niezwykle istotna dla ukraińskich uchodźców i w przezwyciężeniu kryzysu humanitarnego na Ukrainie. Po 24 lutego 2022 roku Polska otworzyła swoje granice dla zmuszonych uciekać przed wojną Ukraińców. W sumie ponad 6,7 miliona ukraińskich uchodźców opuściło Ukrainę, z czego ponad 1,7 miliona uzyskało w Polsce stałe schronienie oraz pomoc materialną i medyczną. Polski rząd szybko zareagował na kryzys humanitarny i wdrożył system przyjmowania i zakwaterowania uchodźców. Ważną rolę w zapewnianiu schronienia ukraińskim uchodźcom odgrywają polskie organizacje społeczne i pozarządowe, a także oddolne ruchy wolontariackie, które zasadniczo przyczyniły się do organizowania zakwaterowania, transportu, opieki i integracji imigrantów z polskim społeczeństwem. Jedną z najważniejszych inicjatyw państwa i społeczeństwa polskiego w zakresie udzielania pomocy humanitarnej Ukrainie była zakrojona na szeroką skalę akcja pozyskiwania funduszy i środków. W ciągu trzech lat wojny na pełną skalę Ukraina otrzymała od Polski pomoc humanitarnej, finansowej i wojskowej o łącznej wartości przekraczającej 100 miliardów złotych. Pomoc ta jest wyrazem solidarności Polaków z narodem ukraińskim w walce z rosyjską agresją.

Słowa kluczowe Ukraina, Rzeczpospolita Polska, wojna rosyjsko-ukraińska 2014–2025, agresja zbrojna na dużą skalę, pomoc humanitarna

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Introduction

Relevance of the topic. Interplays between states always play an important role in the system of international interactions. Their importance considerably increases for the victim of aggression in wartime. The Russian hybrid aggression against Ukraine on 24th February 2022 was a full-scale war which significantly affected the dynamics and problem areas of Ukraine's regional and global relations. Its cooperation with the neighbor countries, which are considered first-order states in geopolitical terms, entered a special phase. Given this, thorough attention is needed to capture the current state of relations between Ukraine and Poland; the developmental dynamic of Ukrainian-Polish relations during Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine must be studied; and comparative analysis of other countries' assistance to Ukraine must be performed. Not only political-diplomatic, economic, financial and military-technical relations, but also issues of humanitarian cooperation occupy are relevant in this respect. During the full-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine, the international community's support became pivotal in overcoming the humanitarian crisis caused by the military conflict. In this context, the role of Poland, a neighbor state with deep historical and cultural ties with Ukraine, acquired particular importance as a result of the obvious need for humanitarian, economic and financial assistance. At the same time, a number of challenges arose regarding the organization and distribution of humanitarian aid in order to optimally meet the needs of the population. These complex issues include ensuring the reliable and safe transportation of aid across the border, considering the impact of humanitarian aid on the the political and social situation in Ukraine, and securing the Ukrainian population's economic and financial needs in the long-term perspective, that is, after the active conflict is over. Solving these problems requires a comprehensive approach and cooperation of states, organizations and public initiatives.

The purpose of research presented in this article is to offer a comprehensive account of the nature, volume and features of Poland's humanitarian assistance for Ukraine under Russia's armed aggression in 2022–2025. At the same time, attention is focused on the role that Polish state structures, public organizations, initiatives, volunteer movements, international associations and foundations active in Poland have played in providing such assistance.

A survey of recent research and publications indicates that solid historiographic effort has been devoted to Ukraine-Poland bilateral relations, including in the era of the large-scale Russo-Ukrainian war. The varied body of historiographic literature first of all includes research on the Ukrainian-Polish strategic partnership (V. Balyuk, M. Doroshko, M. Pietras, H. Perepelytsia, K. Jendraschyk and B. Surmach), the historically changing relations between Ukraine and the Republic of Poland (V. Buslenko, V. Komar, M. Lytvyn, Y. Makar, O. Sanzharevsky, N. Strilchuk, S. Troyan and I. Tsependa), the difficult past experiences and the commemorative discourses of neighbor countries and peoples (L. Adamsky, V. Viatrovych, Y. Hrytsak, B. Hud, L. Zashkilnyak, I. Ilyushyn, O. Kalischuk, A. Kyrydon, G. Motyka, I. Patrylyak, R. Stobetsky and Y. Shapoval). The Ukrainian-Polish cooperation, including the Republic of Poland's political, military and humanitarian assistance for Ukraine between 2014 and 2025, has also been studied by authors such as V. Baluk, M. Pietraś and G. Perepełycia (2024), M. Biryukova (2023), N. Boyko and V. Skokova (2022), V. Buslenko (2024), S. Zhelikhovsky and I. Tikhonenko (2023), A. Kyrydon and S. Troyan (2015, 2017, 2018, 2020), V. Tarasenko (2023) and L. Shpakovskyi (2017). At the same time, humanitarian aid from Poland and Polish society in the time of Russia's full-scale aggression calls for a comprehensive interdisciplinary study in the context of comprehensive analysis of and further research on the bilateral Ukrainian-Polish relations of strategic partnership.

The methodology of research is based on the principles of scientific rigor, historicism, systematicity, multifactoriality, objectivity and representativeness, relying on systemic and comparative approaches. In the research framework, the problem was studied using both analytic and synthesizing research methods, generalization and systematization, comparative and systemic analysis, with addition of specialized—historical, historical-comparative, statistical and source-analytical—approaches.

The main part

Changing the nature of the Russo-Ukrainian hybrid war, Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine caused turmoil in international processes and essentially affected the nature and dynamics of Ukraine's regional and global relations. Ukraine's cooperation with neighbor states became pivotal, and relations between Ukraine and the Republic of Poland took a prominent place in it. At the highest international level of strategic partnership, Poland supported Ukraine, strongly condemned Russian aggression and joined the political and economic

sanctions imposed on Russia by the international community. Under the large-scale war, Ukraine and Poland actively developed and strengthened most areas of cooperation. Ukraine-Poland political, diplomatic, economic, financial and military-technical relations, as well as humanitarian cooperation, are of particular relevance. The two countries have common interests in defending their territorial integrity and in supporting democracy and human rights. Strengthening their partnership aims to expand integration into European and Atlantic structures and to create a powerful front to defend their positions against Russia's increasing aggression. The shared historical experience of struggle against totalitarianism and aggression laid the foundation for modern ties between Poland and Ukraine. Mutual support, understanding and solidarity, resulting from common challenges and victories, define modern relations between these two countries and contribute to the further development of their collaboration in various areas, including cultural and humanitarian cooperation.

In the context Russia's full-scale aggression and the intensification of almost all areas of cooperation, Ukraine and Poland have shown a convergence of values and mutual support in key areas of security, protection of territorial integrity, democracy, human rights, cultural exchange and humanitarian aid. This consolidates their partnership and promoes mutually beneficial cooperation both under current conditions and in the strategic perspective.

Poland and Ukraine seek to integrate with the European community on the basis of shared European values. Both states are actively working to strengthen democratic institutions, protect human rights and sustain the rule of law. This goal unites them in their shared desire for stability, security and prosperity in the region. As scholars rightly point out, "cultural and humanitarian cooperation has a positive impact on intra-state relations in other areas: trade and economy, politics and security" (Shpakovskyi, 2017, 158). Poland became one of the most active supporters of the Ukrainian cause in the international arena, providing multifarious support and assistance. This solidarity is based on the acute realization that democratic values and the territorial integrity of a sovereign state must be defended. Mutual understanding and the shared desire for freedom, democracy and sovereignty are key components of solidarity.

The common values and solidarity of Poland and Ukraine are manifested not only at the political and economic levels, but also in the cultural, educational and humanitarian spheres. In the conditions of war, this was expressed particularly in assistance to the Ukrainians who left for the Republic of Poland, as well as in help for internally displaced Ukrainians since the beginning of Russia's hybrid aggression in 2014. As early as in November-December 2014, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized and financed a humanitarian convoy (150 tons of material aid for internally displaced people in eastern Ukraine). A convoy of 33 trucks arrived in Kharkiv on 19th December 2014. The convoy consisted of 20 vehicles from the Polish Center for International Aid, 8 vehicles from the Polish Red Cross and 5 vehicles from Caritas. In total, 5,000 families received assistance at that time (PCPM, 2024). Since then, joint projects and initiatives have been launched in the humanitarian sphere in order to support needy people and to promote intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding.

Russia's full-scale offensive on Ukraine and invasion or attempted invasion along the entire land and sea Russia-Ukraine border began on 24th February 2022. This came as a surprise to most of Ukrainian society and neighbor countries. The Russian invasion caused a vast wave of internal and external migrations of Ukrainians. Millions of Ukrainians left the country and went to neighbor states. The mass influx of refugees was a serious challenge to them, including to Poland and Poles. Decisions had to be made and enacted very quickly and effectively in the crisis situation. Under these difficult circimstances, the Polish state and Polish society successfully implemented organizational measures and provided Ukrainians with the necessary humanitarian assistance.

The legal basis for the Republic of Poland's delivery of humanitarian aid to Ukraine under Russia's full-scale aggression was provided by the Law on Assistance to Ukrainian Citizens in Connection with the Armed Conflict on the Territory of this State of 12th March 2022 (Stowarzyszenie Wspólnota Polska, 2022) and the Ukrainian-Polish Security Agreement signed on 8th July 2024 (Porozumienie o współpracy w dziedzinie bezpieczeństwa miedzy Rzecząpospolitą Polską a Ukrainą, 2024). In particular, the Law of 12th March 2022 defines "separate rules for the legalization of the stay of citizens of Ukraine who arrived in the territory of the Republic of Poland from the territory of Ukraine in connection with the hostilities taking place in the territory of this country, and citizens of Ukraine holding a Pole's Card, who arrived in the territory of the Republic of Poland with their closest family in connection with these hostilities. The law also applies to Ukrainian citizens' spouses who do not have Ukrainian citizenship, provided that they arrived in the territory of the Republic of Poland from the territory of Ukraine in connection

with military operations in the territory of this country and are not Polish citizens or citizens of an EU Member State other than the Republic of Polan" (Stowarzyszenie Wspólnota Polska, 2022).

As a result, Ukrainians in Poland and displaced Ukrainian citizens in Ukraine obtained three main kinds of humanitarian assistance from the Polish authorities and civil society: asylum, material assistance and medical assistance. Poland's humanitarian assistance to Ukraine during Russia's full-scale aggression was perhaps most prominently showcased by the provision of shelter and financial help to millions of Ukrainian refugees. After February 24, 2022, Poland opened its borders to Ukrainians who had to flee the war. In total, more than 6.7 million Ukrainian refugees left Ukraine, whereof more than 1.7 million found permanent shelter in Poland early on (91% of them were women and children) (Polska Agencja Prasowa, 2024). At the beginning of 2025, that is, three years after the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the number stood at more than 998,000 (Prezydent.pl, 2025). Polish government responded quite quickly to the humanitarian crisis caused of Russian aggression and put in a system of refugee reception and accommodation. Poland used various facilities as permantent and temporary dwellings for Ukrainian citizens, including shelters, camps, hostels and private homes of Polish citizens. This wide network of facilities made it possible to provide Ukrainian refugees not only with a place to live, but also with the necessary humanitarian and social services. In all voivodeships, reception centers were arranged, where people from Ukraine who had crossed the border were offered assistance. The centers provided food, places to rest, basic medical care and information on the rules of stay and legalization in Poland, as well as on the available forms of assistance. Twelve such points were still in operation as of the end of January 2025, supplying services to a total of more than 1.57 million people. Temporary collective accommodation was also arranged, where meals were provided as well; this solution was used by 574,000 Ukrainian citizens (as of 2025). Polish government co-funded the accommodation and meals for the Ukrainian refugees and by 30th June 2024, over 2 million Ukrainian citizens had used this program (Prezydent.pl, 2025).

Of all the countries providing support for Ukraine, Poland spent the largest proportion of its GDP on assistance for the warring Ukraine and aid for Ukrainian refugees. Poland's allocated aid stood at to 4.91% of GDP, with 0.71% of GDP being spent on supporting Ukraine, and 4.2% of GDP on assisting Ukrainian refugees (Prezydent.pl, 2025). According to Eurostat, there were 27 Ukrainian refugees per 1,000 inhabitants of Poland in December 2024. Similar statistics confirm that Poland took in the largest number of Ukrainians (relative to the number of population), as did the Baltic countries and other Visegrad states (Eurostat, 2025).

According to *International Migration Outlook 2022* published by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the volume of Polish humanitarian aid for Ukraine in 2022 alone amounted to almost EUR 8.5 billion (more than 1.0 % of GDP). This put Poland in the first place among the twenty-seven European donor countries assisting Ukraine. Poland was followed by Germany (EUR 6.8 billion), the Czech Republic (EUR 1.96 billion), Spain (EUR 1.36 billion) and Romania (EUR 1 billion). The total amount of Polish humanitarian aid for Ukraine comprised, among other things, EUR 6.2 billion for accommodation and direct financial assistance, EUR 1.5 billion for education and EUR 664 million for healthcare. The average cost of aid per capita in Poland was EUR 5,225 (Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych, 2022). The support included, in particular, a one-time cash benefit of PLN 300 per person, a refund of PLN 40 per day for hosting a Ukrainian citizen payable to the Polish host, family benefits, special guardianship benefits and family allowances, such as a monthly payment of PLN 500 for each child under 18 years of age (Pietraś, Baluk, & Perepełycia, 2024, 123–124). However, the total figure of Polish humanitarian aid of EUR 8.36 billion is more likely to correspond to the three years of Russia's full-scale aggression (2022 – 2025) rather than to the year 2022 alone. This is evidenced, in particular, by the statistical indicators of the Kiel Institute of World Economy (which been analyzing international aid for Ukraine in-depth since the beginning of the war) and the Polish Economic Institute; as of 24th February 2025, aid for the refugees from Ukraine amounted to PLN 15 billion in 2022, PLN 5 billion in 2023, and slightly less than that in 2024. According to these statistics, the payments of PLN 800 for underage children were used by 209,000 out of 400,000 Ukrainian children. Expenditures on medical care also decreased as the number of Ukrainians who used medical help in Poland dropped from 802,000 in 2023 to 525,000 in 2024 (FilaryBiznesu, 2025; Halimonyk, 2025).

Polish government, civil society organizations and volunteers have actively provided not only material ais but also psychological and medical assistance to the Ukrainian refu-

gees affected by the military actions. Poland's quick and open response to the humanitarian crisis bespeaks its willingness to help its neighbor in difficult times. As of 2025, Poland opened its institutions and reception systems to more than 998 million Ukrainian refugees, most of whom are women and children (46% are children, 45% are women aged 18–65, about 5% are men of working age and 4% are post-working age) (Pietraś, Baluk, & Perepełycia, 2024, 123). These statistics corroborate the empirical conclusion of Ukrainian sociologist: "gender analysis of social practices has shown that today Ukraine is dismantling the common ideas of the gender division of social roles based on deep-seated stereotypes. A new social reality is being formed. Ukrainian refugee women and internally displaced women take responsibility for their fate and the fate of their children and act as agents of social life under new conditions" (Biryukova, 2023, 355).

The Ukrainian refugees obtained access to food, medical care, psychological support and financial assistance. According to the Polish Red Cross, a total of 1.8 million Ukrainian citizens who at various times found protection from the war in Poland received humanitarian assistance. They were 118,200 children and young people, 42,400 people with disabilities, 96,500 pensioners aged 60 and older, 94,500 single women or men raising children, 24,200 people with serious or terminal diseases and almost 185,000 destitute individuals (TVN24, 2024).

Regardless of state-provided support, a vast majority of the Polish population, specifically, 77 % of Poles and 53 % of Polish companies (according to a study by the Polish Economic Institute [PEI]) joined in helping refugees from Ukraine. Their help ranged from financial and material support, to various volunteer activities, to offering their own houses and apartments to those in need. In particular, 7% of Poles took refugees under their own roof. According to PEI, in the first months after the start of the war, personal donations by Poles to help refugees amounted to a total of almost PLN 10 billion (Kompendium polskiej pomocy dla Ukrainy, 2023, 8, 91; Baszczak et al., 2022, 13–14).

Polish public organizations play an important role in providing shelter to Ukrainian refugees, organizing accommodation, care and integration of immigrants into Polish society. organizations and volunteer movements. Polish volunteers and public organizations coordinate the assistance process, organize the transportation of refugees to the places of accommodation and provide them with the necessary services. The Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH), Caritas Poland, the Polish Red Cross and the Ludwika and Henryk Wujec Civic Foundation/Foundation for Poland are leading charitable organizations that played an important role in supporting Ukraine during the Russo-Ukrainian war. The PAH has already provided assistance to more than 600,000 people in Ukraine, Caritas has collected more than PLN 18 million, and 1.8 million Ukrainians have obtained various forms of help from the Polish Red Cross (over PLN 304 million) (TVN24, 2024). The Ludwika and Henryk Wujec Civic Foundation/Foundation for Poland has donated more than PLN 304,000 to volunteer and public organizations helping refugees. Currently, it co-funds 300 public initiatives worth PLN 4 million: activities for refugees and migrants, including Roma refugees from Ukraine and the Ukrainian minority in Poland (Fundusz Obywatelski 2025).

As Poland's major charities, the PAH and Caritas Poland quickly mobilized their resources and experience to respond to the humanitarian crisis caused by the large-scale phase of the Russo-Ukrainian war. They jointly opened numerous aid centers throughout Poland, where Ukrainian refugees were given the necessary support. The organizations also collected funds and humanitarian goods for the affected Ukrainians, organized fundraising campaigns (substantial amounts were collected for the purchase of essential goods and services for Ukrainian refugees) and coordinated the delivery of humanitarian aid to where it was most needed. First of all, it was needed by about 3 million Ukrainians along the front line in eastern Ukraine (Polska Akcja Humanitarna, 2024). Most of them were sick and lonely elderly people who did not want to or could not leave their homes. Children and adults who suffered from bombings, artillery shelling and drone strikes or were hurt by mines also needed special support. In general, according to the Polish Humanitarian Action, humanitarian aid needed to be delivered to almost 15 million Ukrainians, who suffered losses and injuries or were forced to leave their homes as a result of the war (TVN24, 2024). This means that help was delivered to both internally displaced persons and Ukrainians who had left the country.

The Dobra Fabryka Foundation and its pursuits exemplify assistance within the framework of Polish public initiatives and organizations. This was one of the first non-governmental organizations to cross the Ukraine-Poland border after 24th February 2024 in order to deliver humanitarian assistance to Ukrainians. Its transports of food, clothing, and medicines repeatedly went to Kyiv, Mykolaiv, Rivne, Chernivtsi, Lviv, Lutsk, and Slavutych. In total, 70,000 Ukrainians who had stayed in the country received various types of humanitarian assis-

tance through the activities of the Dobra Fabryka Foundation (Dobra Fabryka, 2025).

The Stand with Ukraine Foundation, a Polish NGO, provides humanitarian assistance to various affected regions of Ukraine. It was through this organization that food and water, detergents and personal hygiene products, winter clothing and footwear, tactical first-aid kits, medicines and dressings, specialized equipment (electricity generators and Starlink satellite systems) and other needed items were donated and transferred to Ukraine. The foundation organized one of the largest humanitarian operations after the destruction of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power station dam by the Russian occupiers in early June 2023. In the first days after this environmental disaster, members of the organization collected several dozen tons of goods from individual donors in Warsaw. It did not take long until three trucks delivered more than 60 tons of humanitarian aid (including essential goods, such as food, clothing, and hygiene products) to inhabitants of the Kherson region affected by the disaster (Stand with Ukraine Foundation, 2025).

Poland also became a key transit corridor for humanitarian aid from other countries to Ukraine. This role was facilitated by the simplified broder-crossing procedure for vehicles transporting humanitarian aid to Ukraine (Kancelaria Prezesa Rady Ministrów, 2024), approved by the Council of Ministers of Poland. During the first two years of the war, 11,000 tons of food products worth PLN 205 million and medicines worth PLN 60 million were delivered to Ukrainians through Polish institutions, primarily through the Government Agency for Strategic Reserves, which manages the humanitarian aid hub for Ukraine. In this period, 70,000 cubic meters of fuel and 4,000 housing containers were delivered to Ukraine. Goods from all over the world worth over PLN 1.5 billion, 75,000 pallets, and over 55,000 tons of cargo passed through the transshipment hub. The aid was transported by 9,000 trucks and by several hundred trains with more than 10,000 freight cars and containers. The agency also handled donations for Ukraine from fifty-eight countries around the world (Prezydent.pl, 2025).

Polish public organizations, NGOs and volunteer movements were highly mobilized and effective in raising funds to help the victims of the war in Ukraine, boh the Ukrainian refugees in Poland and the internally displaced people. These funds substantially helped purchase the necessary goods and services for Ukrainian immigrants. This considerable contribution demonstrates not only the high level of support for the Ukrainian people in Polish society, but also the strength and potential of public initiatives in solving humanitarian crises. Public institutions, NGOs and volunteers exhibited solidarity and readiness to help those facing dire adversities. Thanks to thes donations and volunteers' efforts, additional resources and support could be offered to Ukrainians in need. Volunteers established additional assistance centers for Ukrainian refugees to provide food, medical care, psychological assistance and social support. Volunteers also have also been helping satisfy the refugees' material needs and organizing educational and cultural events to integrate them into their new environment. The activities of volunteers and public organizations have been important in the joint support for and assistance to Ukrainian immigrants, improving their lives and facilitating their adaptation in the new settings.

In order to coordinate efforts for securing shelter and humanitarian aid for Ukrainian refugees, Poland has competently cooperated with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and a range of international humanitarian organizations. Such cooperation produces an efficient mechanism for distributing resources and providing comprehensive support to displaced people in need of protection and assistance, makes it possible to coordinate responses to urgent humanitarian needs and in this way bolsters effective action to overcome the difficulties faced by displaced refugees. Cooperation with international partners enables Poland to ensure wider access to resources, expertise and experience, which increases the efficacy of humanitarian assistance. This joint work is an important element in addressing global challenges involved in mass displacement and the protection of human rights.

Poland plays a prominent role in the delivery of medical assistance to Ukraine. This support includes both the treatment of the wounded Ukrainians in Polish hospitals, the admission of Ukrainians with disabilities to rehabilitation centers in Poland, the work of Polish medical teams in Ukraine and the provision of the necessary mediacl resources. Experience sharing and cooperation between medical professionals from the two countries is an expression of humanism and solidarity, boosts the effectiveness of the assistance provided and materially contributes to saving the lives of those wounded and maimed under Russia's aggression. A few months after the the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, Poland was ready to receive wounded Ukrainian servicemen. This was made possible by ameding the Law on Nursing and Midwifery Professions and some other laws, authorized by the President of the Republic of Poland. Medical assistance was provided to Ukrainian citizens and people who did not have Ukrainian citizenship but fought on the

Ukrainian side in the war. In total, about 300 wounded Ukrainian servicemen and victims of the war in Ukraine arrived in Poland. Concomitantly, Polish hospitals extended full medical care to Ukrainian civilians.

From February 2022 to the end of September 2024, patients from Ukraine used medical services financed from state funds, with 1.1 million people using primary health care institutions, 514,000 using outpatient specialized care, 457,000 being admitted to hospitals, 21,000 people receiving psychiatric care (inpatient and outpatient) and 77,000 children being vaccinated. In total, 1.3 million Ukrainian refugees used state-funded medical services in Poland. The overall cost of these interventions was PLN 4.3 billion (Prezydent.pl, 2025). Clearly, edical assistance to Ukraine accounts for a significant portion of Poland's humanitarian efforts, showcasing solidarity and dedication to saving as many lives as possible under Russia's continuing aggression. This support strengthens the two countries' partnership and contributes to the preservation of Ukraine's human potential.

At the same time, it should be noted that Ukrainians, who found themselves in Poland as a result of Russia's full-scale aggression, have largely adapted to the new situation and are already contributing to Poland's economic and social development. For example, 78% of adult Ukrainians in Poland had jobs as of the beginning of 2025. Ukrainian labor migrants and people with temporary protection status make up 5% of the total working population in Poland. According to a report by the National Development Bank of Poland, Ukrainian forced migrants contributed PLN 15.21 billion to the National Health Fund and the Social Insurance Fund in 2024. This amount significantly exceeds the expenses incurred by the Polish state for the social support for children and medical care for Ukrainians with temporary protection status (FilaryBiznesu, 2025). In addition, according to the Polish Economic Institute, about 59,800 businesses were founded by Ukrainians in Poland from January 2022 to June 2024. In 2024, every eighth new entrepreneur in Poland was of Ukrainian origin. Ukrainians drive the production sector, open beauty salons, start restaurants and establish IT companies. Ukrainian businesses mainly operate in the sectors of construction (23% of the Ukrainian businesses in Poland), information and communications (19%) and other services (12%) (Halymonyk, 2025). Ukrainian migration also contributes to the growth of Polish GDP. According to the data the National Development Bank, the relevant figures of an annual growth of Polish GDP stand at 0.5–2.4 %. The former Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and long-time Chairman of the National Bank of Poland Leszek Balcerowicz noted: "If it weren't for refugees, Poland's gross domestic product would be 7 percent lower" (Halymonyk, 2025).

In general, the current humanitarian assistance provided to Ukraine and Ukrainian war refugees by the Polish state and civil society speaks to remarkable solidarity and commitment to the principles of friendship, partnership and respect for human life as the highest value. Having offered extensive support to Ukrainians in an extremely difficult and complex time, Poland receives positive returns both in the economy and in other spheres of public and social life, which creates favorable prospects for further multifaceted cooperation between the two states and peoples.

Conclusion

Poland has become a reliable and important ally of Ukraine in the period of counteraction to Russia's full-scale aggression. The Polish state and society have provided Ukraine with enormous military-technical, financial and social assistance. The Russian invasion of Ukraine caused a devastating humanitarian catastrophe, putting millions of Ukrainians in direct danger and forcing them to leave their homes. At that critical moment for Ukraine, the Republic of Poland became one of the largest donors of humanitarian aid and a dependable partner in overcoming the consequences of the war. Humanitarian initiatives of Polish society, in particular of volunteer movements, charitable organizations and large-scale fundraising campaigns, have been vital. Thanks to the solidarity of Poles, hundreds of millions of zlotys and a huge number of essential goods were collected in support of Ukraine. In total, over three years of the full-scale war, Ukraine received more than PLN 100 billion's worth of humanitarian, financial and military aid from Poland. Poland's extensive material assistance helped save hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians, provided medical treatment for the wounded and supported the functioning of Ukraine's critical infrastructure in wartime. While contributing to overcoming the humanitarian crisis and stabilizing Ukraine's economic and financial situation, these efforts also strengthened the ties between the two peoples. Poland's humanitarian aid is of extreme importace to Ukraine today; it is an expression of Poles' solidarity with the Ukrainian people in the fight against Russia's aggression. Hopefully, such humanitarian initiatives will bolster Ukrainian-Polish ties and help mitigate the consequences of the war.

At the same time, as a result of providing significant support to

Ukrainians in difficult times, Poland can enjoy today the resultant advantages to its economy and public life. This is a promising habringer of a multilayered collaboration of the two states in the future.

Ukraine-Poland relations are evolving, and their form and quality depend on multiple factors, including cultural and humanitarian ones. Their shared security and integration interests, as well as the historical heritage and modern European culture of mutual understanding and dialogue, can lay the foundation for a strong strategic partnership and cooperation in years to come. alleviating the humanitarian consequences of the conflict, but also enhanced solidarity between the peoples of both countries. Domestic political aspects of cooperation imply that the parties are ready to constructively approach common tasks, relying on the further active development of their multifaceted, strategic partnership relations.

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