

To Our Friends – Ukrainians, Russians and Belarusians,
living in and coming to Poland

March 4, 2022

We address you as researchers of human migration, including the issues of forced migration and refugees, who are aptly aware of the complexity of the problems stemming from leaving one's homeland and adapting to the receiving country. First of all, we express our deepest grief for the victims of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. We express our condolences for the innocent people, especially for those who had it hardest to defend themselves: for women, children, and the elderly. Together with many communities and public institutions in Poland, we unanimously condemn the brutal attack on Ukraine. We expect the same condemnation from the citizens of Russia and Belarus residing in Poland.

As researchers of migration, we know how crucial it is to welcome refugees from the regions engulfed by military combat in the all-encompassing and dignified manner. We declare all possible help in this respect – both as people and as experts. Some of the refugees will probably choose Poland as their second homeland, others will want to go further, still others - to return home and rebuild their country. We advocate that Poland should support refugees with each of these plans, and we call on Polish government and local authorities as well as on NGOs to facilitate their realization.

We are concerned about the attempts of Putin's regime to further destabilize the situation by spreading the propaganda that is aimed not only at justifying the Russian invasion of Ukraine, but also at driving a wedge between different groups seeking refuge in Poland. As a result of a series of events and circumstances, for many of you our country has become, or will become, a new homeland. We know many of you and we are friends, we work together, we start families. As Poles, we are glad to build the future of our country together with you.

We do not want the unleashed war and hatred to destroy our common legacy, created by the efforts of people of different cultures, religions, beliefs and experiences, but based on the shared respect for basic and universal human values: truth, good, and love. Let us not allow this great, but also - as it may turn out - fragile legacy to be ruined.

Taking the above considerations into account, we urge everyone to respect each other, to reject mutual prejudices as well as not to be guided by collective responsibility and not to discriminate against any individual, even if they are citizens of an aggressor state.