

THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AND MIGRATION

ZBIGNIEW FILIP¹

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59505/IRHNS.22352007.2025.2.01>

¹ Catholic University in Ružomberok,
Faculty of Theology,
Theological Institute in Spišské Podhradie,
Slovakia

Contact: Mgr. Zbigniew Filip - zfilip77@op.pl

Abstract:

The article analyses the theoretical aspects of humanitarian crises and migration. The author presents key concepts related to forced mobility and places particular emphasis on the mechanisms of international humanitarian aid, as well as the effectiveness of migration policies implemented by states and international organisations. The article highlights the challenges associated with refugee integration and the long-term social, economic, and political consequences of mass population displacement. The analysis also considers the impact of war on public perception of refugees and the rise of disinformation in host countries. The need for an interdisciplinary approach to managing the migration crisis and for developing effective support strategies is underlined. The article also points to the necessity for further research into social adaptation mechanisms and migration policies in the face of future humanitarian crises.

Keywords: humanitarian crisis, migration, refugees, migration policy.

Introduction

Humanitarian crises represent one of the greatest challenges of the modern world, and their analysis requires an interdisciplinary approach encompassing political, social, economic, and legal dimensions. The outbreak of full-scale war in Ukraine on 24 February 2022 led to one of the most significant humanitarian crises of the 21st century, resulting in mass displacement of civilians, a dramatic deterioration in living conditions, and the destruction of critical infrastructure both in Ukraine and in the countries receiving refugees.

The aim of this article is to analyse the theoretical aspects of humanitarian crises. The theoretical considerations cover key concepts essential for understanding contemporary migration phenomena. Furthermore, the article refers to major migration theories as well as concepts related to humanitarian aid and international refugee protection.

The issue of migration and humanitarian crises is gaining new significance, revealing dynamic adaptation processes not only among those affected by conflict, but also within states and international organisations engaged in relief efforts. This article attempts to outline a theoretical framework for analysing crises, taking into account aspects of international law, migration policy, and the impact of war on the social, economic, and political structures of the region. It also addresses the perception of refugees within host societies.

This study also discusses the mechanisms by which the international community responds to humanitarian crises, including the roles of the United Nations, the European Union, and non-governmental organisations in managing the refugee crisis. The analysis includes the long-term consequences of migration, including challenges related to refugee integration in host countries, and the potential impact of migration on the demographic, social, and economic situation of both Ukraine and the destination countries.

The theoretical reflections presented in this article aim to highlight the complexity of humanitarian and migration issues and to indicate possible directions for further research in this area. The analysis also takes into account key ethical and practical challenges arising in the context of refugee crisis management, emphasising the need for a comprehensive and coordinated approach at global, regional, and local levels, as well as the necessity of adapting integration policies to the evolving geopolitical landscape.

The main hypothesis assumes that humanitarian crises significantly affect global migration processes, altering demographic structures in refugee-receiving countries. Furthermore, it is assumed that refugee integration is more effective

in countries with prior experience of migration than in those with little or no history of hosting large numbers of refugees.

To achieve the intended aim and verify the proposed hypotheses, a critical analysis of sources was employed as the primary research method.

Definition and characteristics of a humanitarian crisis

In academic literature, a humanitarian crisis is defined as a situation occurring within a specific country, region, or society, caused by natural disasters or human actions. Such a situation significantly disrupts the normal functioning of a community and is typically characterised by threats to the life or health of the people residing in the affected area. Resolving these crises through conventional means is often difficult, and at times impossible. This means that the affected community is usually unable to cope with the crisis independently¹.

Alternatively, a humanitarian crisis can be described as an event, or a series of events occurring simultaneously, which endanger the health, safety, and well-being of a population or group of individuals living in the affected area.² A humanitarian crisis may arise in various ways, most notably as a result of epidemics, natural disasters, famine, armed conflict, and other catastrophes³. Accordingly, humanitarian crises can be divided into two main categories: those resulting from natural causes and those driven by human activity⁴:

1. Humanitarian crises resulting from natural causes, also referred to as natural disasters or catastrophes, include floods, droughts, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, hurricanes, and other such events.
2. Crises caused by human activity include economic and industrial disasters as well as armed conflicts.

Several main groups of contributing factors can be identified as conducive to the emergence of humanitarian crises. One of these is environmental degradation, stemming from human activity that leads to the destruction of ecosystems—

1 Barczak-Oplustil, A., Wróbel, W. *Udzielanie pomocy humanitarnej jako zachowanie (pierwotnie) legalne*, „Iustitia” 2022, nr 1, p. 15.

2 Budayová, Z. 2024b. The European union's position in migration. In *Scientia Internationale Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift Dortmund*. Dortmund: ISSKA, 2024 (3), pp. 54-64.

3 Hechmann, R., Bodzan, M. *Pomoc humanitarna, Materiały z edukacji globalnej*, Polska Akcja Humanitarna, Warszawa 2017, p. 10.

4 Hechmann, R., Bodzan, M. *Pomoc humanitarna, Materiały z edukacji globalnej*, Polska Akcja Humanitarna, Warszawa 2017, p. 10.

such as deforestation, air and water pollution, and soil erosion.⁵ Climate change also plays a significant role, manifested in rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and rising sea and ocean levels. Other contributing factors include rapid and uncontrolled urbanisation, which results in inadequate infrastructure and poor spatial planning.

Poverty and social inequality also increase vulnerability to disasters, due to a lack of sufficient resources for disaster prevention, and limited access to education and healthcare. Another factor is poor crisis management, marked by the absence of adequate evacuation plans and early warning systems⁶. The scale of a disaster is influenced by the strength and intensity of the hazard, the level of armed conflict, the extent to which people are exposed to the crisis's effects, and the preparedness of infrastructure. These factors determine the number of victims and the level of destruction⁷.

People experiencing a humanitarian crisis must contend with its long-term consequences. The most catastrophic outcome is loss of life or health among those directly affected. Survivors are often left to deal with fear, uncertainty, grief, and loss.⁸ Crises frequently destroy essential buildings, including homes, schools, hospitals, places of worship, and other community landmarks. This results in a lack of access to healthcare for the ill and disruptions in the functioning of society and government. Damage to infrastructure often leads to unemployment and reduced income, while rising living costs can result in malnutrition and hunger for the poorest. Lack of access to clean water and electricity contributes to deteriorating sanitation, which may cause disease outbreaks and epidemics. The natural environment also suffers, and the economy of the affected country may be destabilised, even if the crisis does not impact the entire nation⁹.

Humanitarian crises have been recorded across the world for many years,

-
- 5 Budayová, Z., Marová, M., Šimek, V. Charitable activity of the Society of Daughters of Christian Charity in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. In: *Review of theology, social sciences and sacred art*. Dublin : International scientific board of catholic researchers and teachers in Ireland, no. 1, (2024), pp. 91-104
 - 6 Hechmann, R., Bodzan, M. *Pomoc humanitarna, Materiały z edukacji globalnej*, Polska Akcja Humanitarna, Warszawa 2017, p. 15.
 - 7 Hechmann, R., Bodzan, M. *Pomoc humanitarna, Materiały z edukacji globalnej*, Polska Akcja Humanitarna, Warszawa 2017, p. 15.
 - 8 Rojšl, J., Šimek, V. Organizování jako manažerská funkce In: *Sociální média v oblasti řízení lidských zdrojů* (IV). Uherské Hradiště: Akademie krizového řízení a managementu. pp. 132-141.
 - 9 Hechmann, R., Bodzan, M. *Pomoc humanitarna, Materiały z edukacji globalnej*, Polska Akcja Humanitarna, Warszawa 2017, p. 15.; Budayová, Z. 2024a. The process of establishing a day center of social services. In *Review of theology, social sciences and sacred art*. Dublin: International scientific board of catholic researchers and teachers in Ireland. no. 3, pp. 9-22.

often accompanied by refugee (migration) crises. According to data from 2022 presented by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the world's largest refugee crisis involved Syria, with 6.9 million refugees recorded outside the country's borders between 2011 and 2022 (including 3.7 million in Turkey) and 6.8 million internally displaced persons. In total, around two-thirds of the population were forced to flee their homes. Humanitarian crises involving refugee migration have also affected Afghanistan, Venezuela, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Iraq. UNHCR also stated that one of the largest current humanitarian crises globally is the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022.¹⁰

In summary, the analysis confirms that humanitarian crises arise both from natural disasters and human actions. The main contributing factors include environmental degradation, climate change, uncontrolled urbanisation, poverty, and poor crisis management. The consequences of these crises include death, health issues, destruction of homes and infrastructure, unemployment, and hunger. Humanitarian crises are closely linked to displacement, and according to UNHCR, the most significant contemporary crises affect Syria, Afghanistan, Venezuela, Ukraine, Ethiopia, and South Sudan.

Migration and refugees – a theoretical approach to forced migration

A humanitarian crisis is not synonymous with a migration crisis. Population movement is a consequence of humanitarian crises occurring in a given area. This means that a migration crisis differs from a humanitarian one, as it refers to the phenomenon of a mass influx of refugees, primarily to Europe, from regions affected by armed conflict, political or economic instability. However, some aspects of a migration crisis can turn into a humanitarian crisis. This occurs when a sudden increase in the number of people arriving in a specific area leads to a situation where their health or lives are endangered, and it becomes difficult to provide adequate living conditions¹¹.

The term migration is derived from the Latin word *migratio*, which translates into Polish as “resettlement”¹². In definitional terms, migration refers to a change of residence, with the intention of relocating either permanently or temporarily.

10 Jąźwiński, P. *Kryzysy humanitarne na świecie: wojna w Ukrainie już wśród największych. Najnowsze dane*, 2022, <https://konkret24.tvn24.pl/swiat/kryzysy-humanitarne-na-swiecie-wojna-w-ukrainie-juz-wsrod-najwiekszych-najnowsze-dane-ra1100835-ls5791266>

11 Barczak-Oplustil, A., Wróbel, W. *Udzielanie pomocy humanitarnej jako zachowanie (pierwotnie) legalne*, „Iustitia” 2022, nr 1, p. 15.

12 Nickel, A., Nowak, A. *Trendy migracyjne w XXI wieku*, „Roczniki Studenckie Akademii Wojsk Lądowych” 2017, nr 1, p. 107-108.

According to dictionary definitions, migration is understood as a mass movement of people within one country or between different countries, driven by political, ethnic, religious, or economic factors.¹³

International migration is regarded as a more complex phenomenon than internal migration. It is a concept studied across numerous academic disciplines, each approaching the subject differently and defining it based on varied criteria. In economics, the focus is on the economic consequences of migration. From an economic perspective, migration is seen as an investment in labour resource efficiency (microeconomic perspective) or as a flow of production factors (macroeconomic perspective). In demography, migration is perceived as a process influencing the demographic structure of a given community. In the social sciences, the mass nature of migration and its impact on social structures is emphasised. Migration is interpreted as a natural part of a human life cycle, influencing the formation and transformation of social structures. In psychology, however, migration is often viewed negatively, defined as a form of psychological and identity-related crisis for the migrant. In political science, migration is seen as a process involving the movement of people between countries, with various political implications.¹⁴

Migration can be classified using several main criteria: spatial, residential, temporal, and activity-related.

Migrations are divided into internal and external. Internal migrations refer to resettlement within a single country (e.g., from rural areas to cities), while external migrations involve crossing national borders into another country (international migration).¹⁵ It is important to note that in practice, migration takes many forms, which determines the use of different terminology related to this concept¹⁶:

1. Emigration – departure from one's country of origin to another with the intention of permanent settlement.
2. Immigration – arrival in a new country to settle permanently.
3. Re-emigration – return to one's homeland or emigration once again to a

13 Kaczmarczyk, K. *Migracje – charakterystyka zjawiska*, „Zeszyty Naukowe PWSZ w Legnicy” 2015, nr 16(3), p. 7.

14 Chugaievska, S., Dybała, A., Wisła, R. *Ukraiński kryzys migracyjny. Konsekwencje ekonomiczne dla krajów Unii Europejskiej i Ukrainy: wyzwania oraz ryzyka*, In Szymczyk, P., Domina, I. *Migracje i uchodźstwo ludności*, Lublin 2023, pp. 78-79.

15 Nickel, A., Nowak, A. *Trendy migracyjne w XXI wieku*, „Roczniki Studenckie Akademii Wojsk Lądowych” 2017, nr 1, p. 10.

16 Kaczmarczyk, K. *Migracje – charakterystyka zjawiska*, „Zeszyty Naukowe PWSZ w Legnicy” 2015, nr 16(3), p. 8.

different country.

4. Repatriation – return to the home country after a prolonged forced stay abroad, often due to exile or other circumstances beyond the individual's control.

The key factors that drive people to leave their current country of residence include lack of tolerance, conflict, unemployment, social tensions, and poor living conditions. In addition to these negative factors, there are also positive aspects that encourage people to emigrate to another country. These include, for example, a better economic situation, fewer tensions and conflicts, and greater religious, cultural, and social tolerance. The determinants of human migration, whether international or domestic, can be grouped into several categories: economic, social, educational, cultural, religious, and political.¹⁷ Another typology of migration determinants divides them into economic and non-economic factors¹⁸:

1. Economic determinants of migration:

- job search,
- desire for higher wages,
- improving family living standards,
- upgrading skills and gaining professional experience,
- learning foreign languages in the case of international migration,
- better career development opportunities,
- access to modern technology and innovation.

2. Non-economic determinants of migration:

- religious motives,
- the need to reunite with family,
- escape from armed conflicts,
- escape from political persecution,
- environmental factors (e.g., climate change),
- health needs,
- improving children's education,
- access to higher quality tertiary education.

According to UN data, the number of international migrants in 2020 reached 281 million, accounting for 3.6% of the world's population. When analysing

17 Nickel, A., Nowak, A. *Trendy migracyjne w XXI wieku*, „Roczniki Studenckie Akademii Wojsk Lądowych” 2017, nr 1, p. 107-108.

18 Chugaievska, S., Dybała, A., Wisła, R. *Ukraiński kryzys migracyjny. Konsekwencje ekonomiczne dla krajów Unii Europejskiej i Ukrainy: wyzwania oraz ryzyka*, In Szymczyk, P., Domina, I. *Migracje i uchodźstwo ludności*, Lublin 2023, p. 79.

global migration trends between 2017 and 2021, it was observed that some regions experienced significant population losses due to emigration, while others attracted large numbers of migrants. The greatest migration losses were recorded in the Marshall Islands, American Samoa, Lebanon, and Venezuela. Each of these territories faced economic or political difficulties that forced residents to leave. The average annual migration balance ranged from -28 to -42 people per 1,000 inhabitants. In contrast, the highest relative influx of migrants was observed in Malta, Tokelau (New Zealand), and the Turks and Caicos Islands (Caribbean). The average annual migration balance in these locations ranged from 22 to 45 people per 1,000 inhabitants. The global migration phenomenon between 2017 and 2021 reveals clear contrasts between regions losing population due to economic hardship and those attracting migrants due to favourable living or working conditions.¹⁹

In recent years, the world has faced an unprecedented scale of humanitarian needs arising from migration crises. Crises in countries such as Syria, Iran, South Sudan, and Yemen, as well as numerous natural disasters and epidemics, have affected millions of lives. In many regions, residents suffer from ongoing or recurring conflicts and disasters. Prolonged wars and violence have led to a sharp increase in the number of refugees and internally displaced persons. UNHCR data indicates that by the end of 2020, as many as 82.4 million people were forced to flee their homes due to persecution, conflict, and human rights violations. More than 35 million of these individuals – 42% – were children under the age of 18.²⁰ Ethnic, national, religious, and linguistic minorities are often the most exposed to the effects of crises, frequently facing discrimination during and after such events.²¹ Many refugees migrate to other countries due to armed conflicts and political regimes in their home countries.

In 1980, due to political conflicts, 1.3 million Afghans and 1.6 million Ethiopians fled to neighbouring countries. In 1991, the Gulf War forced 1.4 million Iraqis to flee to Iran. Another tragic event was the Rwandan genocide in 1994, which caused the forced migration of 2.3 million citizens. In 1999, the Balkan conflict forced nearly 1 million people to leave Serbia and Kosovo. The Syrian civil war in 2014 led to the displacement of 1.7 million Syrians, and in 2018, the economic and political crises in Venezuela and Syria resulted in the

19 *Jakie kraje zyskały najwięcej migrantów, a z jakich najczęściej uciekano?*, 2020. Available at: <https://forsal.pl/gospodarka/demografia/artykuly/8558391,migracja-ludzi-na-swiecie-dane-onz-2020.html>.

20 Gołębiowska, K. *Afganistan: kryzys humanitarny jako zagrożenie dla fundamentalnych praw człowieka*, „Przegląd Polityczny” 2024, nr 5, p. 123.

21 Gołębiowska, K. *Afganistan: kryzys humanitarny jako zagrożenie dla fundamentalnych praw człowieka*, „Przegląd Polityczny” 2024, nr 5, p. 123.

migration of 3.2 million people. The largest increase in refugee numbers occurred in 2022 due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine – 5.7 million Ukrainians left their country, while another 4.4 million people of various nationalities, mainly Afghans and Venezuelans, were also forced to migrate. The data confirms that the number of refugees has been steadily increasing for years due to recurring conflicts, persecution, and economic crises in different parts of the world. The growing number of refugees highlights the global nature of the issue and the need for international cooperation and effective humanitarian action.²²

Migration is a phenomenon that sovereign European countries must address as part of their national security strategies. It is also the subject of international discussions concerning the humanitarian dimension of crises, as well as debates within our own country. This stems from the fact that in 2021–2022, Poland faced specific migration-related challenges. One of these concerned the situation on the Polish–Belarusian border, caused by the regime of Alexander Lukashenko. The crisis and fate of migrants from Belarus at our eastern border were militarised. The second migration crisis stemmed from Russia's military intervention in Ukraine in February 2022.²³ Currently, various governmental and non-governmental organisations in Poland are involved in providing humanitarian assistance to refugees²⁴:

1. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) – a part of the UN, operating since 1950, with a global reach. It protects refugee rights, improves asylum procedures, and works to enhance their quality of life, particularly in crisis-affected areas.
2. The Office for Foreigners – responsible for asylum matters, providing protection to foreigners, regulating residence status, offering social assistance, managing accommodation centres, and registering arrivals.
3. Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH) – an organisation that offers assistance to people affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts.
4. Caritas Poland – supports refugee integration through language courses, job and housing assistance, psychological support, and social aid.
5. Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) – founded by French doctors in the 1970s, provides aid in areas affected by armed conflict and epidemics. Polish doctors also participate.

22 W. Szkwerek, *Strach łatwo sprzedać...*, op. cit.,

23 Boguciewicz, M. *Kryzysy migracyjne w Polsce: od sekurytyzacji migracji do imperatywu humanitarnego*, Adamczyk, A., Sakson, A., Trosiak, C. (red.), *Mniejszości, emigranci i uchodźcy „stare” i „nowe” wyzwania*, Poznań 2022, p. 117.

24 Olszewska-Łabędź, B. *Konflikt zbrojny jako źródło kryzysu migracyjnego. Wybrane formy wsparcia uchodźców z Ukrainy*, Kraków, 2022, pp. 85–87.

In summary, migration is a phenomenon that has become a pressing issue in the modern world. Armed conflicts, disasters, persecution, and discrimination are among many factors that contribute to the rising levels of migration. There are numerous reasons that compel or encourage people to leave their current country of residence. Migrations can be internal or external (international), with the latter being far more complex. Refugees can rely on the support of numerous international, governmental, and non-governmental humanitarian organisations, which ensure their well-being and provide care. However, this does not mitigate the broader issue of population movement, which has become a persistent global challenge.

The role of global humanitarian organisations

International humanitarian aid encompasses actions driven by concern for the victims of crises, aimed at alleviating their suffering. In times of crisis, individuals and organisations are mobilised to provide support to those in need. This assistance makes it possible to save the lives and preserve the health of people affected by disasters. Humanitarian aid supports the survival of local communities affected by hardship and contributes to the reconstruction of devastated areas. The actions taken as part of humanitarian aid are crucial in restoring stability and hope to those affected around the world.²⁵

From a definitional perspective, humanitarian aid refers to the material and logistical support provided immediately following a disaster in a given area. Its purpose is to mitigate the initial effects of the catastrophe. However, its primary aim is to save lives, reduce suffering, and uphold human dignity, thereby helping crisis victims return to a normal life. Humanitarian aid primarily involves the delivery of food, drinking water, basic medical care, hygiene and cleaning supplies, the provision of shelter, and the organisation of camps for those forced to migrate.²⁶

Humanitarian aid is provided by humanitarian organisations. A global body engaged in humanitarian support worldwide is the United Nations (UN). In 1998, the UN established the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), whose logo is shown in Graphic 4. This institution is responsible for coordinating international humanitarian aid. The formation of OCHA was the result of UN General Assembly Resolution No. 46/182 of 1991, aimed

25 Dobrowolska-Polak, J. *Pomoc humanitarna*, Wrocław, 2014, p. 245.

26 Grzebyk, P., Mikos-Skuza, E. *Pomoc humanitarna – uwagi wstępne*. In Grzebyk, P., Mikos-Skuza, E. *Pomoc humanitarna w świetle prawa i praktyki*, Warszawa 2016, pp. 8-9.

at strengthening the UN's response to crisis situations and natural disasters.²⁷ OCHA has headquarters in New York and Geneva, and over 20 regional offices located in areas frequently affected by crises. OCHA's main tasks include²⁸:

- Coordinating humanitarian operations and cooperating with various organisations and governments,
- Developing policies and frameworks for unified humanitarian response,
- Producing reports, maps, and analyses on current crises,
- Managing aid funds to maximise the effectiveness of operations.

Within OCHA, mechanisms were established to facilitate humanitarian support. Based on UN resolutions, the following were created²⁹:

1. Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) – responsible for the overall coordination of humanitarian efforts during crises,
2. Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) – coordinating the activities of numerous entities to ensure effective humanitarian aid,
3. Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) – a UN-managed fund that provides emergency resources for humanitarian response to natural disasters and conflicts,
4. Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) – a mechanism enabling the coordination of humanitarian aid financing.

Humanitarian aid is also significant within the European Union's policy framework. The EU and its member states are the largest providers of humanitarian aid in the world. Every year, aid from the EU budget reaches hundreds of millions of people.³⁰ Those in crisis situations can count on support amounting to as much as one billion euros annually. The EU's humanitarian policy is conducted in line with its external policy. Its aim is to provide help and support to people in need from third countries. Actions are directed towards populations affected by natural disasters or man-made catastrophes. The EU strives to protect these populations and meet the needs arising from difficult circumstances.³¹ In undertaking crisis prevention measures, the EU has developed a cycle for responding to disasters and crises: prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. Broadly speaking,

27 Stefańska, M. *Instytucjonalizacja międzynarodowej współpracy humanitarnej – zagadnienia podstawowe*, „Czasopismo Marszałek.com.pl” 2013, nr 1(4), pp. 392-393.

28 Stefańska, M. *Instytucjonalizacja międzynarodowej współpracy humanitarnej – zagadnienia podstawowe*, „Czasopismo Marszałek.com.pl” 2013, nr 1(4), p. 393.

29 Stefańska, M. *Instytucjonalizacja międzynarodowej współpracy humanitarnej – zagadnienia podstawowe*, „Czasopismo Marszałek.com.pl” 2013, nr 1(4), p. 393.

30 *Pomoc humanitarna i ochrona ludności*, 2015, s. 4.

31 Art. 214 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej, Dz. Urz. UE z 2012 r., C 326/47.

the humanitarian actions undertaken by the EU include³²:

1. Attempting to minimise the risk of natural disasters,
2. Strengthening preparedness for crises,
3. Ensuring a smooth transition to the recovery phase after aid operations, linking aid to development strategies,
4. Increasing human resilience, i.e., preparing societies for future possible crises and disasters in a given region.

In 1992, the EU established the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), which is responsible for coordinating humanitarian assistance. ECHO's activities have reached over 100 countries worldwide, delivering essential supplies and support to crisis victims. Through cooperation with various organisations, ECHO ensures rapid crisis response and support for the most vulnerable, while also strengthening communities through preventive measures.³³ The scope of ECHO's activities includes³⁴:

1. Delivering basic equipment and emergency supplies such as food, clean water, and sanitation products,
2. Funding medical teams, demining experts, transportation and communications, food aid, and logistics support,
3. Cooperating with humanitarian aid implementing partners, including NGOs, UN agencies, the Red Cross, and the Red Crescent.

Another major global humanitarian organisation is the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), whose origins date back to the 19th century. The idea for the Committee emerged as a response to the suffering of soldiers wounded in the Battle of Solferino. The organisation was founded by Henri Dunant, who described his experiences in a book advocating the creation of an international medical service to assist wounded soldiers on the battlefield. His concept proposed that both aid workers and the wounded be treated as neutral during armed conflict, since an injured soldier no longer plays an active role in combat. Dunant's idea gained public support, and in 1864, representatives of 12 countries adopted the First Geneva Convention, aimed at improving the condition of wounded soldiers. At that time, the symbol of the organisation – a

32 Komisja Europejska, Dyrekcja Generalna ds. Komunikacji Społecznej, Dział Informacji dla Obywateli, *Pomoc humanitarna i ochrona ludności...*, op. cit., s. 3

33 Zygierewicz, A. *Pomoc humanitarna Unii Europejskiej*, „Biuro Analiz Sejmowych” 2009, nr 12(59), p. 2.

34 Zygierewicz, A. *Pomoc humanitarna Unii Europejskiej*, „Biuro Analiz Sejmowych” 2009, nr 12(59), p. 2.

red cross on a white background – was introduced and remains in use today.³⁵

Today, the ICRC is an independent humanitarian organisation and part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which also includes³⁶:

1. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies,
2. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC),
3. The International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,
4. The Council of Delegates of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement,
5. The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

The ICRC's work is grounded in the principles of neutrality and confidentiality. The organisation does not disclose detailed information about its operations to maintain the trust of all conflict parties. This enables the ICRC to effectively assist those in need, regardless of the circumstances. The entire Red Cross movement adheres to these principles, allowing it to provide humanitarian aid in an effective and impartial manner. The ICRC's main tasks include providing humanitarian aid during armed conflicts and crises, protecting war victims (including wounded soldiers, civilians, prisoners of war, and displaced persons), promoting international humanitarian law, and monitoring compliance with the Geneva Conventions and other legal norms related to humanitarian assistance³⁷.

Another important international organisation is Amnesty International (AI), which works to protect human rights. AI is an independent, democratic movement whose members from around the world act in solidarity with victims of human rights violations.³⁸

AI conducts research, prepares reports, and documents cases of human rights violations globally. It organises campaigns and protest actions in defence of those at risk, expressing global solidarity by uniting people from different cultures and backgrounds, and operating in many regions of the world. The organisation focuses on helping specific individuals, highlighting their personal stories and rights. It is important to note that AI is independent and impartial, as it does not support any governments, political ideologies, economic interests, or religions. Another of its objectives is to promote legislative and political changes aimed at

35 Stankiewicz, W. *Rola i zadania Międzynarodowego Komitetu Czerwonego Krzyża (MKCK) w systemie ochrony praw człowieka*, „Cywilizacja i Polityka” 2012, nr 10, pp. 155-156.

36 Stankiewicz, W. *Rola i zadania Międzynarodowego Komitetu Czerwonego Krzyża (MKCK) w systemie ochrony praw człowieka*, „Cywilizacja i Polityka” 2012, nr 10, p. 156.

37 Stankiewicz, W. *Rola i zadania Międzynarodowego Komitetu Czerwonego Krzyża (MKCK) w systemie ochrony praw człowieka*, „Cywilizacja i Polityka” 2012, nr 10, p. 156.

38 *Amnesty International Handbook*, London 2002, pp. 3-4, Available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/org200012002en.pdf>.

strengthening the protection of human rights.³⁹

In conclusion, international organisations play a significant role in responding to crises worldwide. They participate in interventions, providing various forms of assistance to those affected by disasters and suffering. They support those in need with both advisory and material help. These organisations also strive to prevent the factors that contribute to the emergence of crisis situations. Humanitarian organisations not only combat existing humanitarian crises but also help prepare for potential future disasters.

Legal and international framework of humanitarian aid

Humanitarian aid, in the context of humanitarian crises, is based on two pillars of international law. The first is international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL). Each of these has its own set of principles and specific applications; however, together they create a coherent legal framework for the protection of individuals and the provision of humanitarian assistance⁴⁰.

International humanitarian law (IHL) is also referred to as the law of armed conflict or the law of war. It is a body of legal norms that regulate humanitarian actions undertaken during armed conflicts. The law of armed conflict is founded on both international treaties and customary law. IHL is regarded as one of the most developed areas of international law, shaped by numerous strategic treaties such as the Hague Conventions (1899, 1907), the Geneva Conventions (1949), and the Additional Protocols (1977). It is a dynamic regulatory system that evolves in response to the needs arising from armed conflicts, as new IHL provisions are often created after conflicts to fill gaps and improve existing regulations. A notable feature of this area of international law is the precision and clarity of its regulations, which facilitates compliance, and many of its provisions can be applied without the need for additional national legislation.⁴¹

Within the framework of international humanitarian law and international treaties, customary law still plays a significant role, reinforcing the entire legal

39 *Amnesty International Handbook*, London 2002, pp. 3-4, Available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/org200012002en.pdf>, pp. 3-4.

40 Galicki, Z. *Związki międzynarodowego prawa humanitarnego z międzynarodowymi standardami ochrony praw człowieka w sytuacji konfliktu zbrojnego*, In Grzebyk, P., Mikos-Skuza, E.), *Pomoc humanitarna*, p. 20.

41 Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych. *Miedzynarodné humanitárne právo*. Available at: <https://www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja/miedzynarodowe-prawo-humanitarne>

system. IHL allows for the alignment of rules concerning methods of warfare (Hague law) as well as the protection of victims (Geneva law). An example of regulation in this area is the 1997 Ottawa Convention, which contains important anti-war and disarmament rules, rules of warfare in the form of prohibitions on the use of landmines, and protection rules in the form of norms safeguarding combatants and civilians. The development of international criminal law supports the implementation of IHL, as it enables the effective prosecution of individuals responsible for serious violations of humanitarian law.⁴²

Beyond international humanitarian law, humanitarian aid is also connected to international human rights law (IHRL), which comprises a set of norms aimed at protecting the fundamental rights and freedoms of every individual. The formation of this law stems from the emergence of international documents such as⁴³:

1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
2. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
3. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)

These covenants laid the foundation for the creation of subsequent regulations and mechanisms for the protection of human rights. At the European level, a particularly important role has been played by the European Convention on Human Rights (1950) and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000). It is important to note that in the field of IHRL, it is essential to provide individuals with protection against state abuses and to establish mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing human rights. Such mechanisms include, among others, appropriate UN bodies (e.g., the Human Rights Council, the Human Rights Committee), international tribunals (e.g., the European Court of Human Rights), and monitoring and reporting mechanisms (e.g., through UN special rapporteurs).⁴⁴

Natural and man-made disasters have a significant impact on the realisation and protection of human rights. Crises particularly threaten the right to life. Furthermore, disasters seriously hinder the exercise of other rights, including socio-economic rights (e.g., the right to health care, food, water, and adequate living conditions). The occurrence of a crisis does not in any way exempt a state from the obligation to uphold these rights, as this arises from their international

42 Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych. *Mesdzinárodné humantárne právo*. Available at: <https://www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja/miedzynarodowe-prawo-humanitarne>

43 Gawin, M., Markiewicz, B., Nogal, A., Wonicki, R. *Prawa człowieka i obywatela w zglobalizowanym świecie*, Warszawa 2016, pp. 25-26.

44 Gawin, M., Markiewicz, B., Nogal, A., Wonicki, R. *Prawa człowieka i obywatela w zglobalizowanym świecie*, Warszawa 2016, pp. 25-26.

commitments. Within the UN framework, compliance with human rights in the context of disasters and emergencies is overseen by bodies such as the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Opinions and recommendations issued by these committees help to fill gaps in the UN's core human rights treaties.⁴⁵

Humanitarian aid is an important area of activity for the EU. The legal basis for humanitarian aid within the Union is provided by Commission regulations adopted by the Council of the EU and the Parliament under the ordinary legislative procedure. In the Parliament, responsibility for humanitarian aid lies with the Committee on Development (DEVE), while responsibility for civil protection falls to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI). The European Parliament monitors budgetary resources to ensure they are appropriately aligned with needs and regularly calls for increased humanitarian funding and the reduction of discrepancies between financial commitments and actual disbursements.⁴⁶

Specific rules for the provision of humanitarian aid and the instruments for its financing are laid down in Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996.⁴⁷ The core principles of the EU's humanitarian aid policy are also set out in the *European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid* of 2007, signed by the European Commission, the Council of the EU and the European Parliament. This document outlines a common vision for the Union, its priorities and operational principles, including international humanitarian cooperation, aid effectiveness, disaster risk reduction, preparedness, civil protection, and coordination between civil and military operations. The European Consensus also highlights the fundamental humanitarian principles: humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence. The action plan implementing the Consensus was in force until 2013, with the next 18-month plan executed in 2015. In 2017, the European Commission began evaluating its humanitarian aid policy over the previous five years. The objective of this review was to assess the impact of previous reforms and identify areas for further improvement.⁴⁸ The 1996 Council Regulation on humanitarian aid remains the legal foundation for the EU's humanitarian efforts and has not been significantly amended since its adoption. Its importance has been repeatedly

45 Balcerzak, M. *Pomoc humanitarna a międzynarodowa ochrona praw człowieka*, [w:] P. Grzebyk, E. Mikos-Skuza (red.), pp. 26-27.

46 Trevino, G. U. *Pomoc humanitarna*, Dokumenty informacyjne o UE, 2017, nr 9, p. 5.

47 Rozporządzenie Rady (WE) nr 1257/96 z dnia 20 czerwca 1996 roku dotyczące pomocy humanitarnej, Dz. Urz. UE z 1996 r. nr L 163/1.

48 Trevino, G. U. *Pomoc humanitarna*, Dokumenty informacyjne o UE, 2017, nr 9, pp. 2-3.

reaffirmed in subsequent documents, such as Decision 2013/1313/EU on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.⁴⁹

In summary, it is essential to emphasise that humanitarian aid is based on two pillars of international law: international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL). Humanitarian law governs the principles of humanitarian action during armed conflict and includes the Hague and Geneva Conventions along with their Additional Protocols. In turn, human rights law protects the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals both in peacetime and during crises, such as in the event of natural disasters. At the EU level, humanitarian aid is carried out under specific regulations, with its principles defined in documents such as the 2007 European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, which underscores the core principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence.

Conclusion

The analysis of the theoretical aspects of the humanitarian crisis and migration confirms the key assumptions outlined in the research hypotheses. The humanitarian crisis triggered by war has indeed influenced global migration processes, altering the demographic structure of countries receiving refugees. It has also been confirmed that international humanitarian aid mechanisms and migration policies are not fully adapted to the scale and dynamics of this crisis, highlighting the need for further action at both global and regional levels.

The hypotheses concerning the effectiveness of refugee integration, changes in EU migration policies, the role of non-governmental organisations, and the long-term economic consequences have also been supported by the conducted considerations.

It has been emphasised that effective management of a humanitarian crisis requires an interdisciplinary approach and long-term strategies that take into account both the needs of refugees and the challenges faced by host countries. Combating disinformation and fostering social acceptance of migration processes are also of crucial importance. In the face of growing humanitarian challenges, further research into these issues and the development of effective support mechanisms for those affected by conflict are essential.

49 Decyzja Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady nr 1313/2013/EU z dnia 17 grudnia 2013 r. w sprawie Unijnego Mechanizmu Ochrony Ludności (Tekst mający znaczenie dla EOG), Dz. Urz. UE z 2013 r. nr 1313/EU.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1] Balcerzak M., *Pomoc humanitarna a międzynarodowa ochrona praw człowieka. In Grzebyk, P., Mikos-Skuza, E. Pomoc humanitarna – uwagi wstępne.*
- [2] Balcerowicz, B. 2008. *Słownik terminów z zakresu bezpieczeństwa narodowego*, Warszawa.
- [3] Barczak-Oplustil A., Wróbel W. 2022. *Udzielanie pomocy humanitarnej jako zachowanie (pierwotnie) legalne*, „Iustitia”, nr 1.
- [4] Bogucewicz, M. 2022. *Kryzysy migracyjne w Polsce: od sekurytyzacji migracji do imperatywu humanitarnego. In Adamczyk, A. Sakson, A., Trosiak, C. Mniejszości, emigranci i uchodźcy „stare” i „nowe” wyzwania*, Poznań.
- [5] Budayová, Z., Marová, M., Šimek, V. Charitable activity of the Society of Daughters of Christian Charity in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. In: *Review of theology, social sciences and sacred art*. Dublin : International scientific board of catholic researchers and teachers in Ireland, no. 1, (2024), pp. 91-104
- [6] Budayová, Z. 2024a. The process of establishing a day center of social services. In *Review of theology, social sciences and sacred art*. Dublin: International scientific board of catholic researchers and teachers in Ireland. no. 3, pp. 9-22.
- [7] Budayová, Z. 2024b. The European union's position in migration. In *Scientia Internationale Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift Dortmund*. Dortmund: ISSKA, 2024 (3), pp. 54-64.
- [8] Dobrowolska-Polak J. 2014. *Pomoc humanitarna*, Wrocław.
- [9] Galicki Z. *Związki międzynarodowego prawa humanitarnego z międzynarodowymi standardami ochrony praw człowieka w sytuacji konfliktu zbrojnego. In Grzebyk, P., Mikos-Skuza, E.*
- [10] Gawin M., Markiewicz B, Nogal A., Wonicki R. 2016. *Prawa człowieka i obywatela w zglobalizowanym świecie*, Warszawa,
- [11] Gołębiowska, K. 2024. *Afganistan: kryzys humanitarny jako zagrożenie dla fundamentalnych praw człowieka*, „Przegląd Polityczny”, nr 5.
- [12] Grzebyk P., Mikos-Skuza E. 2016. *Pomoc humanitarna – uwagi wstępne. In Grzebyk, P., Mikos-Skuza, E. Pomoc humanitarna w świetle prawa i praktyki*, Warszawa.
- [13] Hechmann R., Bodzan M. 2017. *Pomoc humanitarna, Materiały z edukacji*

globalnej, Polska Akcja Humanitarna, Warszawa.

- [14] Chugaievska S., Dybała A., Wisła R. 2023. *Ukraiński kryzys migracyjny. Konsekwencje ekonomiczne dla krajów Unii Europejskiej i Ukrainy: wyzwania oraz ryzyka*. In Szymczyk, P.
- [15] Jaźwiński P. 2022. *Kryzysy humanitarne na świecie: wojna w Ukrainie już wśród największych. Najnowsze dane, 2022*. Available at: <https://konkret24.tvn24.pl/swiat/kryzysy-humanitarne-na-swiecie-wojna-w-ukrainie-juz-wsrod-najwiekszych-najnowsze-dane-ra1100835-ls5791266>, data pobrania: 08.12.2024 r.
- [16] Kaczmarczyk K. 2015. *Migracje – charakterystyka zjawiska*, „Zeszyty Naukowe PWSZ w Legnicy”, nr 16(3).
- [17] Koczan M. 2023. *Wpływ wojny na Ukrainie na międzynarodową pozycję Rosji*, „Roczniki Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego”, nr 2.
- [18] Nickel A., Nowak A., 2017. *Trendy migracyjne w XXI wieku*, „Roczniki Studenckie Akademii Wojsk Lądowych”, nr 1.
- [19] Olszewska-Łabędź B. 2022. *Konflikt zbrojny jako źródło kryzysu migracyjnego. Wybrane formy wsparcia uchodźców z Ukrainy*, Kraków.
- [20] *Pomoc humanitarna i ochrona ludności*, Komisja Europejska, Dyrekcja Generalna ds. Komunikacji Społecznej, Dział Informacji dla Obywateli, 2015.
- [21] Rojšl, J., Šimek, V. 2021. Organizování jako manažerská funkce In: *Sociální média v oblasti řízení lidských zdrojů (IV)*. Uherské Hradiště: Akademie krizového řízení a managementu. pp. 132-141.
- [22] Rozporządzenie Rady (WE) nr 1257/96 z dnia 20 czerwca 1996 roku dotyczące pomocy humanitarnej, Dz. Urz. UE z 1996 r. nr L 163/1.
- [23] Stefańska M. 2013. *Instytucjonalizacja międzynarodowej współpracy humanitarnej – zagadnienia podstawowe*, „Czasopismo Marszałek.com.pl”, nr 1(4).
- [24] Trevino G.U. 2017. *Pomoc humanitarna*, Dokumenty informacyjne o UE, nr 9.
- [25] Wiktor Z. 2023. *Wojna w Ukrainie – przyczyny i skutki po ponad roku trwania*, „Studia Orientalne”, nr 3.

WEBSITES:

- [26] *Jakie kraje zyskały najwięcej migrantów, a z jakich najczęściej uciekano?*, 2020. Availbale at: <https://forsal.pl/gospodarka/demografia/artykuly/8558391,migracja-ludzi-na-swiecie-dane-onz-2020.html>,
- [27] Lemańczyk B., *Straszny bilans dwóch lat wojny na Ukrainie*, 2024, Availbale at: <https://www.bankier.pl/wiadomosc/Straszny-bilans-dwoch-lat-wojny-na-Ukrainie-8700604.html>
- [28] *Kryzys na Ukrainie Partnerstwa organizacji pozarządowych odpowiedzią na kryzys*, Oxfam International 2024.
- [29] *Pomoc Polski dla Ukrainy dwa lata po wybuchu wojny*, 2020. Availbale at: <https://www.gov.pl/web/japonia/PomocPolskidlaUkrainywdwalatapowybuchuwojny>