

Technology and Forced Migration

Ukrainian Migrants in Central
and Eastern Europe

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Preface

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Migrants in Central and Eastern Europe

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Preface

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0.1 Background and general approach of the book

Although debates over international migration, migrants' lives and their integration have been ongoing for many decades (De Haas et al., 2020), migration concerns in Central and Eastern European (CEE)¹ countries have not been thoroughly investigated yet. Poverty and political oppression had prompted emigration in these countries for years (Bielewska, 2019; Okólski, 2021), and immigration was a minor phenomenon. The fall of the Soviet Union and the war in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s resulted in migration movements to CEE countries, and when they joined the EU, the ratio of emigrants and immigrants began to change, and a migration transition occurred, with a migration balance shifting from negative to positive (Bielewska, 2019; Okólski, 2021). The Russian aggression on Ukraine in 2014 resulted in the displacement of approximately 1.5 million Ukrainians (Mikheieva & Kuznetsova, 2023), and following the outbreak of Russia-Ukraine war in February 2022, next 12 million Ukrainians were forced to cross international borders, many of whom sought asylum in the neighbouring CEE countries (UNHCR, 2024).

The potential to examine such a quick migration transformation makes the topic of migration in CEE more relevant than ever before. At the beginning of 2022, prior to the onset of the full-fledged conflict in Ukraine, Poland and Hungary in particular had highly homogeneous populations, with migrants accounting only for 1.2% of the population in Poland (EMN, 2022a) and 2.1% in Hungary (EMN, 2022b). The number of migrants was greater in Slovakia, where they made up 5.13% of the population (IOM, 2022), and in Czechia - 6.3% (CZSO, 2022), with economic migration prevailing in both cases. However, for all the countries investigated, Ukrainian forced migration represented a significant shift from sending to receiving large numbers of (forced) migrants, as well as a transition from a more homogeneous society to a more heterogeneous one.

The Ukrainians who were forced to leave their country constitute a distinct population of refugees in Europe, in contrast to the surge of refugees from the Middle East and Africa in recent decades. The Ukrainian forced migration into CEE countries differs in many respects, including migrants' proximity (geographical, social and cultural), a diverse polymedia background they function within, a multi-level governance context and overarching asylum policies. This book focuses on

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Ukrainian forced migrants arriving in CEE countries following the full outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war, and it contributes to the understanding of the large-scale migration processes caused by war that occur in CEE countries. These countries were not accustomed to admitting and integrating migrants before and do not possess much relevant experience (Eurofound, 2024).

The book focuses specifically on the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in migration processes, a significant phenomenon that has gained momentum in recent years. Hence, the book intends to provide a novel viewpoint on the interplay between forced migration and ICTs, focussing on how forced migrants affect ICTs and how ICTs, in turn, shape the everyday lives of migrants, including the use of ICTs as the migration management tool. This discussion is set in the framework of multilevel and multi-actor migration governance, in which interconnectedness is the defining feature and individuals undergo an ontological shift, moving from a world where technologies were viewed as luxurious gadgets to the epi-digital and polymedia reality in which lives are embedded in the ICT-driven context. Migrants, as well as other actors benefit from this change and use technologies to stay “connected”, seek, verify and convey information, while also becoming subjects of surveillance or integration practices.

Without a doubt, digital technologies (technologies or ICTs in short) are impacting present times and phenomena, including migration. It has been almost 20 years since the International Organisation for Migration (IOM, 2005) declared ICTs to be the global driver of migration. Furthermore, Castles (2008, p. 2) stated that information and communication technologies, combined with advancements in transportation made it “normal for people to think beyond borders”. Interestingly, there was a considerable period preceding the rapid development and application of those technologies in public services. The use of ICTs in public services was tested during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many offices were closed and public services were available only online. Ukrainian forced migrants who arrived shortly after the pandemic were a new group of users – non-citizen testers of these services, and their presence prompted the translation of those e-services into other languages (or only Ukrainian). Therefore, the Ukrainian forced migrants’ situation must be examined in light of the development of digital migration management tools.

This volume’s discussion of ICTs encompasses a broad and diverse range of technological tools and resources used to manage migration such as telecommunications, broadcast media, intelligent building management systems, audio-visual processing and transmission systems and network-based control and monitoring functions. These technological tools and resources include (based on UNESCO Institute for Statistics, n.d.; Madianou, 2020):

- Devices: Smartphones, tablets, computers and other portable digital devices.
- Communication Tools: Emails, text messaging, social media platforms and instant messaging applications.
- Digital Memories: Cloud storage services and digital archives.
- Applications: Software that tracks routines, collects data and provides feedback.

- Internet Services: Websites, online services and digital platforms that facilitate various forms of interaction and information exchange.
- Polymedia: Integrated communication technologies that blend physical and metaphysical aspects, viewing technology as an extension of the self.

These technologies enable the creation, access, storage, transfer, allowing for many forms of communication and interaction, but also manipulation of information. ICTs play a crucial role in modern life, impacting how people communicate, work, study and interact with the physical and virtual worlds. The book focuses on digital technologies and their interplay with forced migrants and other actors in the context of the four chosen CEE countries. However, examples from other CEE countries, as well as other EU or non-EU countries are used when they are relevant or offer added value.

0.2 CEE countries in the context of forced migration

The four CEE countries chosen for analysis in this book are those geographically close to Ukraine, and experiencing unprecedented inflows of forced migration as a result of the Russian aggression in Ukraine. The expanding digitalisation of CEE countries continues to improve the migration process, as the present migration influx differs from previous, well-explored ones. These countries are the Republic of Poland (Poland), the Czech Republic (Czechia), the Slovak Republic (Slovakia) and Hungary, also known as the Visegrád² countries. Their geographical position and history ensure their commonalities, and their current diverse situation makes them an excellent choice for comparison.

Most of them have some historical ties with Ukraine, with Slovakia and Poland sharing a border with Ukraine, which influences forced migrants' decisions to relocate there. All Visegrád countries were in the past part of the Soviet bloc, with limited cross-border movement. During the communist era, the borders were "pacified" or guarded, keeping the Soviet Union's satellite states on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain. The situation began to change in the 1990s, but the most significant shift occurred after these countries joined the European Union and were required to comply with the EU migration policy. Even so, migration became the topic of public debate in CEE countries only when right-wing governments came to power by exploiting xenophobic fears (Scott, 2021). Interestingly, despite xenophobia and securitisation of migration, these countries still opened the door to labour migration (Androvičová, 2016; Bures & Stojanov, 2022; Pędziwiatr & Magdziarz, 2022). Centralisation of migration policies was also a common feature among them (Drbohlav, 2012; Gyollai & Korkut, 2020; Ślęzak & Bielewska, 2022). Visegrád countries, characterised by similar levels of development, are called by some scholars as New Immigration Destinations (NID) (see Pędziwiatr & Magdziarz, 2022). This definition used in American context refers to places where a tradition of emigration was replaced with an increased immigrant intake (McAreavey & Argent, 2018). Therefore, it may be a useful concept in analysis of CEE countries where

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such migration has changed population structure and raises awareness of the rapid and unanticipated immigration processes and challenges (Winders, 2014). The four analysed countries saw a large influx of forced migrants, but lacked experience of coping with humanitarian crises, as well as adequate infrastructure, resources and sufficient legal framework (Pędzwiatr & Magdziarz, 2022). Therefore, by focusing on countries that are aspiring to the NID status and their use of modern technologies, this book fills a significant vacuum in migration research.

There are also some stark differences among these four countries, since Hungary was a forerunner of the migration transition, whilst Slovakia gained characteristics of the NID much later than the other three. Before the Russia-Ukraine war, most migrants in Slovakia came from the EU countries, while those in Czechia largely came from outside of the EU (Androvičová, 2016; Pędzwiatr & Magdziarz, 2022). Finally, Ukrainians made up the majority of foreign residents in Poland (Bielewska et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the Visegrád countries' response to the outbreak of the war in Ukraine in 2022 differs. Poland, Czechia and Slovakia have provided military support to Ukraine and condemned Russian aggression, while Hungary has not only refrained from condemning Russian aggression, but it has also blocked financial aid to Ukraine and maintains strong economic ties with Russia (Brozmanová Gregorová & Bambúch, 2025). Similar differences may be seen in how these countries implemented the EU directive of March 2022, which was intended to provide Ukrainian forced migrants with immediate protection. However, with the change of government in 2023 Slovakia's political attitude has shifted, with the country consistently moving away from helping Ukraine and Ukrainian forced migrants.

All examples, cases and viewpoints offered in this volume are based on Ukrainian migration, both economic migrants driven out of their country before 2022 and those forced to flee as the result of the Russian full-scale aggression (after 2022). Because of their different position, statuses, rights, as well as a lack of clear boundaries to distinguish them, both groups of Ukrainians who arrived in the analysed countries (Poland, Czechia, Slovakia and Hungary) form a single community and should be considered as one. So, while discussing them, the authors refer to them as forced migrants.

On 4 March 2022, the European Council activated the Temporary Protection Directive in response to the mass displacement caused by the war in Ukraine, granting beneficiaries a two-year residence status with access to employment, housing, healthcare, and education for minors—subsequently extended (European Council, 2022; European Commission, 2023). The four Visegrád countries transposed this framework into their national legal systems through divergent legal and administrative mechanisms, reflecting varied approaches to managing the large-scale influx of Ukrainian nationals.

Poland, which has the longest border with Ukraine among CEE countries (about 535 kilometres), has become a popular destination for Ukrainian migrants, especially following the Crimea annexation in 2014. After the Russian onslaught in 2022, existing migrant networks aided fellow Ukrainians fleeing the country, leading to Poland having the highest number of new arrivals (Brozmanová Gregorová

& Bambúch, 2025). In January 2025, there were roughly 957,505 Ukrainians registered in Poland under the temporary protection scheme (Statista, 2025). On March 12, 2022, Poland passed a special law to regulate their status (Ustawa o pomocy obywatelom Ukrainy..., 2022). This law granted temporary protection status, including residency rights, access to housing, the labour market, social welfare benefits, medical assistance and education for youths (Bielewska et al., 2025). Financial incentives included a one-time humanitarian allowance of 300 PLN (about €70) and child assistance of 800 PLN (around €190) per child, which is important given that children make up 37% of this group. The temporary protection status has been extended several times; however, the lack of a comprehensive state approach to integration may deter efforts to integrate.

As of January 2025, *Czechia* hosted 353,510 Ukrainian forced migrants (Statista, 2025), the Visegrád countries' highest migration-to-hosting population ratio at 4%. This ratio is slightly higher than Poland's 3.6%, double that of Slovakia's 2% and exceeds more than ten times Hungary's 0.3% (Pędziwiatr & Magdziarz, 2022). *Czechia's* openness to migration, especially from Ukraine, has been a key factor encouraging Ukrainian immigration (Jelínková et al., 2024). By 2021, almost 200,000 Ukrainians lived in *Czechia*. On March 17, 2022 the country introduced a law, to regulate the status of people fleeing the war in Ukraine, which has been amended several times. This law provides access to the labour market, education, healthcare, social housing and one of Central Europe's most generous financial support schemes. Individuals under temporary protection can receive a humanitarian allowance of 5000 CK (about €200) for up to five months (Pędziwiatr & Magdziarz, 2022).

In January 2025, *Slovakia* hosted 122,925 Ukrainian forced migrants (Statista, 2025), ranking fifth in terms of total received Ukrainian forced migrants. *Slovakia*, like *Czechia* and *Poland*, extended temporary protection to all groups of people who legally resided in Ukraine. The Slovak government provided them with basic benefits, much like Slovak citizens, but excluded them from certain family-related social entitlements, such as child or parental allowance. On the other hand, the forced migrants were eligible for financial assistance for training courses to facilitate their social and labour market integration (Pędziwiatr & Magdziarz, 2022).

For January 2025, *Hungary* hosted 61,570 Ukrainian forced migrants (Statista, 2025), the smallest number among the four Visegrád countries. *Hungary* provided temporary protection to Ukrainian nationals who lived in Ukraine prior to February 24, 2022, as well as refugees and stateless persons recognised in Ukraine along with their family members. However, this protection did not apply to third-country nationals fleeing the war in Ukraine, who were instead given a certificate for temporary stay of up to 30 days, which may be extended for up to six months. Forced migrants entering *Hungary* encountered numerous problems including information provision and procedural difficulties. They could only receive financial assistance once their temporary protection applications were positively evaluated, which may take up to two months, contrary to the EU's aim as a regulator. Those eligible for financial help may receive €61 per adult and €37 per minor per month (Pędziwiatr & Magdziarz, 2022). In August 2024, *Hungary* introduced changes stipulating that

only areas directly affected by military operations would be eligible for additional governmental support, a condition that will be regularly reviewed in the future.

In the context of the forced migration of Ukrainians, it is important to mention *Germany* as well. Following the outbreak of the conflict in 2022, initially Germany received a lower number of Ukrainian forced migrants, yet with time, their numbers increased significantly. As a result, at present, Germany is hosting the largest number of Ukrainians under temporary protection among EU countries. By January 2025, Germany had 1.2 million Ukrainians under temporary protection (Eurostat, 2025). However, given Germany's status as an established immigration country, yet neither a new immigration destination nor a CEE country, it is not addressed in this book.

0.3 **Forced migrants and refugees**

Ukrainians fleeing the war are mentioned in the literature and in public debate under different terms, such as refugees, war refugees, displaced people, migrants in refugee-like situations and forced migrants, to name a few. At the same time, how we label, categorise and differentiate between migrants – individuals on the move – has ramifications for the legal and moral obligations that receiving states and societies have to them (Sigona, 2018, p. 456). In general, states have obligations to migrants whose asylum rights they have recognised, however, the situation of other groups of forced migrants is less clear with NGOs urging states to accept responsibility for their well-being (Ongenaert, 2019). The situation of those classified as economic migrants is different. If allowed to enter the state, they are expected to demonstrate a high level of independence, which they frequently achieve by being statistically more entrepreneurial than the host country population (Brzozowski, 2024).

As a result, the choice of label in case of migrants is frequently strategic, and thus the labelling used in this volume should be explained. The type of discourse determines the label used. Every day, legal and academic discourse uses different terms. In this book, Ukrainians fleeing the war are classified and referred to as “*forced migrants*” since we believe this phrase best describes their true predicament and is less misleading than the term “refugees”.

Refugees are migrants who receive protection from a host state under the 1951 Geneva Convention because they have a well-founded fear of being persecuted in their home country for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a specific social group or political opinion. As a result, those individuals must submit an application for refugee status, which needs to be judged valid by the host country. Refugees cannot be internally displaced people, including those fleeing natural disasters and widespread violence. Individuals who have crossed international boundaries fleeing generalised violence do not qualify for refugee status under the Convention (Adebayo, 2015). The term “war refugees” was adopted by the Polish government to create a political narrative about Ukrainians escaping war and possibly returning to their country of origin when the war was over. Some Polish politicians utilised it to distinguish between those fleeing the war and those seeking asylum, as well as migrants with legal refugee status. Ukrainians leaving the country in large numbers made it impossible for any neighbouring country to process their individual

applications for refugee status. Therefore in March 2022, the EU granted temporary protection to people fleeing the war in Ukraine without a need for them to submit an individual applications and EU member states adapted this status into their national laws in different ways. Consequently, as Ukrainians fleeing the war do not have legal refugee status, we decided not to use the term refugees or war refugees to describe them but use the phrase “forced refugees” instead.

The term “forced migrants” employed in this book is also the broadest and most accurate among those used to describe current Ukrainian migration, which was induced mostly by push factors and falls on the continuum of choice and coercion. Ukrainian forced migrants are closer to the latter (for more on their decision-making, see [Amit et al., 2024](#)). The term “forced migrants” has no legal connotations as opposed to terms like refugees (those who receive the protection under the Geneva Convention) or asylum seekers (those who wish to become refugees, but are not yet). Forced migrants include refugees, asylum seekers and any other regular and irregular migrants whose migration was coerced rather than voluntary.

0.4 Organisation of the research and methods

The relationship between ICTs and Ukrainian forced migrants in CEE is investigated using pertinent sociological and economic theories, as well as empirical evidence from migration and technology studies. Such an interdisciplinary approach enabled a thorough understanding of the mechanisms and processes related to forced migrants’ decisions, their arrival and transition from one state and society to another, as well as integration or existing impediments – all set within the epigital and polymedia reality in which all actors are immersed and operate.

The book employs a comprehensive review of research and robust qualitative methodologies in the CEE and in the EU perspectives, incorporating not only semi-structured interviews and focus groups with forced migrants, but also expert interviews and panel discussions during Local Advisory Boards (LAB) with policymakers, practitioners and key experts. By involving field experts, policymakers and practitioners, such an approach provides invaluable insights into the national and EU’s strategic approach of using digital technologies to manage and monitor migrants’/forced migrants’ situation. This approach looks critically at the consequences, such as potential impediments, the emergence of broader societal concerns as well as for example infringements of fundamental rights.

The data from all V4 countries are based on the primary research supported mostly by MINTE project,³ but also by the Bolyai Scholarship⁴ in Hungary, and National Science Centre⁵ in Poland. The studies run from 2022 to early 2025. The research included, among other things: a) 40 semi structured interviews with Ukrainian migrants in Poland and Czechia (20 in each country) from autumn 2022 to spring 2023; b) expert interviews in *Poland, Czechia, Hungary* and *Slovakia* (academics, international organisations, NGOs dealing with migrants, authorities); c) focus groups with Ukrainian forced migrants in Poland and Czechia; d) panel discussions as part of a Local Advisory Board (LAB) meeting with various state actors representing various levels of government, NGOs, international organisations in Poland and Czechia. [Appendix 1](#) includes a detailed list of research undertaken.

Snowball sampling was used to gather interviews among Ukrainian forced migrants based on social connections. Their age ranged from 19 to 77. The majority of them were women (85%) with higher education. Experts' interviewees and LAB participants were practitioners and academics, people who professionally deal with migrants such as migration researchers, state and local administration officials, NGOs activists and workers or educational institutions employees. Additionally, [Chapters 3 to 6](#) draw on interviews and panel discussions with various groups of experts: [Chapter 3](#) with representatives of communication operators, [Chapter 4](#) with public authorities of various levels and NGOs, [Chapter 5](#) with public authorities of various levels, NGOs, international actors and [Chapter 6](#) with workers of Frontex's Fundamental Rights Office. These interviews provided diverse perspectives on the implications of technological deployment in migration governance, with a focus on migration management, human rights and data privacy. Data from the interviews were thematically examined to identify recurring themes and concerns about the use of digital technologies.

Panel discussions within the scope of the Local Advisory Board (LAB) meetings were especially beneficial because they were held in each MINTE country each year between 2022 and 2025. The purpose of the LAB meetings was to gather expert feedback on project outcomes such as reports on the use of ICTs by migrants and states, as well as to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas among different actors involved in migrants' reception and integration, and to form recommendations that were later passed on to state administration to include in national policies.

Aside from the above, the secondary data was analysed, based on a) a mapping of the available secondary sources of information and services available to Ukrainian forced migrants in each of the countries, with a special focus on websites operated by national, local and NGOs actors in the field; b) desk research combining a review of policies issued by official agencies of international organisations, their reports, in particular those aid organisations facilitating migrants' wellbeing and integration such as UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and the available secondary sources.

The material gathered, observations shared and ideas formulated by experts and migrants participating in the aforementioned research, as well as secondary data were examined and incorporated into the chapters' content.

0.5 Structure of the book

The content of this book is depicted in [Figure 0.1](#), which presents all of the major themes that appear at the nexus of forced migration and ICTs debate. As shown there, ICTs play a significant role in the migration process, particularly in the initial adaptation of forced migrants. This volume has seven chapters. Each chapter discussed a topic that adds to our understanding of the Ukrainian forced migration to CEE and its subtle interplay with digital technologies, as well as the roles of other actors in CEE countries.

[Chapter 1](#), written by Ewa Ślęzak-Belowska, Marie Jelínková and Giacomo Solano, examines the evolving role of ICTs in shaping migration, with a special

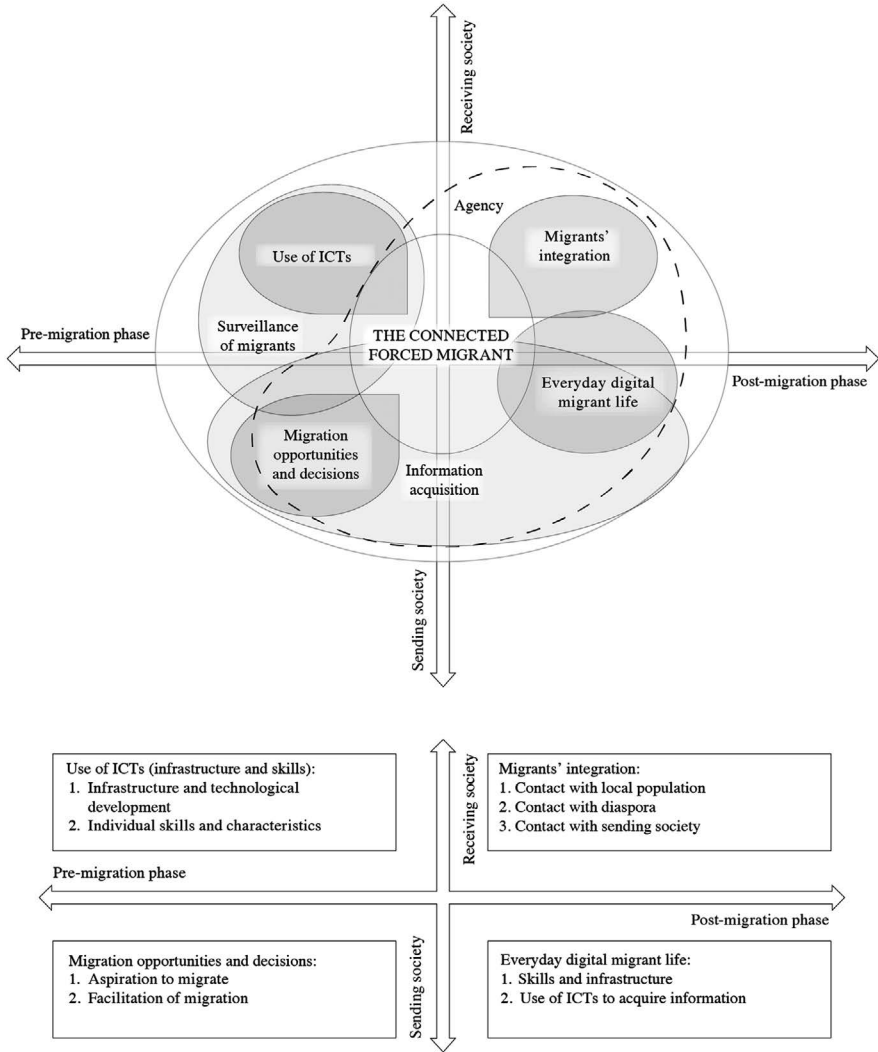


Figure 0.1 The main themes and paradigms of research debate on migrants and ICTs.

Source: own work based on Collin and Karsenti (2012).

focus on forced migration caused by Russia's full-scale aggression on Ukraine in 2022. By beginning with the historical backdrop of the technologies' development and contextualising the source country sending its forced migrants, this chapter analyses how forced migrants use, adapt and create with ICTs, highlighting the intricate interplay between migration and technologies. It also discusses ramifications of ICTs use in this context, providing broad insights into how modern technologies facilitate and complicate the migration experience in CEE countries.

Chapter 2, written by Karin Amit, gives additional insights into the migration decision-making process among forced migrants, with a focus on the role of ICTs in the process. This chapter can help grasping the complexities of the path a connected forced migrant faces. The connected forced migrant begins his or her journey in a pre-migration stage while remaining in the sending country. During this phase, the forced migrant assesses migration prospects and goes through an intensive migration decision-making process. This chapter stresses the role of social media, smartphones and instant messaging services in enabling new types of daily interactions and social experiences with actors in the host society, while remaining in the sending society. During the pre-migration phase, host societies use ICTs to make initial adaptations to absorbing forced migrants. These changes must take into account the distinctive ICTs context in each of the CEE host countries (infrastructure and development), as well as the digital skills and characteristics of the potential forced migrants. The growing importance of ICTs is inextricably related to the role of telecommunications providers, whose participation is critical to guaranteeing connectivity and accessibility. Ukrainian forced migrants tend to use less digital information provided by the authorities, due to both, its limited availability in their origin language and lack of trust in these sources.

Chapter 3, written by Marie Jelínková and Kelly Soderstrom, examines the role of private actors in the reception and integration of Ukrainian forced migrants. In addition to detailing how mobile operators have engaged in assisting Ukraine and Ukrainian migrants in particular V4 countries, the chapter investigates public-private partnerships in essential technological services. It discusses challenges and opportunities that these partnerships provide, as well as the importance of regulatory frameworks for effective management of these relationships. Along with the private sector, the public sector – the state – is involved in the surveillance of forced migrants while they are on the run, and in their initial adaptation process to the host society in the post-migration phase.

Chapter 4, written by Agnieszka Bielewska, Ksenia Naranovich and Igor Lyubashenko, describes how the state, in the meaning of public authorities (central and local), uses ICTs to manage forced migration, by providing information and access to public services. The connected forced migrant employs his or her digital skills, as well as available ICTs, not only during the migration decision-making process, but also upon arrival and during the initial phase of integration in the host society. The connected forced migrants also use ICTs to maintain transnational diasporic ties with the host society, as well as to form new ties in the host society. States utilise this dependency to manage migration by providing specific information. They also rely on ICTs to deliver public services in an often unsuccessful attempt to improve access while keeping costs low.

To complete our comprehension of the journey of the connected forced migrants, *Chapter 5* by Ewa Ślęzak-Belowska and Beáta Paragi discusses ICTs and forced migrants' integration in CEE countries. These countries are distinguished by their multi-level and multi-actor governance. Given the complexity of the regulatory and policy architecture, as well as the diversity of stakeholders willing to assist, digital technologies appear to be emerging as a survival tool to help

migrants navigate their lives and support stakeholders' activities towards their integration and settlement. Taking into account various national contexts, the activities of non-state actors and international actors are examined, as they complement the state in aid to forced migrants. Their actions are not only significant but also ingrained in the technologies used. By looking at different examples, the authors demonstrate how Ukrainian forced migrants and other actors use ICTs to form networks, support integration, create new communities and interact with other communities and states.

Because the book focuses on CEE countries, it is important to consider the pan-European perspective. *Chapter 6*, written by Sinem Yilmaz and Tuba Bircan, discusses the role of ICTs in EU migration governance following the massive forced migration influx of Ukrainians to EU countries. The chapter presents a comprehensive descriptive analysis of current trends in the usage of ICTs at various stages of migration, including border crossing and entry, asylum applications and residence permit processing. This is demonstrated in two comparable contexts, i.e. the friendly border regime of Ukraine, where forced migrants are welcomed and entrusted with the temporary protection solution, and the unfriendly border regime, which is highly securitised, full of technologies, army and walls defending entry into the EU.

In the book's final chapter, *Chapter 7*, the editors summarise and discuss technological challenges in the migration process based on the dilemmas, controversies and risks recorded and noticed in the previous six chapters. The chapter also offers a list of recommendations to policymakers and public authorities how to use technologies in the context of forced migration. In the book's final conclusion, it is argued that ICTs have heavily influenced the status of countries that have become the NID states discussed here, and that without them, smooth reception and initial integration would not have been feasible.

The graph above shows how the book's considerations are organised. We draw on existing literature on ICTs and migration to better understand how they intersect in the case of Ukrainian forced migration in CEE. This literature includes paradigms in digital studies by [Candidatu et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Leurs and Prabhakar \(2018\)](#) that focus on: (1) migrants in cyberspace; (2) everyday digital migrant life; and (3) migrants as data. Furthermore, the discourse areas on ICTs and migration, as highlighted by [Brown et al. \(2019\)](#) and [Masiero & von Deden \(2022\)](#), are considered seeing technologies as tools for: (1) controlling migrants and managing migration flows; (2) acquiring information and knowledge about migration; and (3) providing migrants' integration and inclusion (for more see [Chapter 1](#)).

This approach seeks to combine relevant discourses and paradigms to investigate the transformative impact of ICTs on migrants, particularly Ukrainian forced migrants in Central and Eastern Europe. Thus, it includes the following aspects, which refer to various discourses and paradigms:

- Decision-making: This encompasses everyday digital migrant life, migrants in cyberspace and the acquisition of information and knowledge about migration.
- Informing and communicating with migrants: This involves the state and private sector, covering aspects such as migrants in cyberspace, everyday digital

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migrant life, migrants as data, controlling migrants and managing migration flows, and acquisition of information and knowledge about migration.

- Integration of migrants: This includes the roles of state and non-state actors, focusing on migrants in cyberspace, everyday digital migrant life and acquisition of information and knowledge about migration.

By addressing these factors, the approach aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how ICTs affect Ukrainian forced migrants in the CEE region, as well as how migrants affect destination countries.

Notes

- 1 CEE countries are EU member states which were part of the former Eastern bloc, namely: Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Croatia. The four CEE discussed in detail in this book are Poland, Czechia, Hungary and Slovakia.
- 2 We are referring here to the alliance formed officially in the town of Visegrád on February 15, 1991, between Poland, Hungary and then Czechoslovakia to strengthen their military, economic, cultural and energy cooperation, as well as facilitate their admission to the EU.
- 3 This book was created as part of the MINTE (Migrant Integration Through Education) project, which was funded with the support of the European Commission under the Erasmus+ program. Project number: 2022-1-CZ01-KA220-HED- 000087425.
- 4 Research on the Hungarian case was partially financed by the Bolyai Scholarship (2024–2027, funded by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences). Officials were contacted to map digitalisation experiences in the context of aiding Ukrainians in Hungary, see the references section for the list. The co-author of this work appreciates the interviewees' participation and engagement, and accepts her responsibility for any potential inaccuracies.
- 5 National Science Centre, Poland, grant no. 2022/45/B/HS5/00933.

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