

EU RESPONSE TO THE UKRAINIAN REFUGEE CRISIS: A LIBERALIST TRIUMPH

Abstract:	<i>The military confrontation which started in Ukraine on 24th February 2024, designated a new era in European and world history. The landscape of ensuring security in Europe has significantly transformed and continues to evolve, affecting various aspects of daily life. The need to adapt to these changes has become crucial in ways that were previously unimaginable. A notable development during this period is the influx of Ukrainian refugees who have fled their homeland in search of a more peaceful future. This situation underscores the dynamic and complex challenges faced by European nations in the realm of security and migration. Their movement to the EU in large numbers has raised multiple questions and challenges for the EU Member states, which had to find new ways to address and solve them. Despite the tremendous number of hardships that needed to be overcome in the process the cooperation and collaboration in the EU among Member states has not slowed down but on the contrary has tightened, consolidated, and reached a new level of existence in line with the liberal theory of International Relations.</i>
Keywords:	Refugees; Ukrainian refugee crisis; EU; Republic of Moldova; liberalism
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Introduction

When investigating the liberal theory in International Relations and emphasizing its core tenets, one comes to observe the deep liberal ropes that entangle themselves around all aspects of today's life in all its intricacy and complexity. The EU response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis is an example of it. As such, one can choose from the many characteristics of the liberalist theory amongst them being interdependence, the role of international institutions, the Democratic Peace Theory as well as the role of norms and non-state actors and verify them against the actions that were taken by the EU in its response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis⁴⁸⁶.

All the above-mentioned traits of liberalism do count one fundamental mechanism of international interaction, namely cooperation. Precisely in this manner, the EU member states went about in their strategy of addressing the refugee crisis. In the case of interdependence, it emphasizes economic interdependence, and the cooperative behavior of the EU Member states, which stresses the supposition that states have mutual interests in maintaining stable and prosperous relations. In the case of international institutions, it shows the positive role of international institutions which provide platforms for states to cooperate and address collective action problems as is the case of the EU response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis. Finally, the Democratic Peace Theory, the idea that democratic states are less likely to go to war with each other due to the shared values, the constraints of the institutions, and transparent decision-making processes underscores the expectation that democratic states would engage in more cooperative international behavior as is the case of the EU response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis. In the case of norms and non-state actors it is observed how both contribute to the cooperation and impact state behavior in the international system as they did in the case of the EU member states response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis⁴⁸⁷.

⁴⁸⁶ Jeffrey W. Meiser, *Introducing Liberalism in International Relations Theory*, "International Relations Theory, E-International Relations Publishing", Bristol, 2017, p. 23

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 24

Ukraine Refugee Crisis

War constitutes a threat to human security. On one hand, it affects society through the destruction it inflicts upon it, whereas on the other hand, it causes psychological distress. Until 2022 Ukraine was a country of destination and transit for international migrants⁴⁸⁸. Once the military conflict started in Ukraine a massive new flow of refugees began. It was directed to the neighboring countries. The events overlapped with the lingering effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, Ukraine encountered economic losses of over 280 billion USD in the period 2014-2020⁴⁸⁹, followed by an economic contraction of 3,8% in 2020, as well as an economic growth of 3,4% in 2021⁴⁹⁰. One year after the beginning of the war Ukraine's economy was down by 30%, with bleak future perspectives⁴⁹¹. By the end of 2022, over 7,8 million refugees from Ukraine were registered in European countries and 5,9 million persons were internally displaced⁴⁹².

The decrease in the population of Ukraine, the shift of jobs and production capacity towards the war effort as well and the destruction of infrastructure led to the development of economic and humanitarian crises⁴⁹³.

The depth of the humanitarian crisis can be viewed in the numbers that show that by the end of January 2023, in Poland arrived over 1,5 million Ukrainians refugees, while in Germany over 1 million Ukrainian refugees. Countries that received over one hundred thousand refugees were the Czech Republic, Italy, Spain, Great Britain, Canada, France, the USA, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Slovakia⁴⁹⁴.

The demographic trends that came about during these trying times were expressed in the article of Hill Kulu, et.al. In their article, the authors concluded that if past demographic trends continue, in the next two decades the population of Ukraine will decline by one-sixth. In case many of the refugees will be staying abroad then the decline of the population is expected to reach one-third. The decline of the population may not be as drastic if part of the refugees will return to Ukraine. The more refugees will return less drastic the decline will be and conversely, the less refugees will return the more drastic the decline will become. These processes will heavily impact the working-age population as well as the number of children. The above-mentioned circumstances emphasize the importance of identifying ways of attracting refugees to return to Ukraine. Yet the task may not be as simple in that people's decision whether to stay in the country, leave the country, or return to Ukraine would most likely be linked to the country's political and economic development⁴⁹⁵. Moreover, return migration is difficult to predict⁴⁹⁶. Migrants can move to a new country through resettlement schemes⁴⁹⁷ or they may move on their own in search of better living conditions. In a situation where political and economic uncertainty may be present long term in Ukraine, refugees would be less likely to return as well

⁴⁸⁸ International Organization for Migration (IOM), *World Migration Report 2022*, <https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2022> (20.09.2023)

⁴⁸⁹ Cristian Băhnăreanu, *Implicații economice ale războiului ruso-ucrainean*, "Colocviu Strategic", Vol. 195, No.1, 2022, https://cssas.unap.ro/ro/pdf_publicatii/cs01-22.pdf (15.09.2023)

⁴⁹⁰ Simon Torkington, *Ukraine's economy will shrink by almost half this year, says World Bank*, "World Economic Forum", April, 2022, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/09/why-cooperating-sustainable-development-goals-requires-competition/> (10.09.2023)

⁴⁹¹ Cristian Băhnăreanu, *Implicații economice ale războiului din Ucraina*, in "Colocviu Strategic", Vol. 209, No. 1, 2023, https://cssas.unap.ro/ro/pdf_publicatii/cs01-23.pdf (14.09.2023)

⁴⁹² The UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe, *Ukraine Situation Flash Update #37*, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/97648> (06.09.2023)

⁴⁹³ Alexandra Sarcinschi, *"Permacriză" umanitară? Războiul din Ucraina, insecuritatea percepută și acutizarea crizei umanitare*, "Evaluare strategică", 2023, https://revista.unap.ro/index.php/Evaluare_strategica/issue/view/98 (21.08.2023)

⁴⁹⁴ The UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe, *Ukraine Situation Flash Update #37*, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/97648> (07.09.2023)

⁴⁹⁵ Hill Kulu, Sarah Christison, Chia Liu, Julia Mikolai, *The war, refugees, and the future of Ukraine's population*, in "Population, Space and Place", Vol. 29, No. 4, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.2656> (24.08.2023)

⁴⁹⁶ Christian Dustmann, Yoram Weiss, *Return migration: Theory and empirical evidence from the UK*, in "British Journal of Industrial Relations", Vol. 45, No.2, May 2007, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8543.2007.00613.x> (10.09.2023)

⁴⁹⁷ Adele Garnier, Liliana Lyra Jubilut, Kristin Bergtora Sandvik, *Refugee Resettlement: Power, Politics, and Humanitarian Governance*, "Forced Migration", Vol. 38, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvw04brz> (27.08.2023)

and youth and young families in increased numbers could choose to leave the country in search of a better future⁴⁹⁸.

The issue at hand left no option to the EU but to adopt policies, which would contribute to the effective management of the crisis and ensure its security. The new refugee crisis quickly became one of the biggest challenges to the EU. The large number of refugees imposed on the EU the necessity to take on a new approach as regards the management of the situation. The measures taken by the EU for this purpose were to target the fair distribution of the influx of people, to integrate asylum seekers, and to eliminate the sense of insecurity that arose among European citizens⁴⁹⁹. The measures intend to alleviate the concerns of European citizens as regards social welfare dependence, and employment opportunities for the refugees arriving in their respective countries.

In the above-mentioned context, it is appropriate to name the Directive 2001/55/EC that offered temporary protection in case of a large influx of people. At the outbreak of the conflict, within 48 hours, about 350 000 Ukrainian migrants reached the European countries, the EU activated the Temporary Protection Directive on 4th March 2022 granting temporary protection to the Ukrainian migrants. With the help of this Directive Ukrainian citizens had the opportunity to enter the territory of any member state with which Ukraine has a border with. Moreover, the Ukrainian citizens had the right to transit the EU territory towards any other Member State of their choosing⁵⁰⁰. As a result of this measure the influx of Ukrainian refugees into the EU has been divided into several states, decongesting in that way the refugee agglomeration at border points.

One another action taken by the European Union in support of Ukrainian refugees was the economic support for the EU Member States bordering Ukraine, which provided humanitarian aid to the refugees. Specifically, the European Commission directed funds through the “Cohesion Action for Refugees in Europe” (CARE), to Member States that offered emergency support for Ukrainian refugees. Additionally, financial support was offered to the Member States, neighbors of Ukraine. The support consisted of medical supplies, first aid as well and resources directed to manage migration and border security efficiently. Further, the European Agency, and the European Border and Coast Guard (FRONTEX) created humanitarian corridors to facilitate access to aid convoys as well as opened new border crossing points. Moreover, FRONTEX initiated a series of actions to assist the Moldovan authorities in their handling of the refugees at the border with Ukraine⁵⁰¹.

One another fundamental action, by the EU, as regards the assistance of the Ukrainian refugees was adopted in the new Pact on Migration and Asylum with the integration and inclusion of the migrants. The aspect of integration and inclusion is of paramount importance in that it is the basis of social cohesion which is the backbone for a positive and beneficial contribution of the refugees to the societies in which they choose to integrate. Measures taken for this purpose included education and training, aimed at recognition of qualifications and language skills learning for the refugees. Second, based on the refugees’ skill recognition were created and improved employment opportunities. Third, health services have been ensured for people with birth origins outside the European Union⁵⁰².

One another perspective from which the European Union chose to effectively manage migration from European territory was the effort to influence the conduct of the military operations in Ukraine, to allow for a successful repatriation of refugees to Ukraine, while providing a safe environment that would assist and contribute to the repatriation process. Therefore, through the European Peace Facility (EPF) was adopted a support package for Ukraine to support the Ukrainian military defensive capabilities⁵⁰³.

On a political level, the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, together with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell adopted a pro-

⁴⁹⁸ Hill Kulu, Sarah Christison, Chia Liu, Julia Mikolai, *The war, refugees, and the future of Ukraine's population*, “Population, Space and Place”, Vol. 29, No. 4, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.2656> (24.08.2023)

⁴⁹⁹ Rareș-Alexandru Văscan, Claudia Anamaria Iov, *The Ukrainian Refugee Crisis – New Migration Challenge for the European Union*, “Migration Dynamics and New Trends in European (IN)Security: Old Challenges in a Changing World”, 2023, p. 35

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 43

⁵⁰¹ *Ibidem*, p. 45

⁵⁰² *Idem*

⁵⁰³ *Ibidem*, p. 46

European discourse as regards the new refugee crisis. The speech motivates support for the Member States of the European Union in their management of the crisis, including offering humanitarian aid to refugees⁵⁰⁴.

Each Member State found its way in dealing with the refugee crisis. In Poland for example non-governmental organisations and volunteers played a pivotal role in assisting the Ukrainian refugees. The assistance package included the provision of necessities as well as assistance with legal and administrative matters⁵⁰⁵. The above type of described assistance represents an example of civil society and NGO involvement in assisting the government in dealing with a humanitarian crisis.

According to UNHCR, the largest number of Ukrainian refugees arrived in Poland. Nevertheless, many of them did not stay for long but left further West and to the Scandinavian countries, whereas a part of them already returned to Ukraine⁵⁰⁶. The influx of refugees into Poland posed a tremendous challenge to its government, therefore Polish citizens engaged quickly in “ad hoc crisis management efforts” thus easing the pressure experienced by the Polish Government⁵⁰⁷. The amount of people engaged in this action was unprecedented. In the study performed by Baszczak et al., it was identified that around 59% of respondents bought necessary products for the refugees, around 53% donated money, around 20% declared helping refugees with different chores, and around 7% took refugees into their homes⁵⁰⁸. Repeatedly whole towns were helping in supporting the refugees who most often were in transition to foreign destinations. Even though local governments were needed to organize the logistical side of the support for the refugees, their objectives could have not been met without the support of NGOs and volunteering citizens⁵⁰⁹.

In the case of the Republic of Moldova, its authorities at both the national and local levels reacted quickly in giving support to the refugees from Ukraine. The buildings which were being managed by public institutions, pensions, as well as the houses for the cities and villages of Moldova became a place of refuge for those in need of it⁵¹⁰. During the first week of the military action in Ukraine at the eastern border of the Republic of Moldova, a record number of refugees from Ukraine. In the period 24.02-02.03.2022, the territory of the Republic of Moldova entered 112.299 Ukraine citizens, out of whom 108.955 persons entered through the Moldovan-Ukrainian border.

In the same period, it was announced that the Republic of Moldova had received the first cargo of humanitarian aid, aimed at Ukrainian refugees, from the Bureau of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Government of Holland through the Mechanism of civil protection of the EU and the Government of Turkey⁵¹¹. The value of the given humanitarian aid was 750,000 euros and consisted of goods necessary for the setup of the centers of temporary residence, family tents, blankets, pillows, beds, goods of first necessity, and food packages. These goods were assigned to the centers of temporary residence and border crossing points⁵¹².

The Republic of Moldova undertook a series of mechanisms in support of the Ukrainian refugees. The country allowed for the entrance and stay on its territory as well as for the transit of its territory by the Ukrainian refugees, facilitating the receipt of state protection, food, accommodation, access to medical services, employment, the set-up of centers of temporary residence, ensuring the free access to education for

⁵⁰⁴*Idem*

⁵⁰⁵ Monika Lipiec-Karwowska, *Dealing with the Ukrainian refugee crisis in Poland – an example of a well-functioning civil society in action*, in “Reality of Politics”, Vol. 24, 2023, p. 106

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 113

⁵⁰⁷ Jan Domaradzki, Dariusz Walkowiak, Dominika Bazan, Ewa Baum, *Volunteering in the front line of the Ukrainian refugee crisis: A brief report from Poland*, “Frontiers in Public Health”, September, 2022, pp.1-9

⁵⁰⁸ Monika Lipiec-Karwowska, *Dealing with the Ukrainian refugee crisis in Poland – an example of a well-functioning civil society in action*, “Reality of Politics”, Vol. 24, 2023, p. 114

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 115

⁵¹⁰ Artur Fuior, Protecția situativă pe plan social-economic a refugiaților minori ucraineni din Republica Moldova în raport cu tendințele țării de integrare europeană, “Promotion of Social and Economic Values in the Context of European Integration: 5th International Conference”, Chișinău, December, 2022, p.164

⁵¹¹ Anatol Buzev, Svetlana Cebotari, Reziliența Republicii Moldova la criza refugiaților din Ucraina, “Revista de Filosofie, Sociologie și Științe Politice”, Vol. 188, No. 1, 2022, p. 36

⁵¹² *Republica Moldova a recepționat primele loturi de ajutor umanitar pentru refugiații din Ucraina*, March, 2022, <https://mai.gov.md/ro/news/republica-moldova-recepționat-primele-loturi-de-ajutor-umanitar-pentru-refugiații-din-ucraina> (15.08.2023)

the refugee children⁵¹³. Moreover, the Moldovan Government has set up cooperation with international organizations, private initiatives, and volunteers. The country, in cooperation with the EU Member States coordinated the influx of refugees, ensured the existence of humanitarian corridors and instituted free hotlines for refugee-related issues. Using these hotlines, the citizens of the Republic of Moldova were able to access additional information regarding the possible ways in which they could help the refugees or the authorities⁵¹⁴. Up to now, at the request for the assistance of the Republic of Moldova through the Mechanism of civil protection of the EU was already offered humanitarian assistance by a multitude of EU Member States⁵¹⁵.

Also, in line with the EU acquis, starting March 1st, 2023, the Moldovan authorities launched the Temporary protection program for the incoming Ukrainian refugees⁵¹⁶. The program is intended for a period of one year. The individuals who request temporary protection will obtain an identity document, offered free of charge for the period of one year. The information will be uploaded to the informational network of the competent authorities for further use⁵¹⁷. In this manner, the project will contribute to more efficient management and monitoring of the migrant flow.

Having mentioned above the successes of the coordination and cohesion among EU Member states in their response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis, it is appropriate to mention the challenges that accompany the European response. It can be noted that migration remains today a contentious issue even though there is an incredible level of solidarity and volunteerism in Europe. As put forward by Boguslaw Kosmider, the Deputy Mayor of Krakow: “In the first weeks, we managed to cope with it thanks to the unprecedented dedication of the inhabitants, thousands of volunteers, and the actions that were quickly launched at the level of the commune and its agendas. It is known, however, that the enthusiasm of volunteers will not last forever”⁵¹⁸. The words of Kosmider remind us of the fact that the substantial participation in the relief efforts of the volunteers needs to be maintained to not allow it to wane, even though it might have its natural limitations. As such, one of the main challenges in such a case is the fact that many cities and localities do not have enough financial support capacity, which is expected to be given by central authorities for long-term assistance intended for humanitarian aid. In a situation of this kind humanitarian support was possible due to the involvement of the volunteers. Should volunteer support wane so would the possibility of the city or locality to offer humanitarian support.

Integration of the refugees in the communities that they settle in requires additional adjustment. For example, the number of Ukrainian people, who have studied at a tertiary educational level reaches 83%⁵¹⁹. As such the skills of the Ukrainian refugees are on display. This circumstance has manifested itself in the reality that many arrivals may rapidly integrate into the job market. Meanwhile, the necessity remains for the refugees to also have language qualifications, which in many cases are lacking. Recent experience has shown that short-term measures such as the introduction of courses as well as the increase in the limits on classroom quotas for learning languages do not suffice in addressing the long-term needs since the refugees need education curricula that accommodate the language and academic needs for them⁵²⁰.

Since the beginning of the refugee wave, the refugees from Ukraine have changed in their characteristics. The existing differences between them may pose future challenges for their integration into European cities. The difference arises from the fact that at the beginning the refugees were coming from Northern and Western Ukraine, whereas later in the conflict the refugees were fleeing from the Eastern parts of Ukraine. The matter of fact is that the refugees from the Northern and Western Ukraine had many connections

⁵¹³Angela Colatchi, Ecaterina Donoaga, Cătălin Lîsîi, *Securitatea națională în contextul crizei refugiaților*, “Securitatea națională a Republicii Moldova: provocări și tendințe”, May, 2022, p. 228

⁵¹⁴ *Idem*

⁵¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 229

⁵¹⁶ Guvernul Republicii Moldova, 2023, <https://gov.md/ro/content/refugiatii-din-ucraina-vor-beneficia-de-protectie-temporara-republica-moldova> (15.08.2023)

⁵¹⁷ *Idem*

⁵¹⁸ Dziennik Polski, *Kraków: Uchodźcy z Ukrainy chcą pracować i prowadzić firmy*, May, 2022, <https://dziennikpolski24.pl/krakow-uchodzczy-z-ukrainy-chca-pracowac-i-prowadzic-firmy-to-wyzwanie-ale-i-wielka-szansa-na-rozwoj-gospodarczy-stolicy/ar/c10-16333309> (11.08.2023)

⁵¹⁹European Parliament, *Briefing: Research for REGI Committee – Cities and the Ukrainian refugees*, 2022, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IPOL_BRI\(2022\)699654](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IPOL_BRI(2022)699654) (29.08.2023)

⁵²⁰ *Idem*

to Europe, whereas those from the Eastern Ukraine were close to none. Also, one must take into consideration the fact that cities have been demolished and the people's everyday lives have been disrupted in the Eastern part of the country in a way that has not been seen in the Western part. As a result of the above-mentioned, it becomes clear that refugees from the Northern, Western, and Eastern parts of Ukraine have different challenges to overcome in their integration process. As such, in the situation where the conflict continues in the Eastern part of Ukraine and a much larger number of refugees will continue coming from this region, their integration into the European cities is more challenging compared to the refugees from the Western and Northern parts of the country. The lack of contacts as well as the unique cultural background of the Eastern Ukraine refugees will impose on the refugees a greater pressure to adapt to the new set of circumstances as well as greater pressure in setting up new contacts.

One another issue that requires special attention is the issue of shortage of affordable housing. The shortage came about due to the increase in the price of housing units because of the increase in demand for these units once the number of refugees in these countries increased. As a result, even refugees who have a paid job in the place of their living have no choice but to rely on social housing. All the above-mentioned raised the necessity of addressing these issues. One way of addressing them is suggested in the report by the research administrator Marek Kolodziejcki. The suggestion consists of addressing issues both at the local level and at the EU level.

At the local level, it is suggested to ensure that there is readiness for possible new waves of refugees so that the cities and localities develop and maintain urban resilience. Measures of this kind would include increasing the capacity of already operating refugee centers, constructing new centers, and developing mechanisms that would allow for the quick adaptation of hotels and other receiving centers to be able to accommodate refugees. Moreover, attention needs to be paid to the special characteristics of the Ukrainian refugee namely the fact that primarily these are women and children. In this case, it is necessary to focus the spending of resources on ensuring access to schools, kindergartens, and nurseries as well as on various ways how women refugees can become involved in the local labor market⁵²¹. Additionally, refugees need strong and clear communication that is tailored to their needs as well as briefing materials that can be easily accessible and understood given their language skills.

At the EU level, the aim is to support and consolidate the ability of local authorities and civil society to accommodate refugees from the war-torn parts of the Eastern European country. In addition, it is expected to develop and consolidate a system of coordination and collaboration as regards refugees, that will be resilient and reliable. Furthermore, it is suggested to review the current EU directive on temporary protection to ensure better policies, social protection, and guarantees for the Ukrainian refugees. Effective European health information, infrastructure as well and personal data protection are among other aspects of issues dealing with refugees that can be consolidated at this level⁵²².

The two levels of dealing with issues related to the Ukrainian refugees ensure the necessary level of collaboration within and between EU Member states as well as at the EU level. The cooperation strengthens the resilience of the EU and EU Member states in dealing with the Ukrainian refugees but also enhances the readiness of all participants for future dealings with refugees. The current example of cooperation with the EU is one additional avenue of European integration and resilience in the face of adversity and challenge. For the collaboration to reach its full potential it requires to be a multilayer one between all engaged actors starting with individual citizens up to national governments and finally ending with the EU structures of decision-making.

Conclusions

The level of cohesion reached by the EU in dealing with the Ukrainian refugee crisis once again showcases the fact that cooperation has been the key element that led the joint effort, cooperation being the fundamental mechanism courted by all traits of liberalism. The economic interdependence of the EU Member States led and contributed to the cooperative behavior since the mutual interest in solving the issue of Ukrainian refugees impacted the entire EU. As such, through cooperation, the states managed to maintain stable and prosperous relations, and in doing so confirmed the viability of the interdependence trait of

⁵²¹ *Idem*

⁵²² *Idem*

liberalism. Furthermore, the supranational structure of the EU provided platforms for the Member States to cooperate and address collective action. Moreover, since EU Member States share the democratic ideal as well as the principles of good governance, rule of law, and democracy as well as transparent decision-making process it allowed these states to interact with confidence with each other as well as expect joint outcomes, in line with the Democratic Peace Theory. In all their actions and decisions made at the EU level as well as at national and local levels, the liberal ideology pervaded every step of it. Without a doubt, cooperation is needed by negotiations and compromise. Furthermore, the challenges of solving the Ukrainian refugee crisis have multiple layers of complexity that were possible to be addressed only due to cooperation. Had there been a lack of cooperation even the smallest obstacle could have ended the effort to solve the crisis. Yet due to the fact and realization that the benefits of cooperation are more valuable than the effects of confrontation, the choice made by the Member States led not only to individual but also communal gain.

Most important is that the cooperation took place not only at the administrative level but also at the individual and NGO level so that any European citizen had the chance to contribute their share to the joint effort and many did get involved. And in many cases, the participation of individuals represented the driving engine behind the help that was offered to the refugees, especially when the budgets of the official administrations were overwhelmed and not enough to support all refugees. As such, another liberal concept came to the fore namely that of non-state actors. All the above mentioned, confirmed once again that liberalism is very much at the core of international relations as seen in the example of the EU as well as its neighborhood through the example of the Republic of Moldova. Undoubtedly liberalism has shown itself triumphant and indispensable to the international arena.

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