

## THE WAR IN UKRAINE: WESTERN FATIGUE OR RENUNCIATION?

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We are on the 265th day of the Russian Federation's war in Ukraine. A war that should not have been possible in the 21st century, in a global world<sup>2</sup>, and which history will remember as Russia's war of aggression against its neighbour Ukraine.

It has been 265 days since the invasion was launched on 24 February 2022, a moment that stunned both the civil society of states and the governments of the world. There has been a trigger that has manifested itself in strong state support for Ukraine. Whether we are talking about good practice in the reception of Ukrainian refugees<sup>3</sup> by neighbouring states, or the sending of humanitarian aid and arms, this war has made possible a strong coalition of most of the world's states around this reprehensible act of aggression.

The new Iron Curtain has been lowered<sup>4</sup> for the second time in Europe, separating Western states from the Russian Federation and Belarus. The sanctions imposed have multiplied from week to week on the assumption that once the pressure on the Russian economy increases<sup>5</sup>, the war will end.

We are witnessing a bloody, unthinkable and unacceptable event in Europe. A war of aggression with an increased possibility of escalation. People were affected in the first weeks after the outbreak of the invasion, their quality of life declining considerably, at least in the states in the immediate vicinity of the military conflict<sup>6</sup>.

Most countries reacted strongly and consistently, helping Ukraine to resist the Russian invader. The world's publications have been front-page stories about what was happening in

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<sup>2</sup> Cătălin Peptan, Reflections on the phenomenon of globalization, from the perspective of the impact on current society, *Revista Astra Salvensis*, nr. 2/2020, pp. 315-337

<sup>3</sup> Oviedo, Lluís, Berenika Seryczyńska, Josefa Torralba, Piotr Roszak, Javier Del Angel, Olena Vyshynska, Iryna Muzychuk, and Slava Churpita. 2022. "Coping and Resilience Strategies among Ukraine War Refugees" *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19, no. 20: 13094. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192013094>

<sup>4</sup> Flavius Cristian Mărcău, „War in Ukraine. A new Iron Curtain” in *Research and Science Today*, 1(23)/2022, 9-10

<sup>5</sup> „ANALIZĂ Război, criză economică, lupte pentru putere: IARNA lungă care se anunță pentru Rusia”, [https://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-razboi\\_ucraina-25796048-razboi-criza-economica-lupte-pentru-putere-iarna-lunga-care-anunta-pentru-rusia.htm](https://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-razboi_ucraina-25796048-razboi-criza-economica-lupte-pentru-putere-iarna-lunga-care-anunta-pentru-rusia.htm), accessed at 05.11.2022

<sup>6</sup> Mărcău FC, Peptan C, Gorun HT, Băleanu VD and Gheorman V (2022) Analysis of the impact of the armed conflict in Ukraine on the population of Romania. *Front. Public Health* 10:964576. doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2022.964576

Ukraine, a topic of interest to civil society, but it is beginning to wane as the war drags on, as reported by Dmytro Kuleba in an article published on 17 June 2022:

*„It is only natural that people and governments lose interest in conflicts as they drag on. It is a process that has happened many times throughout history. The world stopped paying attention to the war in Libya after former leader Muammar al-Qaddafi was toppled from power in 2011. It has disengaged from Syria, Yemen and other ongoing conflicts that once generated headline news”<sup>7</sup>.*

"Civil society fatigue" should not be seen as a loss of interest in what is happening in Ukraine. Or as a renunciation. It is possible that a new variable has made its presence felt: *people's habit*. Such manifestations have also been observed, for example, among participants in various protests triggered by the actions of governments that have tended to deviate from the democratic leadership of states<sup>8</sup>. Although the crisis has not been resolved, the protests have decreased in intensity from day to day<sup>9</sup>. There is no need to tire<sup>1011</sup> at this point and we do not believe that this will be possible. The war in Ukraine should not be compared, as Kuleba does, to what happened in Libya, Syria or Yemen. In none of these conflicts was there the main element that can be found in Ukraine: the potential for war to escalate.

The vector that maintains interest in the war in Ukraine among state populations underlies their concern and belief in the possibility of the conflict spreading beyond the borders of the Ukrainian state.

As far as "war support fatigue in Ukraine" is concerned, we believe that the new crises on the international scene<sup>12</sup> are increasingly contributing to diverting civil society's attention away from Russia's invasion, but not decisively, since we should not forget one particularly important aspect: *war is the generator of these new crises<sup>1314151617</sup> and any withdrawal of support for Ukraine will lead to a deepening of them.*

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<sup>7</sup> Dmytro Kuleba, „How Ukraine Will Win” in *Foreign Affairs*,

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/ukraine/2022-06-17/how-ukraine-will-win>, accessed at 05.11.2022

<sup>8</sup> Flavius Cristian Mărcău, "Dynamics of Deconsolidating Democracies of Poland, Hungary and Romania" în *Astra Salvensis*, VII (2019), no. 14, 293-305

<sup>9</sup> Flavius Cristian Mărcău, *Dynamics of Deconsolidating Democracies of Poland, Hungary and Romania...*, 293-305

<sup>10</sup> „Iohannis: Societatea civilă s-a mobilizat exemplar în pandemie și în criza războiului din Ucraina”, <https://www.agerpres.ro/politica/2022/09/28/iohannis-societatea-civila-s-a-mobilizat-exemplar-in-pandemie-si-in-criza-razboiului-din-ucraina--986915>, accessed at 05.11.2022

<sup>11</sup> Onuch, O. (2022). European Ukrainians and their fight against Russian invasion. *Nations and Nationalism*, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12883>

<sup>12</sup> „Impactul invadării Ucrainei de către Rusia asupra piețelor: răspunsul UE”,

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ro/policies/eu-response-ukraine-invasion/impact-of-russia-s-invasion-of-ukraine-on-the-markets-eu-response/>, accessed at 05.11.2022

<sup>13</sup> Nchasi, G, Mwashu, C, Shaban, MM, et al. Ukraine's triple emergency: food crisis amid conflicts and COVID-19 pandemic. *Health Sci Rep*. 2022; 5:e862. doi:10.1002/hsr2.862

<sup>14</sup> Caroline Kuzemko, Mathieu Blondeel, Claire Dupont, Marie Claire Brisbois, Russia's war on Ukraine, European energy policy responses & implications for sustainable transformations, *Energy Research & Social Science*, Volume 93, 2022, 102842, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2022.102842>.

<sup>15</sup> „Consecințele războiului din Ucraina: 50 de țări ar putea fi afectate în scurt timp de o criză alimentară”, <https://romania.europalibera.org/a/posibil%C4%83-criz%C4%83-alimentar%C4%83-mondial%C4%83-provocat%C4%83-de-r%C4%83zboiul-din-ucraina/31756492.html>, accessed at 05.11.2022

<sup>16</sup> „Criza din energie și inflația, amplificate de războiul din Ucraina”, <https://www.bursa.ro/semestrul-i-2022-financiar-criza-din-energie-si-inflatia-amplificate-de-razboiul-din-ucraina-27580741>, accessed at 05.11.2022

"Government fatigue" is a particularly important vector for waging war, but it doesn't have to happen. Such "fatigue" would inevitably lead to a Russian advantage over Ukraine. If military aid decreases in intensity or disappears, Ukraine will suffer and so will the rest of Europe and the world. If Russia senses the loss of interest or the tendency of Western states to give up on supporting Ukraine, what will prevent it from acting against another state in the future? This is why we believe that Western governments will not tire and Ukraine will not be left without support.

The war must stop. The Russian Federation must stop the invasion and give up the occupied territories. We stand by Ukraine to the end.

Слава Україні!

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<sup>17</sup> „GRAFICE Efectele războiului din Ucraina și crizei energetice de la Chișinău: România - cea mai scumpă piață spot din UE”, <https://www.profit.ro/povesti-cu-profit/energie/grafice-efectele-razboiului-din-ucraina-si-crizei-energetice-de-la-chisinau-romania-cea-mai-scuppa-piata-spot-din-ue-20900778>, accessed at 05.11.2022