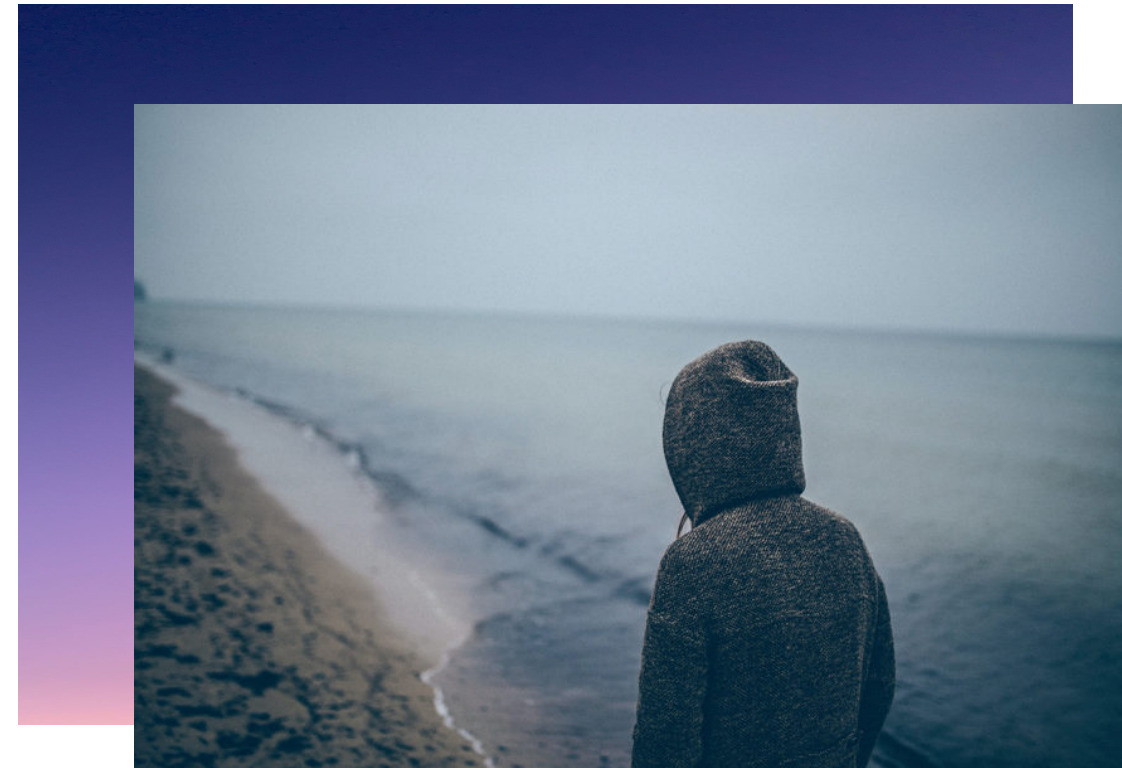



Solo Living outside Home: Case of Ukrainian Migrants





More than 7 million Ukrainians have left Ukraine (UNHCR,2022). In such a large flow of forced migrants, the category of people who fled the country without families and relatives - alone, may fall out of sight.



The relevance:

1. **Economic and Political.** This category of the population is most often represented by youth or young adults. That is, this is the most economically active category of the population. Researchers suggest that people who live solo tend to consume more. On the other hand, these are young specialists, students, graduate students, and all those who can potentially restore the economy of post-war Ukraine or develop the economy of the host country.
2. **Social and psychological.** We can consider this category of the population as one of the vulnerable categories of migrants since in a foreign country they do not have any moral and emotional support in its tangible form.
3. Also, solo-migrants is the most **mobile and independent** category of forced migrants.



The relevance:

In addition to the increased level of responsibility, risks and uncertainty, this category of people also faces several problems:

- loneliness;
- lack of self-sufficiency;
- communication problems;
- isolation;
- labor maladaptation. At the same time, labor activity is the only possible way to live for those who turned out to be solo migrants;
- new conflicts for which there are no solution models (ignorance of laws, customs, etc.);
- complete lack of ideas about the future, even the near future.



Method

Selection process and Sampling:

the snowball and convenience sampling method

Data Collection:

semi-structured interviews

Participants:

- 14 out of 16 respondents did not have a permanent partner at the time of acquiring migrant status;
- the age of respondents ranged from 18 to 48 years old, average age: 31 years old;
- 15 out of 16 have a higher education, 1 out of 16 is a student of a higher educational institution;
- 15 out of 16 respondents are women.

The study covered refugees from 10 countries: Spain, Great Britain, Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Czech Republic, Germany, Finland, Canada, Israel.



The most common reason - the inability to continue working in Ukraine, the lack of physical ability to live at home, the **need for economic support** for the family - parents and older generation of relatives.

The issue of safety worried people who went abroad alone no less, but in the process of describing the adoption of this decision, it appeared less. Since in most cases the respondents were solely responsible only for their lives and for their safety.





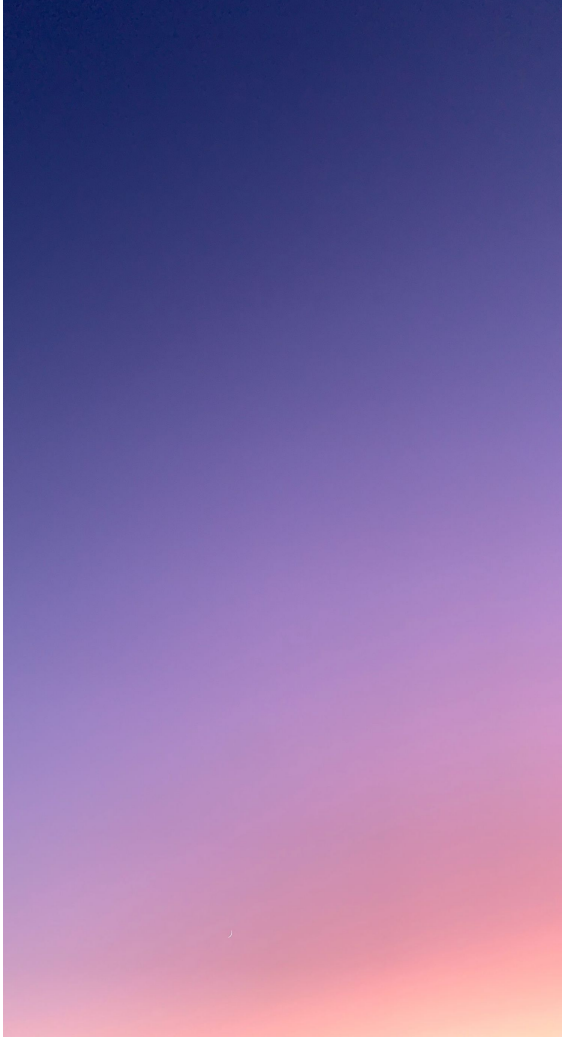
"I didn't want to"



Adaptation / difficulties

- All respondents say that the first months of adaptation were very difficult, the most common reasons were: different mentality; lack of support "on the spot", that is, the physical presence of loved ones; uncertainty in terms of employment; awareness of responsibility for their future.
- Reflecting on what was more difficult for them than for those people who traveled with their families, and what was easier, in both cases they indicated the concept of responsibility. On the one hand, it is easier for solo migrants in that they are not responsible for anyone but themselves.
- The respondents pointed out that the awareness of full responsibility for each of their actions and the need to make decisions solely on their own complicated the process of their adaptation to new conditions and was a heavy moral and emotional burden. The participants in the study pointed out that family-people have someone to consult with and they can share responsibility for decisions regarding the future with someone.





*"And it seems to me that they ("family-migrants") are simply feeling better in the sense that they can provide some kind of support to each other. And it's like an **element of normality**. Something from your **past life, as it were, came with you**".*

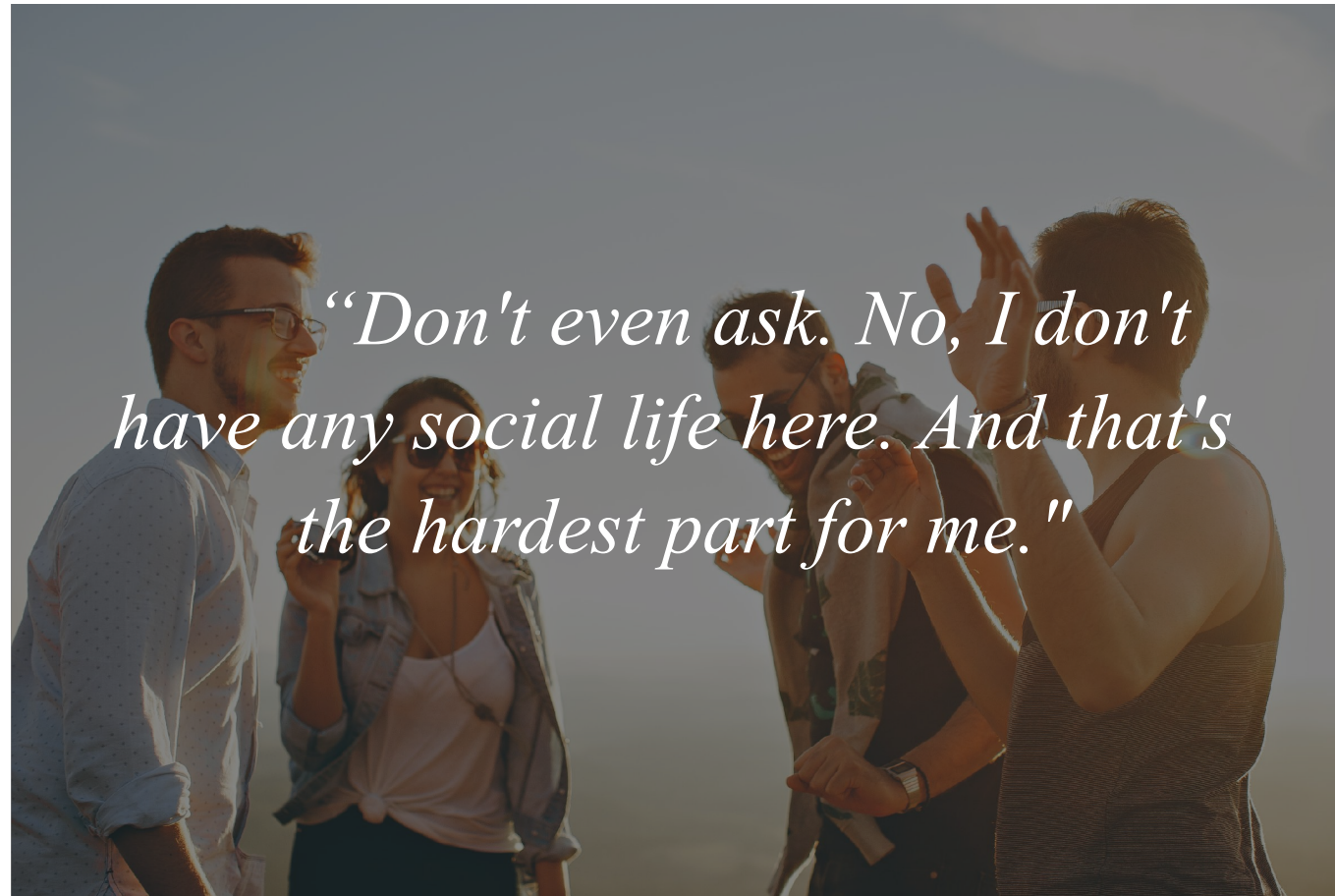


Career

It should be noted that most respondents worked remotely in Ukraine, however, the cases of those who were forced to look for a new job indicate that it was not so difficult in the status of a solo migrants if they knew the language and had a higher education. Lack of knowledge of the language of the host country significantly affects the job search, however, by the presence of English, job options can also be found




Social environment



Many respondents report a quantitative narrowing of communication, including online. The respondents themselves explain this by several reasons, the main of which is that everyone has their own affairs and problems now, therefore, there is simply not enough time to communicate with those who are far away.



Romantic relationship



Respondents said that they had no desire to find and start new relationships now. They explain, first for themselves, this lack of desire for search in several ways:



1. lack of resources to find a partner (both emotional and time):

“maybe there is simply no stability in life, then, accordingly, you don’t want anything that you will spend emotions on. Well, for now, I’m fine on my own.”

2. lack of desire to find a partner in the host country:

“I don’t consider finding a roommate, husband, partner here as an option... Because I don’t consider the option to stay here”


3. presence of plans for the near future, the implementation of which may be hindered by new relationships:

*“No, well, just because I don’t know my plans and I understand that my privat space is very important for me so that I **make decisions** by myself”*

4. convenience of a solo status:

“I don’t know, it just somehow tried to take shape, it somehow didn’t work out and I’m like that ... do I need it? probably no longer needed”

Loneliness



“It was difficult to accept that some people who were close to me for a long time,- they gradually left my life. Well, that's how it happened without scandals, just left.”



More than half of the respondents report their intention to return to Ukraine after the war or soon, and they associate the feeling of loneliness with the fear that loved ones will “forget”:

*“You understand that it’s still temporary, it’s not forever. And you will return after some time anyway. **Whether they will remember you after this time is also incomprehensible.**”*

two main groups:

Those who made a
decision to stay

Those who are going
to go back home
asap



What`s next?
What can we do?



THANK YOU!