

# “Resilience and vulnerability of Ukrainians: The role of family during the war”

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# RESILIENCE AND VULNERABILITY OF UKRAINIANS: THE ROLE OF FAMILY DURING THE WAR

## Abstract

The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine led to numerous physical and moral challenges. The paper aims to estimate the role of family as a social resilience driver in managing wartime challenges on a regional level. It used the online survey method based on Google Forms and online focus-group interviews in September–November 2022. Household members (1,089 respondents) of Kyiv, Lviv, Zakarpattia, Mykolaiv, Sumy, Chernihiv, and Dnipropetrovsk territorial communities were surveyed. Most respondents generally positively assess Ukraine's prospects; 59% believe that the situation in the country will most likely improve. During war escalation, 67.2% of respondents waited for family support, and 48.8% helped their relatives, but relying on family support did not increase their safety expectations. In communities that did not increase their activity level in response to the war by one percentage point, the "feeling unsafe" responses increased by 1.8 percentage points, which means that an active civil position is also responsible for feeling safe (other things being equal) and increasing society's resilience. At the same time, even in wartime, the indicators of social atomization are quite high, as 46.2% relied only on themselves and solved their problems independently, without anyone's help. Therefore, developing family relations is one of the effective mechanisms for raising internal human resources to manage wartime challenges.

## Keywords

war in Ukraine, family resilience, social trust, security, sociological survey, expectations

## JEL Classification

H56, J12, Z13

## INTRODUCTION

Since the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, Ukrainians have been demonstrating strong resilience, with families becoming a significant factor in countries' resilience. During 2022, there was a four percent increase in marriages, a record level for the previous three years. For the first half of 2022, there were over 100,000 new marriages. Meanwhile, divorces fell by 40%, the lowest index for the past nine years (Opendatabot, 2023). According to the Rating Sociology Group (2023), 44% of Ukrainians had to leave their families temporarily, and usually, such cases were detected in Ukraine's Eastern (54%) and Western (39%) regions. Leaving one's family and moving to another territory in wartime is a mentally heavy challenge, as people do not know when they can return to relatives. On the other hand, family helps with psychological support and war adaptation.

Despite the constant destructive Russian attacks on Ukrainian cities, most territorial communities look to the future and form their strategies and plans for recovery and development. Of course, those plans are currently available only to communities located outside the zone of hostilities. Along with this, the reconstruction after the war creates a feeling of "life on hold." The survival strategy followed by the majority of Ukrainians, communities, and Ukraine as a whole can lead to

marginalization. Instead, the question arises whether it is worth planning development in war conditions. Are individuals, families, and communities able to develop positively during the war? What are development and resilience during the war? That is why it is worth understanding the source of social stability of Ukrainians during the war and the role of family in ensuring social stability and managing the wartime challenges at the regional level.

## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

During 2022–2023, thousands of publications were published on the Russia-Ukraine war, but only a few are devoted to family and population resilience. As a human phenomenon, resilience has been researched deeply, spanning several approaches. Ukrainian and foreign authors use the notion of social resilience within different units (international entities, countries, authorities, local communities, social groups, families, and persons) (Glavovic et al., 2002). Social resilience can range from global to individual levels. For the past five years, there has been a significant interest in resilience to political events that affect people. In particular, social and environmental challenges may urge people to do resilient activities (Helmreich, 1992; Lazarus, 1991). There are many other resilience aspects, e.g., psychology (Masten & Narayan, 2012), family health (Walsh, 1996), and COVID-19 (Kostenko et al., 2021). If analyzing resilience to COVID-19, its spawn was thoroughly studied in China as a place of origin (He et al., 2022). Later, people from other countries got epidemic resistance, and researchers focused on regional peculiarities, e.g., in Southeast Asia (Gala et al., 2022) or Africa (Rich et al., 2022). In Europe, it is Italy where the COVID-19 effects were most severe, although population resilience put the situation under control (Ren, 2020). Previous studies on Ukrainian resilience to the COVID-19 pandemic (Kostenko et al., 2021) showed specific atomization in the community.

Modern empirical research deals with social resilience from contrasting perspectives, comparing the current resilience with the past one. A vivid example is the Second World War and UK behavior. Thus, COVID-19 correlates with Britain's resilience to the London bombing by Germany (Jones, 2021). Scientists contrast today's Ukrainian resilience against war with the German and Red Army rapes during the Berlin Offensive. In particular,

there were studies among children of raped females: how they succeeded in mental and social adaptation (Schwartz, 2020). Experts also researched social resilience to recent military conflicts. In Asia, there were tensions in Vietnam and Korea. The Vietnam War took place from 1955 to 1975, and two ideologies collided: Northern Vietnam (supported by the USSR and China) and Southern Vietnam (supported by the USA). McCoy (2020) investigated the local population resilience and its consideration by the American mind. Since 1948, there have been constant Korean tensions between Seoul and Pyongyang, which affects their population. Shin (2019) researched the social resilience of these communities within political and economic differences between the two Koreas.

There were some other Asian examples of resilience development to overcome urgent social problems. In Pakistan, Muzamil et al. (2021) studied the role of formal and informal institutions in recovering from the 2010 flood in the wartime Swat District. The study concluded that institutions contribute to solving social problems significantly. However, uneven relations between authorities can prevent them from minimizing post-crisis damages. Simultaneously, in Sri Lanka, Jayawardana et al. (2019) analyzed post-flood resettlement and resilience to its consequences. The war-caused resettlement changes community resilience to disasters. Jayawardana et al. (2019) compared the resilience of two groups to floods: internally displaced persons in 2010 and victims of local community conflicts. The samples concerned the most flood-affected rural areas. Their analysis resulted in entirely different resilience levels to floods. Precisely, local communities succeeded in both social capital and resilience. Integrating internally displaced persons into local communities will likely raise flood resilience.

Resilience is essential to manage social challenges in Africa and the Middle East. There were crises in Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq. Huber and Woertz

(2021) compared local risks in these countries and defined how resilience can prevent public violence and disorders through social trust, legitimacy, and institutionalism. Restricted entrance and exit with legitimacy threats affect resilience. Collective memory, reconciliation, and institutional flexibility contribute to resilience.

Concerning Europe, a prominent event was the USSR Collapse, when the sovereignty procession of former Soviet republics provoked similar inter-ethnic ambitions in Yugoslavia. In contrast to a relatively peaceful USSR dissolution, the Yugoslavian variant was a bloody clash in the 1990s. Therefore, the local population got used to wartime life. Pilav (2018) analyzed social resilience among Bosnians in Sarajevo during the Yugoslavian conflict.

A lot of attention is currently paid to Ukraine (Kupenko et al., 2023). Even before the full-scale Russian invasion, there were attempts to develop a national resilience concept within the Ukrainian democratic society. Korolchuk (2021) finds it reasonable to apply synergetic and practical cooperation between authorities and citizens to make the nation and country resilient. It can promote democratic development in very turbulent circumstances. The study singles out the main Ukrainian threats and defines national resilience. People should recognize them and their connection with government and local authorities to link national security and resilience.

Meanwhile, researchers are also interested in the current Russian-Ukrainian war and strengthening Ukraine's resilience. According to Terzyan (2022), the war caused humanitarian, political, economic, and social challenges. Therefore, it is the preliminary planning of post-war recovery that matters. Although local agents, institutions, and resources are relevant here, external aid is also necessary. The war is a resilience test for EU solidarity to resolve the crisis, and Ukrainian post-war recovery is critical in settling "the Russian problem in Ukraine." Kupenko et al. (2023) conducted a sociological study of the Russian-Ukrainian war and found that even vulnerable Ukrainians had been demonstrating resilience. According to Lavreniuk et al. (2023), the Russian invasion of Ukraine was associated with business relocations to safer western and central regions

of Ukraine, which accounted for more than 70% of displaced businesses.

Additionally, some new business models appear in Ukraine and the EU to succeed in wartime and post-wartime recovery. Boichenko et al. (2023) find it reasonable to apply smart business models. The article examines the impact of smart business models, driven by technology, entrepreneurship, and sustainable practices, on the resilience and development of these regions, especially considering the challenges posed by the ongoing war in Ukraine. Often, researchers compare several business models to find the optimal efficiency in Ukrainian wartime recovery (Oblój & Voronovska, 2024). Also, war economic recovery can be contrasted to other crisis management in Ukraine and abroad. As an example, Štastná et al. (2024) compared overcoming five Czech financial crises with the business recovery in Ukraine during the current war. Opataska et al. (2024) targeted local business problems in Ukraine and methods to tackle these issues. Finally, affected enterprises should be restored to eliminate food shortage – both in Ukraine and abroad, especially concerning African countries whose sustainable development directly depends on adequate food supplies worldwide (Jreisat, 2023; Mhlanga & Ndhlovu, 2023). Ukrainian contribution is significant, which makes the wartime and post-wartime recovery as urgent as possible.

Great attention is paid to family as a prominent force in overcoming social problems. S. Wolin and S. J. Wolin (1993) and S. Wolin (1999) described family as a resilience and vulnerability factor via "models of challenge" and "models of damage." Sadia et al. (2020) analyzed family resilience to disasters in terms of floods. They defined tools to assess family resilience accurately (having classified four topics, five categories, and fifteen subcategories to estimate family resilience in flood regions). Dubus (2018) compared the resilience of two families' behaviors fleeing Syria battles, differing in resettlement challenges and resilience factors. The families had the same services after arrival, but their integration abilities differed. The question of children's resilience is also urgent. For example, J. D. Osofsky and H. J. Osofsky (2018) studied the resilience of children and teens to disasters regarding adaptation to threats and local infrastructure changes. Special school programs for psychologi-

cal recovery were created to raise youth resilience. Both individual and community efforts are essential for youth recovery after disasters. Jafari et al. (2022) dealt with young refugees and detected factors of their resilience to adapt/recover properly. There can be age gradation in resilience studies. Therefore, experts single out wartime resilience for pupils and students. Veronese and Barola (2018) offer school curricula with survival courses for the Gaza Strip pupils who suffered from war and violence. They assess the purpose of such work: schoolchildren must have positive emotions, be optimistic, and be satisfied with life to prevent post-traumatic reactions after wars.

When the full-scale war phase began, many Ukrainian refugees fled to Europe. Respectively, they faced many challenges to get used to and cope with. Biesiada et al. (2023) studied how medical services are provided for Ukrainian refugees in European states. Different medical policies in separate states produced refugees' attitudes toward the acquired medical aid. Along with it, Rzepka et al. (2023) analyzed the mental disorders of Ukrainians staying abroad since the invasion. Germany is one of the largest countries to provide mental aid.

On the other hand, Dimitrov and Pavlov (2023), Kubiciel-Lodzińska et al. (2024), and Walawender et al. (2024) review the economic integration of Ukrainians and their employment problems. For the whole time of full-scale combats, an attitude toward Ukrainian refugees, to their living and working abroad, changed obviously. A good example is the findings by Haase et al. (2024), which dealt with refugees' housing ambitions in five European cities when the Ukrainian evacuation began. Moreover, Moise et al. (2024) represented the current attitude of foreigners toward arriving Ukrainians, which differs from the initial warm welcome.

Family resilience is also vividly represented by relationships between women and their children when staying in Ukraine or fleeing to Europe. Females are strongly supported by international communities as a sign of solidarity (Pavlova et al., 2023; Sasunkevich, 2024). Regardless of war problems, children would like to return to Ukraine as their native home (Toros et al., 2024). In this

sphere, education emerged as an adaptation challenge abroad. Not only pupils but also students face the same issue if they stay in European states during the war (Herbst & Sitek, 2023). Since February 24, 2022, Kurapov et al. (2023) have investigated the students' resilience to the mental influence of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The research participants reported psychological problems (depression, tiredness, loneliness, nervous tension, and anger) and used more medicines, alcohol, and tobacco. Therefore, the results confirm negative war consequences among students. However, there is a need for new studies to make resilience data more accurate (including the long-term perspective).

Along with the youth, specialists are also interested in the resilience of elderly persons as war witnesses. Lee et al. (2022) outline the resilience of Vietnam veterans, defining the vulnerability and resilience classes among Vietnam veterans living in South Korea via analysis of post-traumatic symptoms, stress disorders, and mental health states. The most efficient factors to strengthen resilience are optimism, positive assessment of military service, and support from their families, friends, and peers.

Apart from wartime civilians, soldiers' resilience is also topical, and during the Russian-Ukrainian war. Prykhodko et al. (2022) consider the state of new soldiers in the Ukrainian Armed Forces, the National Guard of Ukraine, and volunteer battalions who faced the death of their companions. The study defined the post-traumatic mental influence and produced the typology of soldiers' resilience to emergencies. The following four resilience groups were classified: "apprehended danger," "open to danger," "assumed victim," and "hidden fear." The results showed that self-identifying with acute stress disorder symptoms affects the anxiety buffer. Regardless of wartime horror, families keep surviving and giving birth to descendants. According to Denov et al. (2019), wartime refugees not only flee but also recover, develop, and even transfer their adaptation skills to the next generation.

The literature review reflects stochastic resilience changes among target groups during crises when stronger resilience is likely in tight family and social relations.

Thus, the paper aims to estimate the role of family as a social resilience driver in managing wartime challenges on regional levels. There are several hypotheses related to the research aim:

- H1: *The relatives' support increases human resilience during the war.*
- H2: *More active civil positions contribute to stronger resilience and better societal safety indicators.*

## 2. METHOD

The sociological polls were conducted in September–November 2022. It comprised communities of Kyiv, Lviv, Zakarpattia, Mykolaiv, Sumy, Chernihiv, and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts in Ukraine. As a research method, the study used online questionnaire polling. There were 1,089 civil representatives of separate households (one person was polled in each household). The analysis covers respondents staying in local communities and evacuated to other Ukrainian oblasts or abroad. It is the third wave of social resilience studies by the Sumy State University team: the first – January 2021 (COVID-19), the second – March–May 2022 (full-scale invasion beginning), and the third – September–November 2022 (“adaptation” to the war). The target group is residents living or evacuated into the abovementioned communities (Social Research Center of Sumy State University, 2022). The empirical findings of the first two waves of social resilience were presented by Kostenko et al. (2022) and Kupenko et al. (2023).

From the methodological point of view, the assessment of social family resilience is based on certain indexes (Cannon, 2008): availability of livelihood, welfare, security feeling, affordable social services, public participation, and management. In other words, social resilience is assessed via the abili-

ties of affected families to recover from wartime challenges.

Describing the studying population, the polls covered various households: 12.4% – one person; 21.2% – two persons; 25.3% – three persons; 28.4% – four persons; 12.7% – over four persons. A considerable part of families reflect multiple vulnerabilities (Table 1).

Theoretical sample error does not exceed 3.1%. Extra regular deviations may be caused by consequences of the full-scale russian invasion (e.g., resettlement of millions of citizens).

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

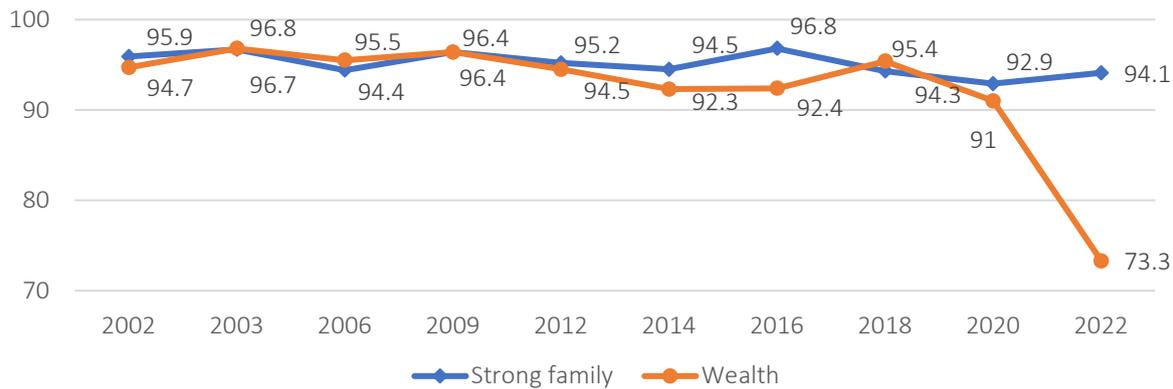
The war has rearranged national values and priorities in Ukraine. For 20 years of monitoring, the Institute of Sociology at the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences has observed stronger family values and weaker wealth. Figure 1 shows such variations in 2014 and 2022 (the russian aggression and full-scale invasion, respectively). In other words, it reflects how affected people reassessed their priorities.

According to Polishchuk et al. (2023), the financial behavior of Ukrainians residing in Ukraine and Poland showed common patterns (e.g., cash flows controlling the personal budget and forming reserves for different types of crises). However, on the eve of war in Ukraine, about 30% of Ukrainians in Ukraine and 25% in Poland had reserved for the period 1–3 months. In both countries, the majority of respondents claim they have sources for unforeseen expenses from their reserves. Focus group interviews confirm communication changes between family and relatives. Since the full-scale invasion, many respondents have kept in touch with their close relatives. Besides, dialogue between distant relatives also improved,

**Table 1.** Polled households according to their vulnerabilities

Vulnerabilities in households	One person	Two persons	Over two persons	No vulnerable persons
Amount of minors (under 18 years)	30.6	13.1	3.2	53.1
Amount of elderly people (over 60 years)	19.9	9.6	1.9	68.5
Amount of disabled members	11.9	1.4	0.2	86.6
Amount of displaced members	8.9	6.2	11.9	72.9
Amount of unemployed people	28.5	15	5.8	50.8

Source: Zhulienova (2023).



**Figure 1.** Values and priorities of Ukrainians. Dynamic changes, %

even though previously, there was bad or no understanding. The usual explanation for it was family separation and security lack.

While family values rise during the beginning of the war, wartime family resilience is likely to fall because of more vulnerable groups. Accordingly, every second Ukrainian family has unemployed persons (49.2%), elderly members (31.5%), disabled people (13.4%), and 12.4% of respondents are single. The data are retrieved from the Social Research Center of Sumy State University (2022). Due to the war, there are new vulnerable groups: widows, orphans, families with dead, wounded or missed members, and veterans. One-third of Ukrainian families parted from their relatives. Among 37.8% of families, there are displaced members. The most displaced citizens come from Mykolaiv (58.3%), Kyiv (46.6%), and Chernihiv oblasts (43.6%). The reason is regular Russian attacks on civil infrastructure (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Resettlement of Ukrainian residents during the full-scale Russian invasion

Oblast	Displaced/Returned	Staying
Kyiv	46.6	53.4
Lviv	32	68
Zakarpattia	35.2	64.8
Mykolaiv	58.3	41.7
Sumy	25.8	74.2
Chernihiv	43.6	56.4
Dnipropetrovsk	27.9	72.1

Note: As of September–November 2022.

More often, families from Kyiv (21%) and Lviv (24.9%) oblasts positively evaluate their current socio-economic status. Whereas represen-

tatives of households from Sumy (14.5%) and Dnipropetrovsk (11.8%) oblasts more often reply, “It is not enough even for basic needs (food, utility bills, medicine).” Half of the respondents in these regions (54.6% and 50.7%, respectively) pointed out they have enough money for basic needs but not more. In the risk group, a large number of households from Mykolaiv (51%) and Zakarpattia (49.3%) oblasts only have enough for basic needs.

Satisfaction of physiological needs for food, water, clothing, shelter, recreation, and medical care is the basis for survival. In wartime conditions, the financial situation of more than 30% of families worsened due to a reduction in the share of wages and salaries (18.9% – men; 15.3% – women; 15% – other family members); loss of official job (10.2% – men; 9.4% – women; 9.1% – other family members); loss of unofficial job (4.7% – men; 2.2% – women; 3.9% – other family members).

Men more often than other household members fall into the situation of loss of work. On the other hand, women predominated in the group of unemployed even before the war. In 16.7% of households, women are still not working, which indicates the strengthening of gender gaps in access to the labor market. On the other hand, in the conditions of martial law, men are more often employed officially (5% of men, 3.7% of women, and 5.1% of other family members) and unofficially (3.2% of men, 2.6% of women, and 4.6% of other family members).

Only about 30% of the families interviewed tried to solve their employment issues (26.4% were looking for paid work, and another 6.2% were trying to start

**Table 3.** Home return plans during the full-scale russian invasion

Oblasts	Everybody returned	Not everybody returned	Plan to return	Plan to stay in another Ukrainian region	Plan to stay abroad	Did not leave home
Kyiv	26.6	5.2	11.7	2.8	5.5	51
Lviv	16.6	2.4	8.3	2.4	7.7	66.3
Zakarpattia	1.4	1.4	29.6	7	2.8	60.6
Mykolaiv	9.4	8.3	39.6	5.2	9.4	38.5
Sumy	10.3	4.1	9.3	1	3.1	73.2
Chernihiv	30.9	4.3	6.4	0	6.4	55.3
Dnipropetrovsk	12.1	2.2	10.3	3.7	4	70.2
TOTAL	17.2	3.9	13.8	3	5.5	60.1

Note: As of September–November 2022.

their own businesses). At the same time, 38.4% of families did not make such attempts, and a third (29.1%) noted that they did not need to look for a job.

Table 3 indicates that 4.1–14.6% of displaced residents would not return to their households. The data vary in particular oblasts. As for the Chernihiv oblast, 30.9% of displaced persons returned home (within 43.6% of all displaced people). As for the Zakarpattia oblast, 1.4% of displaced persons came back home (within 35.2% of all displaced people).

Voznyak et al. (2023) used in-depth interviews based on questionnaires for war-caused displaced people in Ukraine. They found a low integration level for internally displaced people and a lack of desire to assimilate into the host society, caused mainly by intentions to return to their previous (permanent) place of residence.

Most of the displaced people were females with children. At the same time, many respondents did not want to leave their homes for security issues and lack of money. The displacement of females with children rearranged gender roles significantly. Previously, women were usually in charge of home routine, children’s upbringing, and care for disabled or elderly relatives. According to the UN gender analysis in Ukraine, today’s displaced females must combine work with care for children abroad.

**Table 4.** The psychological state of family members

Psychological state	Male	Female	Minors (as to parents’ assessment)	Other family members
Entirely satisfied	22.14	18.05	31.25	18.37
Rather satisfied	52.95	52.49	53.39	56.04
Rather unsatisfied	20.22	23.13	13.04	20.25
Entirely unsatisfied	4.69	6.33	2.23	5.34

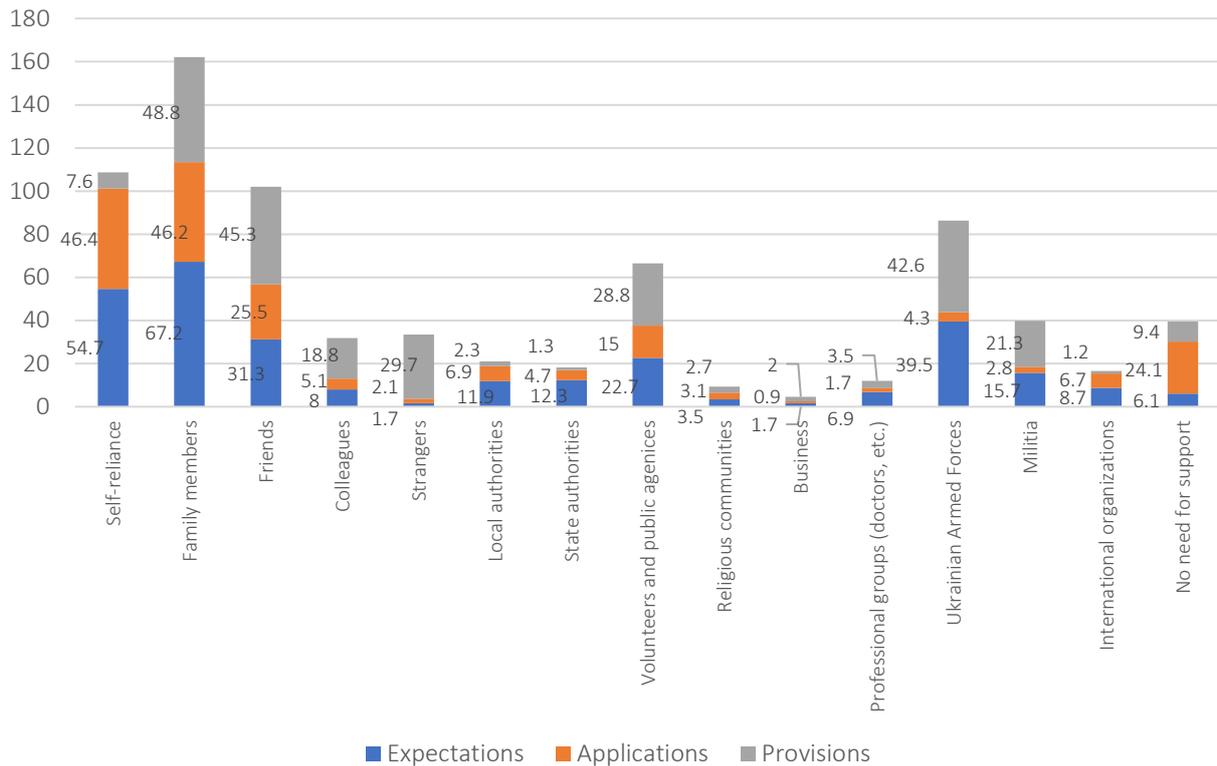
Note: As of September–November 2022.

At the same time, males and elderly members staying in Ukraine must do their home routine alone. That may affect family relations, livelihood affordability, and resilience (UN Ukraine, 2022).

Danger and uncertainty feelings are likely to cause stress and nervous tension. However, over half of the respondents (from 52.95% to 56.04% in different groups) regard the psychological state of their family members as rather satisfactory. On the contrary, a quarter of adults are unsatisfied (Table 4).

The polls demonstrate high assistance and trust among family members that individuals can rely on. During war escalation, 67.2% of respondents waited for family support. Simultaneously, 48.8% helped their relatives and 46.2% applied for social support (Figure 2).

Most respondents generally positively assess Ukraine’s prospects. 59% believe that the situation in the country will most likely improve. It is worth saying that COVID-19 defined family as the primary social resilience factor of Ukrainians. Having been asked about the COVID-19 deterioration, 78% of poll participants relied on their family support. During 2022, 55.4% applied for help, while 61.2% assisted themselves (Kostenko et al., 2022). Simultaneously, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the intensification of domestic, gender-based violence is evident (Prus,



Note: Respondents could select several answers. Therefore, the total values of each index exceed 100% (as of September–November 2022).

Figure 2. Support expectations, applications, and provisions

2022). At the same time, even in wartime, the indicators of social atomization are quite high, as 46.2% of respondents said that they rely only on themselves and solve their problems independently, without anyone’s help.

Assessments of one’s own security currently differ significantly in different areas. Respondents from Dnipropetrovsk, Sumy, and Chernihiv oblasts feel more or less safe at home. More than a third of the surveyed in Zakarpattia and Lviv oblasts feel entirely safe at home. On the other

hand, more than a third of Mykolaiv oblast respondents said they feel unsafe at home (Table 5).

The predominance of “more or less safe” evaluations inclines to a conclusion about insecurity in one’s own security in the emerging situation. It is important to compare the individual-level activity as an answer to the war (Table 6). Kuppenko et al. (2023) noted that according to the “Well-being and baseline status” factor, 66.3% of respondents confirmed an increase in their activity in response to the war.

Table 5. Subjective level of own security at home

Oblasts	Quite safe	More or less safe	Unsafe
Kyiv	21.4	62.1	16.6
Lviv	36.1	60.9	3
Zakarpattia	33.8	63.4	2.8
Mykolayiv	12.5	52.1	35.4
Sumy	14.4	73.2	12.4
Chernihiv	23.4	64.9	11.7
Dnipropetrovsk	11.4	75	13.6

**Table 6.** Have the members of your family become more active in answering the war challenges (by region)?

Oblasts	Yes	No	Hard to say
Kyiv	67.9	30.3	1.7
Lviv	77.5	20.7	1.8
Zakarpattia	76.1	23.9	0
Mykolayiv	59.4	37.5	3.1
Sumy	76.3	22.7	1
Chernihiv	73.4	26.6	0
Dnipropetrovsk	73.5	26.1	0.4

As seen in Table 6, many noted the growth of their own activity, with respondents from Lviv, Zakarpattia, and Sumy oblasts indicating such growth more often. On the other hand, surveyed residents of Kyiv and Mykolaiv oblasts more often note that such activity has not increased – 30.3% and 37.5%, respectively.

The study further combined the information on the “subjective level of own security at home” and the “active position of family members in response to the war.” Thus, it estimated a specific regression model. The dependent variable is “feeling unsafe,” while the explanatory variable is “did not increase activity level in response to the war” (Table 7).

Taking the coefficients from Table 7, it is possible to build a separate regression equation:

$$Feel\ unsafe = 1.818 \cdot Did\ not\ increase\ activity\ level - 35.15 \tag{1}$$

The last means that for the communities that did not increase their activity level by ten percentage points in response to the war, the “feeling unsafe” responses would increase by eighteen percentage points. Therefore, an active civil position is also responsible for feeling safe if other things are equal.

**Table 7.** Empirical estimation of relations between active position by family members during the war and feeling safe

Source	SS	df	MS			
Model	627.5	1	627.57139	Number of obs = 7 F (1, 5) = 34.59 Prob > F = 0.0020 R-squared = 0.8737 Adj R-squared = 0.8485 Root MSE = 4.2592		
Residual	90.705	5	18.14116			
Total	718.277214	6	119.712869			
Feel unsafely	Coefficient	Std.err.	t	P> t	[95% conf. interval]	
Did not increase activity level	1.818882	.309247	5.88	0.002	1.023 2.613	
_cons	-35.15514	8.45139	-4.16	0.009	-56.88 -13.43	

The study confirms H2: More active civil positions contribute to stronger resilience and better societal safety indicators. One has to consider the location of responses since closeness to the war battles did not increase the safety level. The logic behind H2 is that active position reduces the atomization within the society (broken social ties, isolation of people from each other), and supports cohesion within the community. Helping other people has several benefits: first of all, it supports cohesion within the community, and second, it positively influences the person who helps (benefactor) since he/she could expect similar help from other people. Developing family relations in local communities is thought to be an effective mechanism for raising internal human resources to manage war-time challenges and enhance social resilience.

The paper rejects H1: The relatives’ support does not increase human resilience during the war (Appendix A, Tables A1-2.) Social trust is a constant factor in Ukrainian resilience. Such intense problems as war significantly increase the desire to bond with relatives and friends. Also, other related challenges like gender-based and domestic violence can become acute. In August 2023, Foroudi (2023) revealed that during the first five months of 2023 in Ukraine, registered cases of domestic violence increased compared to the same period the previous year. The vast majority of victims

of gender-based violence are women members of households or families. Stress, economic hardship, unemployment, and conflict-related trauma are fueling an increase in domestic violence, which is a byproduct of war (Fernandez-Powell, 2023; GBV AoR Helpdesk, 2022). Therefore, if the above

mentioned byproducts of war would increase, the relying on help from family would not improve the feeling safe and resilience indicators. Further studies should discuss the relevance of communication and empathy for family resilience (as a factor of stabilization and calmness).

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## CONCLUSION

In response to the full-scale Russian invasion, Ukrainian men and women demonstrated considerable resilience. The paper aimed to estimate the role of family as a social resilience driver in managing wartime challenges on regional levels.

As of September–November 2022, 59% of respondents believed that the situation would most likely improve in Ukraine, but during war escalation, 67.2% of respondents waited for family support, and 48.8% helped their relatives. There is a strong correlation between an active civil position and “feeling unsafe.” The sociological polls and proper econometric modeling suggested that communities that did not increase their activity level by ten percentage points in response to the war would have, on average, eighteen percentage points higher “feeling unsafe” indicator. Therefore, local authorities should pay more attention to supporting and mobilizing communities for different social activities to stimulate resilience. The paper failed to prove the hypothesis that relying on family help would increase the safety confidence. Safety confidence is directly related to the closeness of war combats/air raids, and the other factors must be researched more deeply.

The current war combats and future recovery plans make it reasonable to enhance Ukrainian resilience via the family institute. Since the social atomization indicators are quite high (46.2%), to withstand the war, it is necessary to improve not only national resilience but also that of families. Considering that the smallest social stability unit is family, local authorities and central government must consider its potential to resist the war and recover properly.

Families and individuals had to make difficult decisions about their own safety and livelihood, but there was a tendency to strengthen family relationships during the first stage of war. Friendly relations between people also worked to a certain extent and were strengthened in response to war events. Ukrainian men and women accumulated considerable internal resources and abilities and rallied and united others around them. Cohesion, availability, and access to resources made it possible to persevere.

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## APPENDIX A

**Table A1.** Empirical estimation of relations between feeling completely safe and relying on help from family

Source	SS	Df	MS	Number of obs = 7		
Model	80.91696	1	80.91696	F(1, 5) = 0.78 Prob > F = 0.4180		
Residual	519.68012	5	103.93602	R-squared = 0.1347 Adj R-squared = -0.0383		
Total	600.59709	6	100.09951	Root MSE = 10.195		
<b>feel completely safe</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Std.err.</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P&gt; t </b>	<b>[95% conf.interval]</b>	
rely on help from family	-.384124	.435346	-0.88	0.418	-1.50322	.7349702
_cons	39.31835	20.1612	1.95	0.109	-12.50788	91.14458

**Table A2.** Empirical estimation of relations between feeling feel more or less safe and relying on help from family

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs = 7		
Model	.9937252	1	.993725274	F(1, 5) = 0.01 Prob > F = 0.9109		
Residual	358.7948	5	71.758965	R-squared = 0.0028 Adj R-squared = -0.1967		
Total	359.7885	6	59.9647584	Root MSE = 8.4711		
<b>feel more or less safe</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Std.err.</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P&gt; t </b>	<b>[95% conf.interval]</b>	
rely on help from family	.0425682	.361735	0.12	0.911	-.8873011	.9724376
_cons	62.57926	16.7522	3.74	0.013	19.51622	105.6423