

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2024.81.09.10>

How to Cite:

Yefimova, A. (2024). Adaptation of Ukrainians to forced migration: a study of psychosocial models and factors. *Amazonia Investiga*, 13(81), 130-141. <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2024.81.09.10>

## Adaptation of Ukrainians to forced migration: a study of psychosocial models and factors

### АДАПТАЦІЯ УКРАЇНЦІВ ДО ВИМУШЕНОЇ МІГРАЦІЇ: ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ПСИХОСОЦІАЛЬНИХ МОДЕЛЕЙ ТА ФАКТОРІВ

Received: July 18, 2024

Accepted: September 23, 2024

Written by:  
Yefimova Anna<sup>1</sup><https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9821-7993>

#### Abstract

The issue of adaptation to migration is particularly relevant due to the large number of Ukrainians who have been temporarily or permanently displaced since the outbreak of war in Ukraine. This article analyzes empirical results to identify the peculiarities of social and psychological adaptation of Ukrainians to forced migration. Two models of socio-psychological adaptation are identified: a passive model for those forced to migrate due to the war, and an active model for those who migrated consciously. The study finds that the process of socio-psychological adaptation of forced Ukrainian migrants is based on the conflict between the desire to integrate into a new socio-cultural environment and the desire to return to their homeland, resulting in a pronounced affective component. This passive adaptation relies on external control and resources. In contrast, the active model of adaptation of voluntary migrants reveals internal psychological resilience and a focus on self-realization and integration. The article concludes by highlighting the need for psychological interventions aimed at developing subjectivity and problem-solving strategies to optimize the adaptation process for forced Ukrainian migrants.

**Keywords:** adaptability, social and psychological adaptation, migration, forced migration, psychological well-being.

#### Анотація

Питання адаптації до міграції є особливо актуальним у зв'язку з великою кількістю українців, які мігрували тимчасово або постійно через початок війни в Україні. У статті аналізуються емпіричні результати щодо виявлення особливостей соціально-психологічної адаптації українців до вимушеної міграції. Визначено дві моделі соціально-психологічної адаптації: пасивну модель для тих, хто вимушено мігрував через війну, і активну модель для тих, хто мігрував свідомо. У дослідженні встановлено, що в основі процесу соціально-психологічної адаптації вимушених українських мігрантів лежить конфлікт між бажанням інтегруватися в нове соціокультурне середовище та прагненням повернутися на батьківщину, внаслідок чого виражений афективний компонент соціально-психологічної адаптації. Ця пасивна адаптація спирається на зовнішній контроль і ресурси. Навпаки, активна модель адаптації добровільних мігрантів виявляє внутрішню психологічну стійкість і спрямованість на самореалізацію та інтеграцію. На завершення статті наголошується на необхідності психологічного втручання, спрямованого на розвиток суб'єктивності та стратегії вирішення проблем для оптимізації процесу адаптації вимушених українських мігрантів.

**Ключові слова:** адаптивність, соціально-психологічна адаптація, міграція, вимушена міграція, психологічне благополуччя.

<sup>1</sup> Graduate student of the Department of Psychology and personal development of the University of Educational Management of the Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine (NAES), Kyiv, Ukraine. WoS Researcher ID: LCE-5501-2024



## Introduction

Due to the outbreak of war in Ukraine in February 2022, a large number of Ukrainians, including women with children, were forced to migrate to other countries. Among European countries, Poland has received the largest flow of Ukrainian forced migrants - about 3.5 million - and other neighboring countries (Romania, Hungary, Moldova, Slovakia, etc.) have received about 2.3 million.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as of 15.07.2024, 6.5 million Ukrainian refugees were registered across Europe. There are another 558.3 thousand migrants outside Europe (UNHCR, 2024).

Countries are very active in helping Ukrainians integrate into their social and psychological environment: they provide material and physical assistance, help with housing, language learning, and job search, and even have programs to help Ukrainians overcome the trauma of war and migrant trauma.

However, it should be noted that the aspect of external support is only one aspect of the problem of adaptation of forced migrants. Another aspect is internal: motivational, value, affective, and cognitive phenomena that determine the process of social and psychological adaptation of forced migrants in a different socio-cultural system. Our study is dedicated to identifying the psychological mechanisms that ensure this process in a sample of Ukrainians.

The article begins with a literature review that highlights the main theoretical aspects of migration psychology and gaps in socio-psychological models of migrant adaptation. It then discusses the methodology of the empirical study of the psychosocial adaptation of Ukrainians to forced migration, and in the next section the results of this study are presented. Potential limitations of the research methodology are also identified. The paper also discusses the controversies and debates in the field, including methodological issues and the balance between theoretical and empirical evidence. The article concludes with a summary of key findings, practical implications, and suggestions for future research in migration psychology.

## Literature Review

The main focus of psychological research on the socio-psychological adaptation of migrants is aimed at analyzing and studying the mechanisms of socio-psychological adaptation, the process of acculturation is actively studied (Afanasyeva, et al., 2021; Oberg, 1960; Triandis, 2000), the social and psychological problems of migrants, their mental health (Zandt, 2023; Javanbakht, 2022; Martsyniak-Dorosh, 2022, etc.), factors and causes of migration (Berry, 1997; 2015), psychological problems of ethnic interaction and the impact of intercultural differences on psychosocial adaptation (Berry, 1997; 2015; Cohen, 2011; Ho & Chiang, 2015; Zhylin et al, 2023; etc.) are investigated.

Having analyzed numerous definitions of the concept of migration, we believe that migration is a multi-stage, time-deployed process that contains many psychological aspects that are different at each stage - a migrant constantly has to solve problems and respond to new psychological challenges.

In addition, any migration is accompanied by the transformation of the entire system of social and psychological relations, including interpersonal, family, parental, and labor relations, and leads to a significant strain on psychological defense mechanisms (Slyusarevskyi & Blynova, 2013), and psychological readiness for migration or migration readiness is of great importance). But in the current circumstances, Ukrainian migration is spontaneous and forced, which affects its quality and content. Therefore, the root of the main socio-psychological deviations in the process of adaptation of Ukrainians who have been forced to migrate is psychological unpreparedness, as well as physical and material unpreparedness. In addition, when studying the peculiarities of socio-psychological adaptation to forced migration, it is also necessary to take into account the shock and collective trauma that Ukrainians receive because of the war.

In general, forced migration is a source of high stress at all levels, both social and psychological (Blynova, 2010). This is due to a sharp change in the usual way of life, which leads to a high level of anxiety affecting identity, self-concept, mental organization, value system, and self-esteem. It is in these social and

psychological conditions that the process of social and psychological adaptation of Ukrainians to forced migration takes place.

It is also necessary to give meaning to the phenomenon of socio-psychological adaptation, since it is the object of our study. Based on the analysis of scientific sources, we conclude that socio-psychological adaptation is the process of establishing the optimal correspondence between the subject and the environment in the course of carrying out activities inherent in a person and allows him or her to meet current needs and realize life goals that ensure the compliance of activities and behavior with the requirements of the environment (Blynova, 2016).

Researchers call the internal criterion of effective adaptation of migrants a sense of satisfaction and fullness of life, and the external criterion is the inclusion of an individual in the social and cultural life of the new group (Slyusarevskyi & Blynova, 2013). We believe that the general name for the first one is psychological well-being, which includes high adaptation, autonomy, satisfaction with relationships, etc., and the second is the integration of a migrant into the social and psychological field of the host country.

It is important to take into account that the social and psychological adaptation of either voluntary or forced migrants is accompanied by the experience of culture shock and a number of migrant traumas (Oberg, 1960; Triandis, 2000; El-Awad et al, 2017; Bilan, 2017). Other specific problems arise: research confirms that Ukrainian migrants are characterized by signs of PTSD and anxiety disorders, acute loss of loved ones, and general disorientation (Javanbakht, 2022; Martsyniak-Dorosh, 2022). These are the so-called war traumas that forced migrants have received and continue to receive for the third year in a row. After all, leaving the war zone does not mean returning to peaceful life. Ukrainians continue to experience war even in migration. And this fact also affects the entire process of their adaptation to migration.

If we consider the process of social and psychological adaptation of migrants from the point of view of social psychology, it should be noted that this process is not straightforward, but rather heterochronic, and its course depends on many subjective and objective factors, among which there are two main groups: external (environmental features) and internal (personal qualities, properties, processes). Sensitive and critical periods can be traced in its dynamics. The first ones are associated with the equilibrium state in the relationship between the subjects - the migrant and the socio-psychological space in which he/she is located. Critical periods involve transformations in the socio-psychological environment, which leads to disorganization of the intrasubjective socio-psychological space, and therefore causes a state of maladjustment.

Despite the numerous theoretical and empirical studies on this issue, the question of how Ukrainians are adapting to forced migration, which emerged before the international psychological community more than two years ago, remains relevant. A fundamental range of problems is still unresolved—specifically, the characteristics of the socio-psychological adaptation of forced migrants who are affected by the trauma of war, along with all the psychological phenomena and factors related to it, which influence their adaptation. Additionally, the issue of optimizing the process of socio-psychological adaptation and the methods of psychological intervention aimed at its success is still not well-researched.

Therefore, we have conducted an empirical study of the peculiarities of social and psychological adaptation of Ukrainians to forced migration and the purpose of this article is to present the results of this study.

## Methodology

### *Participants*

The study involved 419 respondents - Ukrainians who are currently in migration in different countries of the world. The geography of migration of the Ukrainians we surveyed includes the Czech Republic, Germany, Bulgaria, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Italy, France, Slovenia, the United States, Israel, Holland, and Austria. Also, a small part of the sample (7%) is made up of internal migrants.

We have identified two samples of the study to identify the peculiarities of forced migration of Ukrainians, as opposed to voluntary migration. The first sample of participants in our experiment consisted of adult Ukrainians, mostly women, who have been in forced migration since the beginning of the war in Ukraine,

i.e. up to two years ( $n=248$ ). The second sample consisted of Ukrainian voluntary migrants who have been in migration for 3 to 5 years ( $n=171$ ).

The age of Ukrainians participating in the survey covers the main age categories: under 30 (12.4%), 30 to 40 (29.2%), 40 to 50 (33.7%), and 50 years and older (29.2%).

The social status of the sample varies: 56.2% of respondents are employed, 12.4% are unemployed, 9% are entrepreneurs, 9% are housewives, and 12.4% are students. This distribution of the sample will allow us to identify factors and interrelationships of intrapersonal qualities and phenomena related to social and psychological adaptation to forced migration during the war.

### *Ethical considerations*

The survey was conducted using a Google form. Participation was voluntary. To ensure the confidentiality of the results and to identify the respondents, only their email addresses were used, without any other personal data. The pilot questionnaire included data on gender, age, social status, period and country of migration, as well as consent to use the results for scientific purposes. The Google form also included questions from psychological questionnaires, which are described below. There were no potential risks for the study participants, as the Google form allows the survey results to be processed and used exclusively by the research team without being shared online, as the participants were informed in the information letter.

### *Instrumentations*

The level and peculiarities of social and psychological adaptation of Ukrainians to forced migration were studied using two main methods - a questionnaire Rogers-Diamond's "Social and Psychological Adaptation" and the Semantic Differential Method.

A number of standardized psychological questionnaires were used to study the psychological factors that can influence the process of socio-psychological adaptation, in particular: "Psychological Wellbeing Scale" by Rieff (Schmutte & Ryff, 1997), Questionnaire of Psychological Resourcefulness of Personality (Shtepa, 2018), "Scale of Intolerance to Uncertainty" by Carleton (IUS-12) (Carleton et al., 2007), Questionnaire of Subjectivity.

### *Analysis*

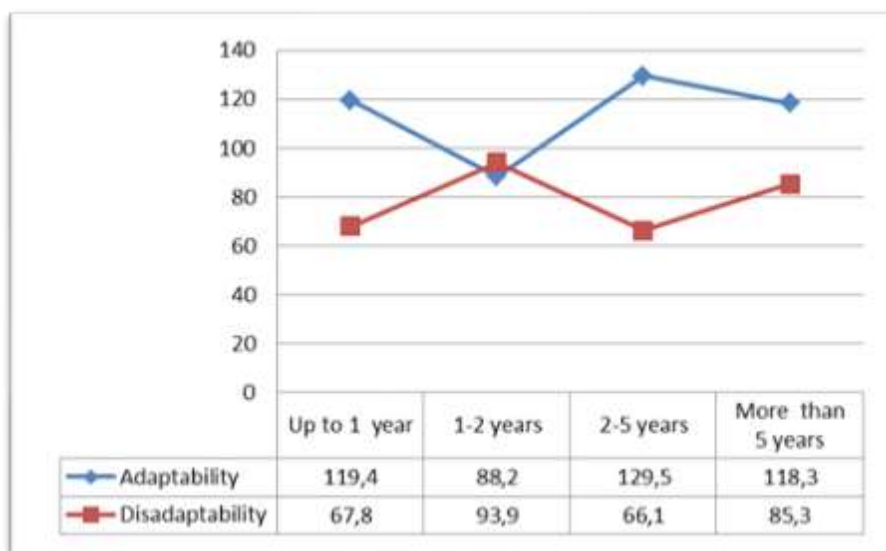
The data from the questionnaires were processed using the keys provided by the authors to determine the level of actualization of a particular quality under study. The sample results are presented in statistical units (percentages).

Pearson's correlation analysis was used to obtain data on the relationships between the indicators of qualities and factors, and Student's t-criteria was used to determine the level of significance of differences in the indicators of psychological qualities in two independent samples.

A pilot questionnaire was used to identify semantic units for the semantic differential method, which allows to identify the peculiarities of migrants' perception and attitude towards the migration situation. Next, the discriminators were identified, which at the main stage of the study were evaluated by respondents on a Likert scale from 1 to 5. Next, a factor analysis of the results was conducted using SPSS Statistics 23.0 and a number of factors characterizing the perception and attitude towards the situation of migration, both forced and voluntary, for the control and experimental groups of respondents were identified.

## **Results**

The level and dynamics of adaptability among forced and voluntary Ukrainian migrants depending on the duration of their migration Diagnostics of the level of social and psychological adaptation of Ukrainians to migration using the Rogers-Diamond methodology revealed its dynamism and heterochronicity. Figure 1 shows the revealed dynamics.



**Figure 1.** Dynamics of indicators of socio-psychological adaptability-disadaptability of Ukrainians depending on the duration of their migration.

Source: prepared by the authors (2024).

We found that the beginning of migration is marked by the beginning of a long process of adaptation to it. Ukrainians who were part of the experimental group and had been in migration for up to 2 years have lower levels of SPA and its integral indicators compared to the control sample of Ukrainians (with a period of migration from 3 to 5 years and more). Thus, the overall adaptation index in the experimental group is 72.3, and in the control group - 89.7.

A comparison of the indicators of social and psychological adaptation of Ukrainians who migrated during the war in Ukraine (experimental group) and before it began (control group) revealed that this process reflects a dynamic, which is confirmed by the stages of adaptation identified by foreign researchers (Oberg, 1960).

During the first year of migration, Ukrainian forced migrants initially experience a stage of emotional uplift, comfort, and adaptability that is close to a high level, with a fairly high level of self-acceptance of themselves and others, internalization, and aspiration for dominance. At the same time, indicators of maladjustment and emotional discomfort are low. In foreign research, this period is called the "honeymoon" (Berry, 1997).

The first crisis of migrants occurs when they have been in migration for up to six months. Due to the fact that the Ukrainians we interviewed are forced migrants, which intensifies the dynamics of adaptation, and at the same time they were forced to migrate because of the war in Ukraine, which may, on the contrary, smooth out some indicators, we believe that this crisis manifests itself in our sample during the second year of their migration. This is confirmed by the indicators of internalizing and adaptability, which decrease sharply during this period (from 119.4 in the first year to 88.2 in the second), while the indicators of externality and maladaptivity increase (from 67.8 to 93.9).

The indicators of emotional comfort remain within the normal range. And the escapism rate is increasing. In other words, this period of migration is made crisis-like by the sociocultural environment, which no longer seems "safe" to Ukrainians and "ideal," which affects adaptability and emotional comfort. At the same time, there is a tendency to avoid problem solving and external control.

At the next stage of migration, the crises that occurred at the previous stage are resolved and it is characterized by foreign researchers as a recovery stage (Berry, 1997). The dynamics we have identified confirm the increase in the SPA indicators of Ukrainians who have been in migration for 2 to 5 years. Thus, Ukrainians with a migration duration of 1 to 2 years have an adaptability index of 88.2 and a maladaptability index of 93.9, while Ukrainians who have been in migration for 2 to 5 years have an adaptability index of 129.5 and a maladaptability index of 66.1. The indicator of emotional comfort during this period is high



(32.4), as is the indicator of internal control (58.1). That is, this is a rather calm, crisis free period of social and psychological adaptation and acculturation, which ends with a high level of adaptation of the migrant to the customs, traditions, social environment of another country, acceptance of the socio-cultural environment and themselves in it.

But in addition, our research has shown that Ukrainians who have been migrating for more than 5 years tend to repeat the cycle described above. At this stage, a crisis occurs, which reduces overall adaptability and increases maladaptability, although within the normal range. The adaptability index of migrants who have been in migration for 2 to 5 years is 129.5 points, while for Ukrainians who have been in migration for more than five years it is 118.3 points. The indicator of maladjustment has the opposite dynamics - an increase from 66.1 to 85.3 (for Ukrainians who have been in migration for more than five years). The indicators of emotional comfort (from 32.4 to 22.5), internal control (from 58.1 to 51.9), self-acceptance (from 54.3 to 46.5), and acceptance of others (from 27.8 to 23.1) are also decreasing.

It can be concluded that, first, the dynamics of the stages of socio-psychological adaptation of Ukrainians in forced and voluntary migration is repetitive with a tendency to increase integral indicators. And secondly, there are certain qualitative changes in the personal and social spaces of the process of social and psychological adaptation of migrants, which cause a crisis that triggers a new round of adaptation dynamics. To address this issue, we used the method of semantic differential, and its results were processed by factor analysis through the identification of structural components of the semantic space of migrants.

The results of applying the semantic differential method

**Table 1.**  
*Results of factor analysis of Ukrainian forced migrants*

Explained variance (abbreviated)						
Component	Initial eigenvalues			Rotation of the sum of squared loads		
	Total	% of variance	%	Total	% of variance	Total%
1	13,937	21,777	21,777	9,905	15,477	15,477
2	6,673	10,427	32,203	8,032	12,549	28,026
3	4,025	6,289	38,493	6,406	10,010	38,036
4	3,383	5,286	43,779	3,676	5,743	43,779
5	2,942	4,597	48,376	2,942	4,597	48,376
6	2,528	3,950	52,327			
<b>The method of factor selection: principal components method.</b>						

Source: prepared by the authors (2024).

Factor analysis identified 18 components in total regarding attitudes toward migration and adaptation to it in the semantic space of Ukrainians who migrated to other countries during the war, but as can be seen from Table 1, five factors were the most loaded.

The first factor covers 21.78% of the total variance and includes the following discriminators: "The best country for life and development, I just need to make an effort" (.653), "The attitude of the country's residents towards migrants is good here" (.578), "I have a goal to learn the language of the new country" (.651), "I have a goal to adapt in the new country" (.581), "I like that people here respect each other" (.553), "I like that people here follow the laws" (.642) and others. Thus, the first factor includes discriminators that reflect the desire of Ukrainians who migrated during the war to adapt, integrate into a new socio-cultural environment, learn the language, and develop in it. These discriminators also reflect the respectful attitude of Ukrainians towards this environment and the tolerant attitude of the socio-cultural environment towards Ukrainians. That is why we called this factor "intention to integrate under conditions of tolerance".

The second factor, which covers 10.42% of the total variance, includes the following discriminators: "I don't know any other country where you have to work as hard as here" (.510), "I don't like the bureaucracy here" (.529), "I don't like the high taxes" (.537), "I don't like the prices here" (.681), "I don't like my moral and psychological state in this country" (.577), and others. That is, the second factor includes semantic units that reflect criticism and hostility. Therefore, we called this factor "negativism and rejection".

It should be noted that according to K. Oberg's stage-by-stage process of migrants' adaptation to life in a new country, the first stage of the "honeymoon period" is followed by the second stage, characterized by migrants' aggressive and hostile attitude towards the new environment, its criticism, in which even the attitude of the country's indigenous people seems indifferent and hostile to migrants. Therefore, it can be concluded that most of the respondents who participated in our study are already at this second stage of adaptation to migration and are experiencing a crisis related to further rejection or acceptance of the new socio-cultural environment.

The third factor covers 6.29% of the total variance and includes the following discriminants: "I miss Ukraine" (.567), "I still compare this country with Ukraine" (.745), "I dream of returning to Ukraine" (.745), "I feel anxious for my relatives who remain in Ukraine" (.558), and others. Thus, the third factor reflects the active national identity of Ukrainians who were forced to migrate to other countries because of the war, as well as their long-term intention to return to Ukraine. A preliminary analysis of the three identified factors shows that Ukrainians - forced migrants are experiencing a crisis due to the fact that they are already living in a new country and have to adapt to a new life and environment, but have a strong desire to return, which greatly complicates the process of adaptation and causes a certain degree of rejection of the new socio-cultural environment as "alien", not identical to the Ukrainian mentality and individual national identity of migrants. That is why we called this factor "national identity and the intention to return".

The fourth factor covers 5.29% of the total variance and includes the following semantic units: "I have difficulties learning the language" (.614), "Everything here needs to be started from scratch" (.468), "I like that I have insurance and/or financial assistance as a migrant" (.447), and others. The semantic units included in the fourth factor reflect the difficulties of Ukrainians who were forced to migrate to other countries because of the war. The discriminators also reflect the negative and pessimistic attitudes of Ukrainians toward the migration situation itself. That is why we called this factor the "tension factor".

The fifth factor, which covers 4.59% of the total variance, includes the following discriminators: "I like that people here are polite" (.536), "I like the different approach to education" (.416), "I like that there are locals who help" (.447), "This country loves innovation and it is good for starting your own business" (.411), and others. The fifth factor includes semantic units that reflect the positive attitudes of Ukrainian forced migrants toward the new socio-cultural environment, the search for new goals, new supports, and the desire to find new meanings and tasks in it. That is why we named this factor "acceptance and positive attitude".

Thus, we can see that the main structural units of migrants' perception and attitude towards the migration situation are the focus on integration in a new country that is tolerant of Ukrainian migrants, negativism and rejection, national identity and the desire to return to Ukraine, emotional stress, acceptance and positive attitude.

The factor analysis of the semantic space assessments of Ukrainians who migrated not during the war but for more than two years and have been in migration for 2 to 5 years or more, identified 11 factors in total, of which five were the most loaded.

**Table 2.**

*Results of the analysis of the selection of factors among Ukrainians - voluntary migrants*

Variance explained (abbreviated)						
Component	Initial eigenvalues			Rotation of the sum of squared loads		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of dispersions	Cumulative%
1	18,149	28,358	28,358	10,998	17,184	17,184
2	8,030	12,547	40,905	10,206	15,948	33,132
3	6,690	10,454	51,359	8,488	13,263	46,395
4	5,587	8,730	60,088	7,120	11,125	57,519
5	4,451	6,955	67,043	6,095	9,524	67,043
6	3,553	5,551	72,594			
7	3,232	5,049	77,644			
8	2,374	3,709	81,353			
<b>Factor extraction method: principal component method.</b>						

Source: prepared by the authors (2024).

The first factor, which covers 28.36% of the total variance, includes the following discriminators: "This is the best country for life and development, you just need to make an effort" (.786), "Here I have the opportunity for self-realization and self-improvement" (.718), "Here I know what I am working for" (.832), "In this country I have found many new opportunities for myself" (.607) and others. These semantic units reflect the humanistic macro-social basis of self-realization and personal and material development of Ukrainian migrants in the new socio-cultural environment. That is why we named this the factor "a human-centered state is a condition for sustainable development and self realization of migrants".

The second factor, which covers 12.54% of the total variance, includes the following discriminators: "Here, everything has to be started from scratch" (.684), "I don't know any other country where you have to work as hard as here" (.833), "I don't like my moral and psychological state in this country" (.749), and others. The discriminators included in the second factor emphasize the psychological tension of Ukrainians regarding the material support of themselves and their families in the new conditions. This professional and personal tension is associated with intensive work and expenses in the conditions offered by the new socio-cultural space. Therefore, we have named this factor "Intensive work as a factor of material security".

The third factor covers 10.45% of the total variance and includes the following semantic units: "I have a goal to adapt in a new country" (.758), "I have a goal to find a job in my profession in a new country" (.523), "My family is better off here" (.604), "How happy and successful you will be here depends on us" (.520), and others. Thus, the third factor characterizes Ukrainians' motivational attitudes toward integration and assimilation in the new socio-cultural environment. While the first factor reflects the general (macro-environmental) conditions for personal development and self-realization of the migrant, this factor emphasizes the focus on the well-being of the micro-environment, children, and family, for which Ukrainians seek to adapt and achieve well-being in the new country of residence. That is, "my self-realization ensures the well-being of my family and children." We believe that this is how migrant subjectivity manifests itself. That is why we named this factor "subjectivity as a condition for integration and family well-being".

The fourth factor, which emerged as a result of factorization of semantic unit scores in the control group of respondents, covers 8.73% of the total variance and includes the following discriminators: "There are huge Ukrainian communities here, where it is easier to adapt and then start to learn other places to live and work" (.881), "I like that I have insurance and/or financial assistance as a migrant" (.470), "The attitude of the country's residents towards migrants is good here" (.489). Thus, the fourth factor characterizes the socio-cultural environment that provides primary support and assistance, which is a condition and starting point for self-determination and adaptation of Ukrainians in a new country. These are external resources that a migrant can rely on, such as attitudes toward migrants, psychological and material support. That is why we named this factor "Primary supportive environment as a condition for adaptation and self-realization".

The fifth factor covers 6.96% of the total variance and includes the following discriminators: "I miss Ukraine" (.703), "Over time, I hope to feel comfort and peace here" (.649), "I still compare this country to Ukraine" (.813), and others. That is, these are the semantic singletons that emphasize the factor of homesickness, experiences related to the war in Ukraine, and for loved ones who remained behind. Also, the discriminators that make up the fifth factor emphasize the national identity of Ukrainian migrants. Therefore, we named this factor "national identity and nostalgia."

Thus, the semantic space of attitudes and perceptions of the migration situation among Ukrainian voluntary migrants includes the following components: sustainable development and self-realization in a human-centered state, material security through work, subjectivity, external socio-cultural resources that provide primary support to migrants in adaptation, national identity, and nostalgia.

## Discussion

We have searched for the content of models of socio-psychological adaptation of Ukrainians to forced migration based on empirical data. As a result, qualitative differences in the process of socio-psychological adaptation were noted and two empirical models of Ukrainians' adaptation to migration were identified. These results are summarized in the table below.



**Table 3.**  
*Empirical models of Ukrainians' adaptation to migration*

	Ukrainians are forced migrants	Ukrainians are voluntary migrants
Factor 1	Focus on integration in a new country country, tolerant to Ukrainian migrants	Sustainable development and self realization in the context of human-centered states
Factor 2	Negativism and rejection	Material provision by labor
Factor 3	National identity and aspirations to return to Ukraine	Subjectivity
Factor 4	Emotional stress	External socio-cultural resources, providing primary support to migrants in adaptation
Factor 5	Acceptance and positive attitude	National identity, nostalgia

Source: prepared by the authors (2024).

The use of factorization of the structural units of the semantic space of attitudes towards migration of Ukrainian migrants allowed us to determine that voluntary Ukrainian migrants who have been in migration for 3 years or more (control group respondents) show a more stable model of adaptation to migration. They consider the opportunities provided by migration and the new socio-cultural environment in which they find themselves to be a resource for self-realization and personal development. External socio-cultural resources are one of the least saturated factors in their semantic space, while the focus on self-realization and development, subjectivity and active engagement - as components of the semantic space related to migration - are much more saturated. This suggests that Ukrainians who are voluntary migrants have an active position and orientation towards integration into the new socio-cultural environment of the host country, relying on their own capabilities and resources, and actively solve problems related to migration and ensuring their own comfort.

Thus, the components of the semantic space of voluntary migrants are complex and well-established, with a significant motivational and value component: development, self realization, material security, family well-being, and internal control (internalization). The emotional component of the semantic space regarding migration, such as homesickness, is among the least burdensome factors, so it can be concluded that Ukrainians are relatively emotionally well off in the context of voluntary migration.

This is due to the fact that voluntary migrants do not make decisions about relocation suddenly. Throughout the decision-making process, their psychological readiness for migration develops, along with stable migration motivations. The migration itself is planned, and only then does migration behavior emerge, which ultimately implements the actual relocation.

Unlike Ukrainians who were voluntary migrants, Ukrainians who were forced to migrate because of the war in Ukraine did not have the opportunity to develop motivational, financial, and psychological readiness, as several hours to several days passed between their decision to move and the actual move.

The events that forced them to make this decision also have a great impact on the emotional state of Ukrainians who are forced migrants. The beginning of the full-scale invasion was shocking for many Ukrainians, causing panic, stress, and a sense that their world was falling apart.

A number of foreign studies indicate that the majority of Ukrainians who are forced migrants exhibit signs of PTSD, depression, and anxiety disorders (Javanbakht, 2022; Martsyniak-Dorosh, 2022). This, in our opinion, explains the structural components of the social and psychological adaptation of the experimental group respondents obtained as a result of factorization.

It has been determined that Ukrainians - forced migrants reveal less established and simpler structural elements of the semantic space regarding migration. The main ones are: macro-social factors favorable for life, tolerance of the host country's residents and the opportunities and resources they provide to Ukrainian migrants. The affective component is the most vividly expressed in the semantic space of forced migrants; three of the five identified factors: negativism and rejection, emotional stress, positive attitude and acceptance are based on emotions.

Another characteristic feature of the model of adaptation of Ukrainians - forced migrants is the focus on the fact that as soon as they are able, they will return to Ukraine. This, in our opinion, complicates the

process of integration into the new socio-cultural environment and gives rise to its rejection and rejection of the very idea of staying.

Thus, we have identified a difference in the two models of adaptation - while the attitudes of Ukrainian respondents who are voluntary migrants are based on the motivation to migrate, the desire for assimilation, acculturation and integration, and those of Ukrainians who are forced migrants are based on affect, reliance on external resources and the desire to return to their homeland.

In order to determine the internal factors that ensure the implementation of the two identified models of socio-psychological adaptation of Ukrainians to forced migration, we have diagnosed such psychological phenomena as psychological resourcefulness, intolerance to uncertainty, intersubjectivity, subjectivity, and psychological well-being.

**Table 4.**

*Significance of differences in the indicators of socio-psychological adaptation of Ukrainians (Student's t-test)*

Variable	Ukrainians - forced migrants	Ukrainians - voluntary migrants	t-criteria	p
Intolerance to uncertainty	34,05	47,22	-,360	,723
Psychological resourcefulness	83,71	75,71	3,264	,001
Intersubjectivity	70,86	56,46	2,201	,040
Activity	6,49	5,02	2,891	,017
Self-awareness	6,22	5,17	2,963	,026
Freedom of choice and responsibility for it	6,17	5,21	2,381	,037
Understanding and acceptance of others	5,58	5,62	1,898	,086
Self-development	5,91	4,79	2,925	,019
Psychological well-being	291,81	218,90	3,103	,002

Source: prepared by the authors (2024).

Comparison of the obtained results revealed that the active model of adaptation inherent in Ukrainians - voluntary migrants is provided by such psychological properties as psychological resourcefulness, subjectivity, psychological well-being and the ability to intersubjective interaction. The passive model of adaptation, which is characteristic of Ukrainians who are forced migrants due to the war in Ukraine, is characterized by a low expression of the above factors. Due to their low tolerance for uncertainty, these Ukrainians are prone to depression, spontaneous aggression, and are characterized by a higher than average level of emotional lability. In other words, the expressed factors of their inherent passive model of adaptation are insufficient emotional self-regulation, insufficient ability to identify and manage their own psychological resources, and passivity.

The core of the identified models of social and psychological adaptation, as our research has shown, is the subjectivity of the migrant's personality. What does this mean in practical and scientific terms?

To answer this question, let's define the concept of personality subjectivity. Subjectivity is a number of qualities that each scientist defines independently, noting only one common quality of the subject - to influence and transform socio-psychological reality. It also includes a number of personal characteristics that correspond to a person's ability to influence his or her psychological, mental, and physical state and a general conscious, reflective, proactive, responsible, and actively transformative attitude toward reality and oneself. It is this attitude, in our opinion, that determines the process of effective adaptation of Ukrainians in forced migration during the war.

This relationship has not yet been identified and studied by scholars, but it seems to us to be crucial for the research problem at hand. Of course, our study was focused on a Ukrainian sample, so this empirical position requires other, more extensive research. Subjectivity is a psychological phenomenon that has proven its relevance in all spheres of human life and, at the same time, can be developed and shaped. Thus,

the conclusions of the presented study, firstly, reveal a new broad layer of research in the field of migration psychology and, at the same time, provide a clear direction for this research.

## Conclusions

Our empirical research allowed us to identify the main models and components of the social and psychological adaptation of Ukrainians who were forced to migrate because of the war in Ukraine and those who migrated consciously.

It has been concluded that the process of socio-psychological adaptation of Ukrainians - forced migrants is based on the conflict between the desire to integrate into a new socio-cultural environment and the wish to return to their homeland, which results in a pronounced affective component. We call this model the model of passive adaptation, because it relies on external control (externality) and external resources - good attitude towards migrants by the host country and its residents, material support, benefits, humanitarian aid, etc.

Meanwhile, the model of adaptation of Ukrainians who left voluntarily and earlier can be called "active" because it is characterized by a strong motivation to integrate, reliance on their own resources, and a subjective position.

The theoretical value of the study is the proven connection between the socio-psychological adaptation of migrants and the level of their subjectivity, which reveals a wide field of opportunities and challenges for further research, as well as the development of models of psychological support for the socio-psychological adaptation of forced migrants.

## Recommendations

Psychological intervention in overcoming the social and psychological maladjustment of forced migrants and supporting the adaptation process should be aimed, in fact, at the development of subjectivity, and the main tasks of such targeted formation will be: activation of awareness, actualization and development of skills to take responsibility for one's life, development of focus on self-development and self-realization.

We believe that this model of psychological intervention is universal for many categories of migrants, not only forced but also voluntary, and not only Ukrainians. However, this statement requires numerous studies, development of psychological programs and determination of their effectiveness by empirical methods.

We have developed and tested one of these programs, and it has proven to be effective in a sample of Ukrainian forced migrants. We will present it to the scientific community in further research papers, as this article is intended to present empirical results.

## Limitations

The obtained results are valid only for the sample of Ukrainians who were forced or voluntarily migrated due to Russia's full-scale invasion. To confirm the findings with a different sample of respondents, a new study is needed, taking into account psychological, ethnic, linguistic, demographic, and other factors. Although our results confirm the existence of certain models of socio-psychological adaptation of migrants, another sample may reveal more of them and they will be qualitatively different, i.e., they can contain completely different socio-psychological phenomena, structural components and features.

## *Conflict of interest*

Absent.

## *Financial support*

Absent.

## Bibliographic References

- Afanasieva, L., Bukricieva, I., Glyns'ka, L., Hlebova, N., & Oleksenko, R. (2021). Sociocultural integration of meskhetian turks in the context of inter-ethnic cooperation. *Amazonia Investiga*, 10(38), 234-244. <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2021.38.02.23>
- Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation and adaptation. *Applied psychology: An international review*, 46(1), 5-34. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.1997.tb01087.x>
- Berry, J.W. (2015). Global psychology: implications for cross-cultural research and management. *Cross Cultural Management*, 22(3), 342-355. <https://acortar.link/2Lez24>
- Bilan, Y. (2017). *Migration of the Ukrainian population: Economic, institutional and sociocultural factors*. London: Ubiquity Press.
- Blynova, O. (2016). Social and psychological adaptation of forced migrants: approaches and problems of studying the phenomenon of acculturation. *Scientific Bulletin of Kherson State University*, 3(1), 111-117. <https://pj.journal.kspu.edu/index.php/pj/article/view/676>
- Blynova, O. (2010). Psychological factors of stress in the acculturation of migrants. *Science and education*, 3, 12-16. <https://dspace.pdpu.edu.ua/jspui/handle/123456789/12795>
- Cohen, E.H. (2011). Impact of the Group of Co-migrants on Strategies of Acculturation: Towards an Expansion of the Berry Model. *International Migration*, 49(4), 1-22.
- Carleton, R. N., Norton, P. J., & Asmundson, J.G. (2007). Fearing the unknown: A short version of the Intolerance of Uncertainty Scale. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 21(1), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2006.03.014>
- El-Awad, U., Fathi, A., Petermann, F., & Reinelt, T. (2017). Promoting Mental Health in Unaccompanied Refugee Minors: Recommendations for Primary Support Programs. *Brain Sciences*, 7(11), 146. <https://doi.org/10.3390/brainsci7110146>
- Ho, K.H.M., & Chiang, V.C.L. (2015). A meta-ethnography of the acculturation and socialization experiences of migrant care workers. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 71(2), 237-254. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.12506>
- Javanbakht, A. (2022). Addressing war trauma in Ukrainian refugees before it is too late. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 13(2), URL: <https://acortar.link/5kv1a5>
- Martsyniak-Dorosh, O. (2022). *The Heavy Psychological Toll of the War in Ukraine - Mental health support is the need of the hour*. Medpagetoday. <https://www.medpagetoday.com/opinion/second-opinions/101119>
- Oberg, K. (1960). Culture shock: Adjustment to new cultural environments. *Practical Anthropology*, (4), 177-182
- Schmutte, P. S., & Ryff, C. D. (1997). Personality and well-being: Reexamining methods and meanings. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73(3), 549-559.
- Shtepa, O. (2018). Questionnaire of psychological resourcefulness of a personality: results of development and testing of the author's methodology. *Problems of modern psychology*, 39, 380-399. <https://acortar.link/DJg28L>
- Slyusarevskiy, M., & Blynova, O. (2013). *Psychology of Migration*. Kirovohrad. «Imeks LTD». [https://ispp.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/migration-psych\\_slusar-blinova.pdf](https://ispp.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/migration-psych_slusar-blinova.pdf)
- Triandis, H.C. (2000). Culture and Conflict. *International Journal of Psychology*, 35(2), 145-152.
- UNHCR. (2024). *Ukraine Refugee Situation*. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>
- Zandt, F. (2023). *6.8 million Seeking Refuge from Russian Invasion*. Statista. Access mode: <https://www.statista.com/chart/26960/number-of-ukrainian-refugees-by-target-country/>
- Zhylin, M., Mendelo, V., Cherusheva, G., Romanova, I., & Borysenko, K. (2023). Analysis of the role of emotional intelligence in the formation of identity in different European cultures. *Amazonia Investiga*, 12(62), 319-326. <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2023.62.02.32>