

'NEVER AGAIN' Association

Let's Maintain Solidarity with Refugees. Report



Warsaw, April 2022

Summary

Faced with a large number of war refugees, in the first weeks after Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Polish society responded with a huge wave of solidarity, hospitality and aid. However, in addition to numerous gestures of support for Ukraine and its fight for freedom, there have also been attempts to inflame aversion to refugees and even to openly justify Putin's invasion.

The 'NEVER AGAIN' Association appeals for solidarity with the refugees from Ukraine and for the renouncing of xenophobic propaganda and disinformation. It also encourages the constant support of all activities to help refugees.

'NEVER AGAIN' has published a new report entitled 'Let's Maintain Solidarity with Refugees' dealing with incidents of discrimination and hate speech against Ukrainians, refugees and national minorities in Poland in the context of the ongoing war.

As indicated by the authors of the report, the vast majority of such events are organised by extreme right-wing groups. Their activities stem from a combination of hostility towards Ukrainians, anti-Semitism and approval for the brutal Putin regime. These groups do not enjoy widespread public support, but they do their best to set Poles and Ukrainians against one another by spreading hateful ideas, conspiracy theories and false information, primarily on the Internet.

One of the most bizarre and harmful antisemitic conspiracy theories is that of 'Heavenly Jerusalem', according to which Jews from Israel plan to settle in south-eastern Ukraine. From this perspective, it is allegedly the Jews who are to blame for the outbreak of the war. This theory was promoted, among others, by former Warsaw councilor Rafal Mossakowski during a demonstration in the capital (March 12) and by Marcin Rola, the founder of the far-right wRealu24 YouTube channel, during a meeting in Legnica (March 17).

The report also noted acts of racist violence against dark-skinned refugees from Ukraine, the rape of a 19-year-old Ukrainian woman, attempts to extort and defraud under the pretext of providing aid, preventing Ukrainian children from accessing education, refusing to help refugees because of their nationality, religion (Orthodox) and origin (Roma and war refugees from African and Asian countries) and finally organising xenophobic meetings and demonstrations, the latter also organised in centres of religious worship.

Below are selected examples of events documented in the report 'Let's Maintain Solidarity with Refugees':

OPOLE. On 24 February, the day of Russia's attack on Ukraine, and in the following weeks, the Head of the Volyn Remembered Foundation, Katarzyna Sokolowska posted extremely anti-Ukrainian material on her Facebook and Twitter profiles. On the day the war began, Sokolowska wrote, 'Will the hordes of Ukrainians coming to us be «scanned»?'

PRZEMYSL. On 1 March, near the train station, football hooligans armed with baseball bats and glass bottles attacked dark-skinned refugees from war-torn Ukraine. Aggressive men were 'patrolling' the streets in groups and shouting xenophobic slogans.

WARSAW. On 1 March during a programme broadcasted on a far-right celebrity's, Wojciech Cejrowski YouTube channel, he presented arguments justifying Putin's decision to start the war and bearing the responsibility for that on Poland and Western countries.

WARSAW. On 4 March, Marcin Rola and Piotr Szlachtowicz from wRealu24 (a far-right channel on YouTube) were broadcasting live from the vicinity of the main railway station in Przemysl (the largest transportation hub close to the Ukrainian border). They spread false information about alleged physical attacks carried out by war refugees who were not Ukrainian citizens. Rola described them as 'people with a non-European skin complexion' (sic!).

GDYNIA. On 17 March, Arka Gdynia football club announced on Facebook that refugees from Ukraine would be able to receive free tickets to the team's match. This gesture of solidarity with the victims of the war was condemned by some Polish 'fans'. In response, they published numerous xenophobic comments from 'fans' about the alleged privileges of Ukrainians at the expense of Poles, claiming that refugees were in Poland on 'all-inclusive holidays', 'getting everything for free' and '[were] not being harmed [in Ukraine – translator's note] in any manner'.

WARSAW. On 1 April, a press conference was held in the Sejm, during which the leader of the Ruch Narodowy (far-right National Movement) Robert Winnicki, and Michal Wawer an MP from the nationalist, radical Konfederacja (Confederation party), presented a draft 'law on a moratorium on granting Polish citizenship'. According to the draft, such a moratorium would be valid for ten years (sic!). Talking about Ukrainian refugees Winnicki declared: 'We are definitely saying 'no' to changing the national structure of the Polish state'.

WARSAW. On 4 April, an anonymous sender sent out death threats and anti-Ukrainian slurs to several public figures, including Member of the European Parliament Radoslaw Sikorski (former Speaker of the Parliament and Minister of Foreign Affairs) and Dr Maciej Lasek (MP Member of Civic Platform and former Chairman of the State Commission for Investigation of Aviation Accidents).

LONDON. On 5 April, Jakub Grygowski, chairman of the London branch of the KORWiN (political party), a member of the National Council and the party's representative in the UK and Ireland, Tweeted comments in which he denied Russian war crimes committed during the war in Ukraine: 'Actor Zelensky did not want to leave his industry colleagues in the lurch. After becoming president, he got them the acting jobs of their lives with audiences numbering in the billions... he let them play corpses lying on the streets'.

The 'NEVER AGAIN' Association appeals for solidarity with the refugees from Ukraine and the renouncing of xenophobic propaganda and disinformation. It also encourages the support of all activities to help refugees organised by the Polish Humanitarian Action: <https://www.pah.org.pl/wplac/?form=ukraina>

The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity (the biggest, non-governmental, non-profit, charity organisation in Poland, which supports medical care in public hospitals nationwide), with which the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association has been cooperating for many years, also supports the victims of the war: it has donated medical equipment to hospitals in Ukraine and to facilities in Poland that care for Ukrainian patients. It has set up humanitarian aid desks in Szeginia on the Polish/Ukrainian border and at the Warsaw East railway station. In the capital, the foundation has built a huge tent with a reception, waiting room, dining room and sleeping area, as well as a first aid area and a medical help point nearby. The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity calls for volunteers to help in centres that provide refugees with basic help. More information: <https://www.wosp.org.pl/pomoc-dla-ukrainy>

On April 4, the observations of the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association were presented at a special consultation session organised by the European Commission, with the participation of non-governmental organisations active in counteracting hate speech in the context of the war in Ukraine.

The 'NEVER AGAIN' Association is an independent anti-racist organization founded in Warsaw in 1996. Since 2005, it has led the 'Racism-Delete' campaign, which has the objective of removing antisemitic and racist content from the internet. The 'NEVER AGAIN' Association is a member of the International Network Against Cyber Hate (INACH). The Association also takes part in projects to counteract online hate speech such as 'Get the Trolls Out' and 'Open Code for Hate-Free Communication'.

More information:

www.nigdywiecej.org

www.facebook.com/Respect.Diversity

www.twitter.com/StowNIGDYWIECEJ

Let's Maintain Solidarity with Refugees. Report

WARSAW. On 22 February, two days before the Russian military attack on Ukraine, **Stanislaw Michalkiewicz**, a longtime commentator on **Radio Maryja** (a religious radio station with connections to radical nationalism) made statements inciting hatred and bias against Ukrainians on the **wRealu24** (internet television) YouTube channel. He claimed: *'If these refugees were to have then status of refugees then Poland will have to support them financially and this is not good, because they won't want to find employment – why would they? [...] And then there's a second threat, because if Poland welcomed a million refugees, then there would be 5 million Ukrainians living in Poland and what would we do if they demanded political rights? And it's only a matter of time before this happens'*. In the later part of the programme, the host **Lukasz Lech** asked his interlocutor about the *'neobanderism in Ukraine'* (banderists were members of the **Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists**, commonly 'banderist' refers to Ukrainians who took part in the Volhynia massacre of Poles as well as in Jewish pogroms in 1943-1944). Michalkiewicz corrected him saying that it's just *'banderism'* and claimed: *'Banderists are the only authentic political power in Ukraine and we have to take that into account in the Ukrainian diaspora'*.

Since December of 2018, internet TV programmes on Real24 have been broadcast from a studio located in the historic building of PAST (the Polish Telecoms company), a symbol of one of the greatest victories of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising. The 'NEVER AGAIN' Association attempted to intervene in the matter of renting PAST premises to an internet television channel known for the regular spreading of hatred, but the capital authorities neglected to take any action in this matter.

WARSAW. On 22 February during a programme broadcast on the **wRealu24** (internet television) YouTube channel, **Rafal Ziemkiewicz**, a commentator on **TV Republika (Republic TV)**, made a contemptuous and biased statement on the threat of war in Ukraine: *'Whatever they say, but Ukrainians are quite good in cutting throats. And if they wanted to take hits at this occupant Russian army then no Russian will have the guts to go out for girls or to buy alcohol. [...] The Russians will come, yeah they will, so they will bleed out, and they will bleed out Ukrainians as well of course. We can't do anything'*. During the broadcast Ziemkiewicz also shared a conspiracy theory on the supposed 'Jewish claims': *'Does antisemitism exist in Poland nowadays? No. Bollocks, it doesn't. [...] The problem starts when American Jews come and try to steal a lot of money from us, the same way they steal from the rest of the world, under the pretense of some reparations for the Holocaust'*.

WARSAW. On 22 February, **Bartłomiej Kurzeja**, co-creator of the so-called **Telewizja Narodowa (National TV)**, who is known for organising antisemitic events and was convicted of inciting hatred in 2020, posted extremely anti-Ukrainian content on Twitter. Kurzeja posted a map of Ukraine, with selectively marked territories which had been conquered by various countries from the 10th century up to the present day. Kurzeja used this image to deny Ukraine's right to sovereignty, adding the following appeal to the post: *'Let's dismantle this artificial anti-Polish Banderastan! **Bandera** followers are not brothers to us! Lviv is Polish!!!'* (**Stepan Bandera** was the leader of the **Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists** (OUN), an organisation which collaborated with Nazi

Germany. The OUN led an ethnic cleansing campaign against Poles in Volhynia during 1943-44. In practice, the term 'Bandera' is frequently used in Poland today as an ethnic slur against all Ukrainians).

WARSAW. On 23 February during a broadcast on the **wRealu24** (internet television) YouTube channel, Dr. **Lucyna Kulinska** (a longtime lecturer at the AGH University of Science and Technology in Krakow, in 2019 she ran for the European Parliament and the Lower House of the Polish Parliament [Sejm], as a far-right **Konfederacja [Confederation]** party) candidate) claimed that the start of a war in Ukraine is necessary and discouraged anyone from helping Ukrainian citizens in any form: *'The truth is that some sort of twist of reality occurred over there that can only be solved by weapons. [...] I wish for the Ukrainians that they will win the unity of their country on their own accord'*. In a later part of the programme Kulinska called Ukraine a country of *'oppressors of a couple of thousand Poles, who expelled the rest from those lands, taking their property, which they have never returned, and today they won't even allow for our dead to be buried'*. Her words met with an enthusiastic reaction from the host **Piotr Szlachowicz**, who said: *'Fine, we can help you, but this, this and that, and first of all we have to settle the issue of Volhynia [referring to the ethnic cleansing of Poles by Ukrainians in Volhynia in 1943-1944 – translator's note]. No one talks about this'*. Kulinska also fuelled the negative sentiments towards Ukrainians by manipulating references to modern times: *'National relations in our country have already been hugely disturbed by letting millions of Ukrainians into Poland. [...] More and more Ukrainians take jobs that could have been for Poles'*.

OPOLE. On 24 February, the day of Russia's attack on Ukraine, and in the following weeks, Head of the **Wolyn Pamietamy Foundation (Volhynia Remembered Foundation)**, **Katarzyna Sokolowska** posted strongly anti-Ukrainian material on her Facebook and Twitter profiles. Some remarks were also antisemitic. On the day the war began, Sokolowska wrote, *'Will the hordes of Ukrainians coming to us be «scanned»?' and '#NoSupportForUkraine #ThisIsNotOurWar'*. When the Mayor of Warsaw Rafal Trzaskowski tweeted that the Palace of Culture and Science would be illuminated in the colours of the Ukrainian flag as a sign of solidarity with the victims of the war, Sokolowska commented, *'An amusement park in Warsaw?'* Her other comments included, *'I do not support Banderite Ukraine!!! [referring to **Stepan Bandera** – leader of the **Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists** (OUN), which led an ethnic cleansing campaign against Poles in Volhynia during 1943-44. In practice 'Bandera' is an ethnic slur frequently used against all Ukrainians in Poland today – translator's note]'* (26 February), *'In what currency do we pay the sheep who, at all costs want to bury the subject of the Ukrainian genocide against the Polish nation? In Dollars, 25.7%. In Shekels 64.9%. In Hryvnias 9.4%'* (10 March), *'We are witnessing a manipulation of nationality in Poland'* (14 March), *'Open your eyes!!! These are not war refugees, they are migrants!!!'* (17 March) and *'Stupid Poliners [Polin means Poland in Hebrew – translator's note] are lending a hand in the complete Ukrainisation of Poland'* (March 25). Sokolowska also copied the following from other sources: *'The police are full of Ukry [an abusive term for Ukrainians – translator's note]. Banks employ speakers of Ukrainian, teachers – Ukry, cultural institutions host Ukrainian events plus give privileges to students from Ukraine! People! What is happening in Poland? Will we be able to chase away this Jewish-Banderite society, or do Poles have NO say in it?'* (February 24), *'For the time*

being, the Ukry have disrespect and contempt for us' (March 20), *'Ukrainization continues'* (March 25).

Sokolowska has been promoting hate speech against Ukrainians for many years. In June 2022, she will face trial on charges of publicly insulting a person on the grounds of their nationality. According to a report in the *Rzeczpospolita* newspaper on 17 March, the Prosecutor's Office have charged her with fourteen charges under Article 257 of the Criminal Code.

POZNAN. On 24 February, the day when Russia's military aggression against Ukraine began, the owners of the **Akamed** health clinic on Przemyslowska Street, posted a message on the door of the facility, which said, *'We do not serve Russians'*. The use of the idea of collective responsibility is unfair to representatives of the Russian community in Poland, many of whom are involved in protests against the war and in helping Ukrainian refugees. After the issue was publicised by the local media, the content of the discriminatory announcement was changed. The word *'Russians'* was crossed out and replaced with, *'Supporters of the military operation in Ukraine'*, in Polish.

WARSAW. On 24 February, a few hours after the start of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, far-right **Konfederacja (Confederation)** party MP, **Grzegorz Braun** (a nationalist known for antisemitic statements), posted a comment on Twitter, in which he called for people not to help those fleeing war-torn Ukraine: *'The humanitarian imperative: DO NOT leave the territory of the Republic of Poland wide open, do not create demand for the migration of refugees – it could be possible to organise shuttle trains... to the western border'*.

POLAND. From the very first days of the war information appeared on social media about landlords refusing to rent their apartments to refugees from Ukraine. They posted announcements that were discriminatory: *'We do not rent to foreigners'*, *'Guests from Ukraine please do not call'*, *'Families from Ukraine thank you but no'* or *'Ukrainian citizens thank you but no'*. Here are a couple of examples of such situations:

- On 28 February, in an Instagram post the actress, Julia Kaminska wrote: *'Does anybody have a flat to rent in Marki [a city close to Warsaw – translator's note]? I'm trying to find an apartment for a mum and a child from Ukraine. I want to rent this apartment for her but I'm finding hurdles. Turns out not everyone want to rent to people from Ukraine. I am destroyed'*. There were a lot of positive responses to Kaminska's post, and later that day the actress updated her followers: *'We managed to find an apartment, thank you for the numerous responses, you're amazing'*.

- On 16 March the following statement from a Ukrainian citizen appeared in *'Gazeta Pomorska'* newspaper: *'A friend from Torun helped to find an apartment for me and my daughter. When we arrived, it turned out that it will be rented to someone else. The owner explained that she preferred to rent it to Poles not Ukrainians'*.

- On 23 March prof. Michal Bilewicz from the Center for Research on Prejudice at the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Warsaw, tweeted two examples of 'offers of apartments to let a Polish small town': *'Potential renters without a Polish citizenship, no thank you'* and *'Rent available to Poles only'*.

The issue with renting apartments to refugees from Ukraine has been addressed by, among others, Bianca Bakowska a real estate adviser (interview from the 30 March on the Interia website). She

said: '[At first – editor's note] we saw a wave of a human instinct to help – people gladly housed [refugees] in their flats without pay. However, the second wave, when it became clear that the war won't end so quickly, led to a huge rise in prices on the rent market. The prices skyrocketed, especially in larger cities. [...] We can see that the first emotional wave finished ended very quickly, and currently, despite Poles' good intentions, there are people who just want to take advantage of the increase in refugees in Poland'.

OLESNICA. On 25 February, MojaOlesnica.pl (a local online news website) published an article stating that on the first day of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, a resident of the city published an extremely xenophobic post on Facebook regarding humanitarian aid for Ukrainians. **Lucja Sz.** wrote, 'Sure, let them get through doors and windows, haha, let these «brudasy» [an ethnic slur in Polish – translator's note] get social welfare here!' In an interview with the website, the woman maintained her earlier opinion: 'This was one of my comments. I wrote why I have such an opinion about them – they murdered Poles. Whenever you open a website or channel, there is something about Ukraine. [...] And they have better lives than many Poles'.

WARSAW. On 25 February, **Cezary Krysztopa**, editor of the '**Tygodnik Solidarnosc**' ('**Solidarity Weekly**') website and associate of the right-wing weekly '**Do Rzeczy**', who is known for publishing an antisemitic drawing, posted a homophobic comment on his Twitter profile in the context of Russia's military attack on Ukraine. Krysztopa claimed the war in Ukraine meant, 'The world of the rainbow dictatorship is coming to an end'.

WARSAW. On 25 February, one day after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, on the **wRealu24**, a far-right YouTube channel, host **Marcin Rola** made a contemptuous statement about people from Ukraine. Rola said, 'I've dealt with Ukrainians many times. [...] There is a very large intellectual accretion with regard to criminals like **Bandera** and the **UPA** [**Stepan Bandera** was the leader of the **Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists** (OUN, which collaborated with Nazi Germany), and of its armed division, the **Ukrainian Insurgent Army** (UPA). In practice, the term 'Bandera' is frequently used in Poland today as an ethnic slur against all Ukrainians – translator's note], and such aversion, which very often turns into hatred towards Poles and Poland; such a strange jealousy – why are Poles in this place and not somewhere else'. Speaking about the Polish army, he described the meaning of the defense activities undertaken by Ukraine as follows: 'People [Poles – translator's note] are supposed to go, to die for Bandera for three or four thousand PLN?' Rola also mocked the American army units stationed in Poland in a homophobic way, referring to them as, 'rainbow soldiers from bilet' [this insult referred to Joe Biden, the president of the USA – translator's note]. Many anti-Ukrainian and antisemitic comments from viewers appeared under the video, including: 'after all, this Jewish-Ukrainian government wants war, because nobody will bring them to justice', 'May we not let the Trojan horse into Poland... out of empathy and compassion', 'It's not Russians who will take over Poland but Ukrainians. UPA units and contemporary Bandera followers', 'Putin would not have done it without a reason if he were not right', 'Bandera will finish us off and the Jews will regain Polin' [Polin in Hebrew means Poland – translator's note] and 'In the end everyone will apologize to Putin'.

WARSAW. On 25 February, in an interview conducted by **Marcin Rola** on the YouTube channel **wRealu24** (a far-right channel, which often disseminates fake news), MP **Janusz Korwin-Mikke** (a well-known eccentric extremist and chauvinist, as well as admirer of **Vladimir Putin**), of the far-right **Konfederacja (Confederation party)**, stated that *‘Russia has the right to safe borders’, and described military intervention in Ukraine as ‘understandable’.*

WARSAW. On 25 February, far-right **Konfederacja (Confederation party)** MP **Grzegorz Braun** (a nationalist known for several scandals and antisemitic statements), condemned on Twitter the aid campaigns organised for refugees leaving Ukraine. Commenting on a statement made by the Mayor of Zamosc about preparations for the arrival of Ukrainians in the city, Braun presented a conspiratorial version of events: *‘I’m warning you, this joyful hyperactivity of the Zamosc authorities specifically means the creation of demand for migrants – today from Ukraine, tomorrow from God knows where. Over time, they could radically change, not only the social structure, but also the balance of political forces in the Republic of Poland’.* Braun also called for ethnic discrimination in favour of Poles: *‘If the Polish authorities are to engage in any «humanitarian actions», these must be primarily humanitarian actions to assist Poles [in Poland or Ukraine]. It is a scandal to prioritise the safety, health and educational problems of neighbours and guests over those of one’s own compatriots and citizens’.*

WROCLAW. On 25 February and the subsequent days, former Catholic priest and extreme-right activist **Jacek Miedlar**, published comments on his Facebook and Twitter profiles, in which he fueled a hostile attitude towards refugees from Ukraine, especially dark-skinned people from African and Asian countries arriving in Poland because of the war (according to the data from Ministry of Education of Ukraine in 2020, 80,000 foreigners studied in the country, with most from Africa, the Middle East and Asia). One day after the Russian aggression began, Miedlar wrote, *‘Poland in danger! [...] Imposition on Poland of coloured migrants on the border with Moscow’s minions. The attack on Ukraine means millions of Ukrainians in Poland = the Vistula operation [the forced relocation of Poles and people of other nationalities from eastern into western Poland after World War II aimed against Ukrainian nationalists – translator’s note] is being crossed out, which, in connection with the banderisation [extreme Ukrainian nationalism – translator’s note] in Ukraine, paints a gloomy scenario’.* He continued, *‘Putin tried to hit Poland with illegal migration of «newcomers» from the Middle East on the border with Belarus. Now, with an awareness of the consequences of the attack on Ukraine, he leads them into our country along with women and children from beyond the river Bug’.*

Miedlar published a number of posts in which he used the Volhyn crimes of 1943-1945 to encourage hatred against Ukrainians today. He also manipulated the memory of the Holocaust by using false pseudo-historical comparisons. For example, he stated that, *‘The Ukrainians had many years to compensate [us], apologise and allow the exhumation of the Polish victims of genocide. Instead, they chose the worship of beasts, the cult of **Bandera** [a leader of the **Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists**, which collaborated with Nazi Germany – translator’s note]. He also called Ukraine ‘the state, which has made a mockery out of our nation by using its historical policy!’*

KOSZALIN. On 26 February, former leader of **KORWiN** (a party created by **Janusz Korwin-Mikke**, a well-known eccentric extremist and chauvinist, as well as admirer of **Vladimir Putin**) in Koszalin **Artur Jablonski**, posted an extremely offensive comment on Twitter under a post made by Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelensky, about the opposition of European Union countries to Russia's military aggression. Jablonski said the following to the Ukrainian President the following: *'F*ck you! I will dance on your grave. Have a nice night, maybe your last one'*. Following criticism, Jablonski removed his post, but posted a second comment – with a very similar meaning: *'OK, I removed it... All in all, why [sic!] write that I would dance on his grave as I cannot dance'*. To this sentence, he added an emoticon signifying amusement.

MEDYKA. On 26 February and the following days, **Konfederacja** party MP's arrived at border crossings and searched for refugees from African and Asian countries, who had come to Poland from Ukraine. In their video's and posts on social media they questioned their right to seek refuge in Poland, and incited racist sentiment. **Konrad Berkowicz** posted the following statements: *'At the Medyka border crossing there were not a lot of fleeing Ukrainians. Almost only Pakistanis, Iranians and citizens of Morocco'* and *'more evidence points to the fact that the situation of the refugees is being taken advantage of by economic immigrants from outside of Europe'*. Another MP from Konfederacja, **Krzysztof Tuduj**, helped him build this atmosphere of threat and hostility. He posted on twitter: *'At the Medyka border crossing there are a couple hundred people not of Ukrainian descent and I can bet that students from Kyiv are a minority in that group. Is the Border Guard working in accordance with the «let them in and check later» rule? How is migration being monitored?'* In another post, he spread claims (unconfirmed by other sources): *'Is it true that today at the Medyka border crossing a gun was used, more specifically a warning shot was fired because a man not of Ukrainian descent hit a border guard in the face? Have the police caught the perpetrator?'*. **Krzysztof Bosak** (Konfederacja MP, and a presidential candidate in the 2020 elections) also published material inciting prejudice against refugees. On 28 February he tweeted: *'We are investigating leads that there are refugees coming through the Polish border that are not Ukrainian but foreigners legally living there but also migrants from outside of Europe. The temptation to deal with the issue by letting them through to Germany without any procedures could exacerbate the problem'*.

WARSAW. On 26 February, the portal wgospodarce.pl published information that the owners of one of the capital's hotels had posted a discriminatory statement inside the building. Its content read: *'Our hotel does not accept Russians'*. It was intended to be an expression of opposition to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, but phrased as it was, it amounted to a damaging identification of all Russians with Putin's supporters.

POLISH-UKRAINIAN BORDER. On 27 February and in the days following Russia's attack on Ukraine, the media reported that people from African and Asian countries who wanted to move from Ukraine to Poland, were being discriminated against by those working for the border services. One person affected wrote on Twitter that she had been to various border-crossing points and that only Ukrainian citizens were allowed through. When she finally managed to get to Poland, she heard that accommodation was only available for Ukrainians. *'We did not sleep for three days, we had no*

food, and we walked over 20 km. Why is it that nationality decides who is entitled to rest?’ she reported.

The Embassy of South Africa in Poland intervened in cases involving students. On 27 February, a South African diplomat, Clayson Monyela, reported on Twitter that ‘*South African students were treated badly on the Polish-Ukrainian border*’.

According to Gazeta.pl (one of the biggest news websites in Poland), a woman from Afghanistan with children was also unable to leave Ukraine as the border guard refused to let her into Poland. Eventually, the Afghan woman and her children were allowed into the territory of the Republic of Poland and were given help.

On 28 February, in a media statement, Deputy Ombudsman, Dr. Hanna Machinska expressed her reservations about the treatment of citizens from African countries, as well as those from Pakistan and India, at border crossings. Referring to the situation in Medyka, Machinska said, ‘*30 students from Zambia and 30 students from India, could not get out. Here there is chaos. I have the impression that they are treated completely differently. [...] We entered the room where these people had been invited. The conditions were absolutely unacceptable, the procedures were long, it left a very bad impression*’. The Office of the Ombudsman intervened in the matter.

WARSAW. On 27 February, two photos were published on Twitter on the **Terytorialsi** profile (an official profile run by the **Territorial Defence Forces**). The first photo showed a group of dark-skinned men standing behind a barbed wire fence and trying to break through it. The photo was labeled ‘Migrants’. This photo presented an image of dangerous aggressors. A second photo showed some nice old ladies and was signed ‘*Refugees*’. The ladies were supposed to symbolise refugees from Ukraine. This juxtaposition of the two photos had a commentary: ‘*The difference between a migrant and a refugee? These pictures say more than a thousand words*’. The post was criticised by many internet users for replicating a racist stereotype. Among others, prof. Jacek Kochanowski from the University of Warsaw wrote: ‘*Bravo! Racism, stupidity and an excellent promotion of WOT [Polish territorial army – translator’s note]. [...] Are white women the only «real refugees»? What if they are fleeing Syria or Ethiopia?*’

GDYNIA. On 28 February, **Konrad Niznik**, an activist for **Konfederacja (Confederation)** party), the party of **Grzegorz Braun** (a nationalist known for antisemitic statements), spread a conspiracy theory through his Twitter profile about the causes of Russia’s attack on Ukraine, repeating the threads of **Putin’s** propaganda. Niznik wrote: ‘*The map of targets in Ukraine that have been bombed coincides with the map of US military laboratories that produce biological weapons, including research on dangerous viruses*’, and provided a link to an article presenting these claims (published on the website **Europe Reloaded**, which promotes anti-vaccine content).

WARSAW. On 28 February, on the YouTube channel **wRealu24**, **Piotr Szlachtowicz** conducted an interview with Dr. **Lucyna Kulinska**, in which Kulinska spread false information and fueled racist prejudices about refugees from African and Asian countries leaving Ukraine (Kulinska was a longtime lecturer at the AGH University of Science and Technology in Krakow. In 2019, she stood for election as a representative of **Konfederacja**, a far-right party). Kulinska delivered the following tirade: ‘*At some of our border crossing points, the number of people with the so-called European skin*

colour, is no more than 20-30%. All these newcomers from Afghanistan, Senegal and many other countries suddenly received information that Poland had opened its borders and that it was possible to enter Poland without anyone checking their documents, only by bribing the now-unimaginably-rich Ukrainian border guards. [...] I saw a shocking video from a train, which, as we know, are free [for refugees – translator’s note]. It was a train going towards the Polish border [...], in which a man was standing with a knife. It can be clearly seen that this person from a Muslim country and his friend stops the women and children who are trying to get on the train, and shouts and whistles to his lads and burqa-clad women to get on the train. He swings the knife around. [...] It cannot be [...] that under the pretext of saving Ukrainians, we are letting the whole wave of refugees in’.

WARSAW. On 28 February and the following days a lot of xenophobic and antisemitic comments appeared under an article about an interview with Weronika Marczuk (Polish actress, producer and lawyer, who was born in Kiev) on the Ukrainian community in Poland (published in December 2021 on the Wirtualna Polska website) on the **Media Narodowe (National Media)** website. Here are some of them: ‘F*ck off banderist [‘banderist’ is a frequently-used ethnic slur against Ukrainians in Poland today – translator’s note] b*tch, Ukraine is a Polish enemy’, ‘We can let them to the border, let them f*ck off together with this b*tch Marczuk. This is Poland for Poles not for banderist trash and brats’, ‘This is Poland not Ukropolin!!!’ (Polin means Poland in Hebrew), ‘Khazari sidelocks [Khazaria was an Eastern European state in the early Middle Ages which partly converted to Judaism, sidelocks are worn by Orthodox Jews – ed.] want to get their own land back and this is where this so-called war is coming from, but in reality it is a Big Action to Resettle Ukrainians. They will now get everything here in our country that our predecessors fought for, and we will be 2nd class citizens. UNTIL THEY SWEEP US AWAY. The world wars did not work so they duped us via «help for refugees»’.

POLAND. At the end of February, a lot of racist comments appeared on the Internet, as well as false information about refugees from African and Asian countries who had come to Poland from war-torn Ukraine. Here are some examples of such posts on Twitter:

- ‘This little war was about, among other things, letting in thousands of people from Africa with the total consent of dumb Poles and about giving them apartments and privileges!! Way to go!!! But I’m not going to pay for it!’

- ‘No words for the human stupidity, what moron believes the police? There are videos with these niggers, you just have to be an idiot without a moral backbone to spread disinformation like that, go turn on the TV, you’ll find everything’ (in response to the police announcement which denied false information about an increase in crime in Przemysl and other areas near the border),

- ‘Can anyone from the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, the police or the Border Guard clean up this black wildness from Africa and Asia, who pretend to be refugees on the border with Ukraine’,

- ‘If the State cannot cope, if the Border Guard cannot cope with the influx of black people, the police, an [the Spokesman of the Special Services Coordinator, name redacted – translator’s note] and the government pretend that there is no problem, it’s time to take matters into your own hands and, for example, following the example of the **National Guard Association** [an aggressive extreme-

nationalist militia connected with the **March of Independence Association** – translator’s note], *set up patrols*,

- *‘These are not Ukrainians, but Pakis from various countries around the world. They attack vulnerable women and children. Nobody will watch such situations with indifference’*,

- *‘Get on with wh*res! They throw women and children out of trains, they stab a woman in Przemysl, and what the f*ck, do they think that they won’t be held accountable?’*

POLAND. From the end of February onwards a lot of antisemitic comments and conspiracy theories about the invasion on Ukraine appeared on the internet. Jews were accused of inciting the war, reaping the benefits from it, acting to the detriment of Poland or exercising the real power in Ukraine. Here are some examples of such statements published on Twitter:

- *‘Yeah, Jews want as many victims among young people and most of all men because kids and women end up with us. And Jews when they resettle to Ukraine want to avoid a second Palestine this way’*,

- *‘Jews always wanted to have their Galicia [historic region of eastern Europe that was a part of Poland before Austria annexed it in 1772; in the 20th century it was restored to Poland but was later divided between Poland and the Soviet Union – translator’s note] for themselves, now they’re counting on Russia to share it with them. Support has its price, and its crowded and hot in Israel’*,

- *‘If we live long enough, then Ukrainians and Jews will elect the President here. Poles will have nothing to say anymore’*,

- *‘Jews are desperate, they need black soil so they will take UA’s place to the West of the Dniepr. Russia will be in the East. Ukraine will move from the San to the Oder river. With our approval and with our money we will have a new partition of Poland. Will you still let them into your houses?’*,

- *‘Jews rule Ukraine, rule Poland and everyone can see what this rule has led to and it can only get worse’*,

- *‘Jews are the same as the Russian bandits, liars, scammers. JEWS AND RUSSIANS ARE BANDIT COUNTRIES’*,

- *‘Jews are worse pests than Russians’*,

- *‘Jews are fake trash worse than Bolsheviks’*,

- *‘Jews are creating confusion the most, to incite a war’*,

- *‘They [Ukrainian refugees – editor’s note] can be used to fight against the catholic church because they are mostly Orthodox Christians or Jews like Zelensky’*,

- *‘We are not a multinational country, and see how many internal problems we have. Let’s imagine that Poland has a significant Ukrainian and Jewish minority. We know what Ukrainians were capable of in Volhynia, what Jews are capable of in Palestine’*.

LODZ. On 1 March, on the Lodz district Facebook profile of **Młodzież Wszechpolska (All-Poland Youth)**, far-right organization) an entry promoting racist content and expressing false information about refugees from Ukraine of African and Asian origin was published: *‘AGGRESSIVE IMMIGRANTS FROM OUTSIDE OF EUROPE! On trains in Ukraine, gangs of economic immigrants from Africa and Arab countries throw out real refugees just to get to our cozy, warm Europe. Aggressive groups of the «princes of the Orient» attack defenseless Ukrainian and Polish women and rob shops’*.

Under this post, there were many insulting comments and calls for racist violence: *'Don't f*ck with them'* (along with an emoticon symbolizing a clenched fist), *'Football fans will take care of them'* (along with three symbols of a clenched fist), *'Get on [the train – translator's note] with them'*, *'Football fans, get to work!!!'* and *'That's why the stray dogs were let in. Border guards do not check their documents, and even let them in without passports'*.

PRZEMYSL. On 1 March, near the train station, football hooligans armed with baseball bats and glass bottles attacked dark-skinned refugees from war-torn Ukraine. Aggressive men were 'patrolling' the streets in groups and shouting xenophobic slogans, including *'Przemysl always Polish'* and *'Get the f*ck out!'* Among them were football fans of the clubs **Polonia Przemysl, Czujaj Przemysl, JKS Jaroslaw, Lady Bilgoraj and Karpaty Krosno.**

Four attackers beat up three men of Indian origin. One of the injured suffered a hand injury and required medical attention. The police were informed about the incident.

Another attack was reported by a volunteer who was helping refugees in Przemysl. In an interview with a journalist, he reported, *'I met a few refugees from Ukraine on the street. They asked for directions to the station. As I showed them where to go, a few cars stopped next to us. Through the open windows we heard: «Get the f*ck out of Poland»'*. The men managed to escape, but three of them were attacked by football fans later that day. The volunteer described the incident: *'They [the refugees – translator's note] were attacked by men with baseball bats and bottles [the perpetrators were football fans]. Two of them [the refugees] were hit and the firefighters helped them [there were uniformed services on the streets that day, with firefighters among them]. They [the firefighters] escorted them [the refugees, who were attacked] to the station. At Biedronka supermarket there was a third man, who had also been attacked, and his friends. While we were waiting for the patrol, the shop's customers began to comment loudly that black people had allegedly attacked a woman in Przemysl with a knife. The atmosphere was getting more tense'*.

As reported by the news website Oko.press, another aggressive group of masked men also attacked three dark-skinned foreigners. When reporters started recording the incident, one of the attackers shouted, *'Okay, don't hit them!'* and turned to the journalists to say, *'We are defending our women!'* It turned out that the victims were workers from the German branch of Humanity First, an organization helping refugees from Ukraine. One of the workers reported, *'We were stopped by some people telling us to «go back to the train» and to «leave the country»'. We turned back, we wanted to wait until they were gone but they came again and attacked us'*. The second activist added, *'We tried to talk to the police and have them escort us to the car. But they refused, saying we were the ones who had to take the risk'*.

In a statement for the British daily newspaper *'The Guardian'*, a 22-year-old Egyptian student, who had come from Ukraine, reported, *'I was with my friends, buying something to eat. These men came and began harassing a group of Nigerian men. They did not allow the African boy to enter the premises so that he could eat. Then they came up to us and shouted: «Go back to your country»'*.

The thugs also attacked a female student from Sudan, using racist insults. They shouted, *'Black b*tch'* at her.

On the same day, a journalist from Israel was attacked near the train station by a group of hooligans.

A recording of another act of aggression, whereby two attackers accosted a black man, was posted on a far-right Twitter account. On camera, the attackers announced that they had used force against the man: *'Good evening, Przemysl civic patrol. We are just escorting the gentleman who is walking around Przemysl without documents, he does not know what for'*. The rest of the video has not been made public.

The events in Przemysl were inspired by racist posts published on social media, primarily on Facebook in the **Engineers Przemysl** group (the name comes from a derisive term for dark-skinned refugees from Ukraine, mocking and questioning the fact that among them there were also university students and people with higher education). The authors of these entries accused newcomers from African and Asian countries of committing crimes in Przemysl including raping women, shoplifting and burglary. These kinds of posts, inciting violence and promoting false content about *'attacks by immigrants from Africa in the Podkarpacie region'*, were also published on the Twitter profile of **Right Populist (Prawy Populista)**, **Przemysl Always Polish (Przemysl Zawsze Polski)**'s Facebook profile, and the **National Media (Media Narodowe)** portal, which belongs to the **March of Independence Association (Stowarzyszenie Marsz Niepodleglosci)** led by **Robert Bakiewicz** (this organization is subsidized by the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage). Moreover, on the Facebook profile of **Podkarpacie Football Fans (Podkarpaccy Kibice)**, the events in Przemysl were described as *'cleansing the city'*.

On 1 March, **Andrzej Zapalowski**, a Professor at the University of Rzeszow and Przemysl city councilor (Zapalowski was elected from the populist movement **Kukiz'15** list, in 1997-2001 he was a member of the Polish Parliament, and in 2005-2009 he was a member of the European Parliament on behalf of the far-right **League of Polish Families – Liga Polskich Rodzin**), published a number of posts inciting aggression and spreading racist fake news. Zapalowski wrote, *'As a councilor of the City of Przemysl, I demand that the authorities of my country bring order to the situation where bandits of a different skin color pretend to be refugees from Ukraine! You threw decent people to the ground for not wearing masks! Now show that you can do something with bandits. If not, the townspeople will take matters into their own hands on their own!!!'* and *'The bandits in Przemysl will not get over it. For now, the youth is patrolling the streets. If necessary, the elders will join in. There is no room here for bandits to rampage!!!'* He also posted an expression of support for the perpetrators of violence: *'Civic patrol in Przemysl in action. Congrats, guys!!!!'* and *'Bullseye in Przemysl!!! Gentlemen and ladies! The motivation to play sports is pride!!!'* Along with these entries, he shared videos of football fans who attacked refugees.

Many racist and violent comments appeared under the councilor's posts, including, *'Chase the scum without mercy, otherwise it will be the same as in the UK and Germany'*, *'If there are such students you should organize a visit for them to an orthopedist in Przemysl...'*, *'Keep it up! I support, beat these shitters!!!!'*, *'You have to beat them'*, *'Why wait – cans on the back, because gentlemen with*

olive skin can be dangerous’ and, ‘They practice the discipline of chasing the blacks on the streets of Przemysl’.

Konrad Berkowicz, a far-right **Konfederacja (Confederation)** party MP, also spread some racist fake news. On 1 March, he wrote on his Twitter profile that, *‘Przemysl is flooded with immigrants from outside Europe. They are attacking women’.*

These false accusations were denied by the Voivodeship police, who published the following statement on Twitter: *‘False information about the increase in crime in Przemysl and in the areas near the border may cause unnecessary anxiety and negative reactions towards foreigners who came from Ukraine. #StopFakeNews’.*

Konfederacja MP **Grzegorz Braun** approved of the acts of racist violence that took place in Przemysl. On the evening of 1 March, he stated on Twitter: *‘I support #PatroleObywatelskie [civic patrols – translator’s note] in Przemysl and other places! I wish you safe service and a peaceful night’.*

WARSAW. On 1 March during a programme broadcasted on a far-right celebrity’s, **Wojciech Cejrowski** YouTube channel, he presented arguments justifying **Putin’s** decision to start the war and bearing the responsibility for that on Poland and Western countries. Cejrowski said, among other things, that: *‘because of the European armed forces [which are yet to be formed – editor’s note] Ukraine is becoming a nuclear state with a big enemy [...] Russian army under its nose. [It is not a surprise] that [Putin] drove in, to secure his front and rear’.* Cejrowski attacked the US President: *‘Biden, whose son took money for Ukraine for no reason, and now Biden supports Ukraine because he knows that there is evidence on his son. Biden will support Ukraine to spite Russia, which is dangerous for the whole world’.*

Cejrowski expressed similar views before the war started, for example on 19 February on **Radio Wnet** in an interview with **Krzysztof Skowronski**, the editor of the radio station and the President of the **Polish Journalist Association**: *‘This war and inciting this war is more important to Biden than Putin. Putin’s goal is Ukraine and not war and Biden’s goal is war’.* Skowronski did not react to those words. In another programme in Radio Wnet (from 9 February) Cejrowski commented on the information that a 100,000 Ukrainians live in Warsaw in the following way: *‘We should get rid of this problem quickly, because it’s a leak of money abroad. And we should give back this work to Poles. [...] If there is just one jobless person in Warsaw, then it means that there is one Ukrainian too many’.*

In relation to Cejrowski’s scandalous statements, in some cases organisers cancelled his planned appearances, in Wroclaw (Multikino – cinema network), Poznan (Medical University and Mutlikino), Krakow (Multikino) and Lodz (Jaracza Theatre).

WARSAW. On 1 March and over the subsequent days, Prof. **Adam Wielomski** (lecturer at Siedlce University of Natural Sciences and Humanities, and contributor to the extreme-right weekly magazine **‘Najwyższy Czas!’ (‘High Time!’)**) made posts on Twitter promoting xenophobic conspiracy theories and condemning the aid given to Ukrainian refugees. He wrote: *‘COVID-19*

sceptics very often also display sceptic attitudes towards Ukrainians. Why? Because both groups of people have one thing in common: a complete lack of trust in the big mass media, in what is said in them and towards the ruling political class' (1 March). Moreover, in reaction to the information that clubs from Ukraine could join the Polish Hockey League, Wielomski stated: *'Has there been a creation of a joint Polish-Ukrainian state, that I have missed due to the flurry of news? As a supporter of the nation state, I am of course against this initiative'* (17 March). In turn, referring to media announcements that the law on assistance to Ukrainian citizens would also cover refugees who arrived from Ukraine via Romania and Moldova, Wielomski despaired: *'Will someone explain to me in a rational way what this is all about? Is this still about helping refugees who found themselves within Poland's borders, fleeing war, or is this a planned and massive drawing of several million people to Poland?'* (18 March).

CHELM. In early March, a 39-year-old resident of the city was charged with inciting ethnic hatred against refugees from Ukraine. According to police information published on Twitter, the man had posted entries on one a social media platform. The posts called for violence, with the author expressing his own readiness to join the attackers: *'Away with those [vulgar word – translator's note]. Gentlemen, let me know if you need help! I will gladly come and assist' and 'Away with them! Zosin/Dorohusk send me a priv, is anyone ready yet?'*

WARSAW. On 2 March, a lawyer, **Pawel Budrewicz** (president of the board of the Warsaw-based Lubie Miasto Association [I Like the City Association] and an expert at the Adam Smith Research Centre) posted a comment on his LinkedIn profile and on his blog, in which he condemned the aid provided to refugees from war-torn Ukraine coming to Poland. He stated: *'The first decision should have been to close the Polish border to Ukrainian refugees'*.

OSWIECIM. On 2 March, the Association of Roma in Poland, published a statement on the situation of Ukrainian refugees of Roma origin who had reached Poland. It gave information about acts of discrimination against Roma and refusals to help them. The message emphasised: *'Polish citizens spontaneously respond to the needs of refugees, organise their transport and place of residence in Poland. Unfortunately, this very human reaction does not apply to the Roma minority, as we have been made aware of by representatives of the Roma refugees'*.

Jerzy Marcol, director of the Biblical Missionary Association from Ustron, released a press statement about the cases of refusals to help Roma arriving from Ukraine on 11 March in a statement for the media. He stated, inter alia, that a Roma family of seven who had reached Poland via the Budomierz crossing had been refused accommodation several times. *'We heard about a request for confirmation that they definitely crossed the border after 24 February and were not merely pretending to be war refugees. Someone else didn't want to say it directly, but between the lines you can hear that they are afraid that these are refugees who will be a burden for a long time, because they will not find a job. It was finally possible to find a place, it was a miracle'*, he reported.

WARSAW. On 2 March, during the *'Dzien Dobry TVN'* broadcast, a model, Monika Miller spoke about xenophobic insults and threats that she had received due to her Ukrainian origin (her mother is Ukrainian and she was born in Ukraine in Kamieniec Podolski in the Khmelnytsky region). She

reported: *'I read comments that it is a shame that I am Ukrainian [...], that Poland is not my country and I should be grateful that Poles help Ukrainians. In short, the message is that if I don't like something, I should go back to my country, because they will bomb my city and shoot my family anyway. People write to me directly saying that I have to return to Ukraine, because if something happened to me, no one would feel sorry for it'*. Miller also said that before the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, hateful comments had been published online about her based on her nationality.

TORUN. On 3 March, on **Radio Maryja** (a religious radio station with connections to radical nationalism), **Tadeusz Rydzyk** (a very influential radical nationalist preacher) made comments that aroused hatred toward refugees coming from Ukraine and other countries. He stated: *'I am afraid that those who should not be here in Poland, against whom we have defended ourselves, will come along with the war refugees. It did not work out in 2015, as they wanted to get a couple of thousand refugees to Poland, to open the borders [...], they used to say those non-Polish Poles'*. He continued his tirade based on innuendo and conspiracy theories: *'Yesterday I read that 250,000 or 270,000 Ukrainians came in, half a million of them in total. So who is the rest? Aren't they the ones who didn't get in in 2015, or when they couldn't get across the Belarusian-Polish border [during 2021 migrant crisis – translator's note]? You have to be careful about that. I would be very, very careful here. [...] Today I hear that many people of Indian origin have flown from Ukraine back to India, that they are being brought in. I don't know, you definitely have to be careful here, keep an eye on it. And here I would like to warn you, because this will destabilise Poland'*.

WARSAW. On 3 March on the **wRealu24** YouTube channel, **Krzysztof Lech Luksza** once again made xenophobic statements about Ukrainian refugees. He criticised the help given to them and talked about their alleged privileges: *'Who will pay for it, how long will this last and will it end up with a situation that Ukrainians will be let in front of Poles in queues. It already seems that way in administrative offices'*. He also claimed: *'Now in Poland and in Ukraine there is supposed to be a different culture, not Polish not Latin but it's supposed to be anti-culture. And let's not kid ourselves, if Ukraine was to be incorporated into Western structures then these anti-culture machines would start working, in fact they have already started working'*.

WARSAW. On 3 March, on the **nacjonalista.pl** portal which is associated with the extreme right-wing party, **Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski** (the **National Rebirth of Poland**), an article was published by one of the ideologists of this group, **Ronald Lasecki** (associate of **Instytut Spraw Obywatelskich [the Civic Affairs Institute]**, his texts have been published, among others, in the fascist journal *'Templum Novum'*). In the text he expressed his support for Russia in the war against Ukraine. Lasecki described the hopes related to **Putin's** aggression as follows: *'Ukraine must be forced to surrender, its ruling oligarchy deprived of power. Western influence must be completely eliminated from Ukraine and the country must be fully protected from Western penetration'*. Contrary to the information about war crimes, he emphasised the alleged *'[...] efforts by Russia to minimise the unnecessary suffering of Ukrainians. But this is a war, and in a war bloodshed is inevitable'*. Lasecki also presented an opinion on the positive results of the war in the context of the final crackdown on dissidents in Russia itself: *'This price, however, may turn out to be the price of healing for Russia. Aggression against Ukraine – if successful – will be the end of Russian*

Occidentalism, and therefore also the end of Russian liberalism. [...] Russia's civilizational and economic dependence on the West will lose its raison d'être. He also expressed his *'hope for the cleansing of the Eurasian space of Western toxins also on the cultural level. [...] The war with Ukraine, if successful, may be a historical and civilizational catharsis for Russia'*.

LUBLIN. On 4 March, the police reported that four men had been arrested in relation to social media posts inciting hate crimes and attacks on refugees from Ukraine and the Middle East. Replicating the fake news about the alleged threat to the safety of the inhabitants of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, they called for organisation of *'patrols in border towns'* and *'joining forces to clean up the cities'*. The detainees were: a 29-year-old resident of the Wawolnica parish (he made a vulgar entry in which he publicly insulted and incited hatred towards people from the Middle East), a 35-year-old resident of the Melgiew parish, a 30-year-old resident of the Tyszowce parish (who published an entry promoting hate speech in a community group) and a 26-year-old resident of the Kamien parish (he posted entries inciting nationality-based hatred against refugees from Ukraine and the Middle East).

WARSAW. On 4 March in the **Regent** hotel at the crossing of Spacerowa Street and Belwederska Street personnel refused to let a married couple from Russia (the woman was pregnant) to access their reserved room. The reception informed them that the hotel had a *'ban on serving Russians'*. This situation was described in the media by a Polish co-worker of the Russian: *'Igor and Olga had been on the road since the 2 March, going by car from St. Petersburg towards the Polish-Ukrainian border. They carried their Ukrainian friend, whose underage son was left alone in a house in the warzone, after his dad was drafted into the Ukrainian Army. After getting the friend to the border, horribly tired, after a couple of sleepless nights during their travels, on 4 March they went to the hotel'*. And then: *'For political/nationality reasons the pregnant woman was denied accommodation, even though she was in no way politically involved, and had spent three days in the car helping her Ukrainian friend'*. Since 2021 the Regent Hotel owned by two state corporations: Polish Hotel Holdings and Polish Real Estate Holdings. The PHH's press office claimed that *'there is no ban on guests from Russia' in any of their hotels and 'this incident was a misunderstanding'*.

WARSAW. On 4 March, **Marcin Rola** and **Piotr Szlachtowicz** from **wRealu24** (far-right channel on YouTube) were broadcasting live from the vicinity of the main railway station in Przemyśl (the largest transportation hub close to the Ukrainian border). They spread false information about alleged physical attacks by war refugees who were not Ukrainian citizens. Rola described them as *'people with a non-European skin complexion'* (sic!) and, contrary to the police's announcements, stated that *'women are being harassed'*. During a conversation with Szlachtowicz on camera, his *'friend from Podkarpacie region'*, **Krystyna**, repeated fake news about the fact that these people *'attacked the inhabitants of Przemyśl'* and praised the bandits (she called them *'priceless football fans'*) who committed acts of violence against dark-skinned refugees.

WARSAW. On 5 March a medical dispatcher refused to send an ambulance to a Ukrainian refugee with an advanced pregnancy, who complained about acute stomach pain (the day before she had been burned with a hot drink). The woman was staying in the hall of Warsaw West railway station,

at a refugee help point. A social worker called the emergency services. The dispatcher decided that a burn was not a life-threatening issue and recommended the Ukrainian went to the A&E. In the end policemen who were at the station called the ambulance. In the hospital, an emergency cesarean section was performed. As the local media reported: *'according to the doctors, 15 minutes decided on the life or death of the mother and her child'*. Proceedings were launched against the Medical Dispatcher who answered the call. The findings were made public on 1 April by Ewa Filipowicz, the spokeswoman of the Masovian Voivodship: *'From a detailed analysis of the call it seems that the dispatcher conducted an interview that was not complete. The worker, who refused to send an ambulance has been punished according to the labour laws'* (no additional details were made public in this case).

SULEJOWEK. On 6 March, at the town's railway station in the Minsk district, *'unknown perpetrators'* destroyed glass cases with messages greeting refugees from Ukraine. This event was reported on Twitter by prof. Michal Bilewicz.

WARSAW. On 6 March, Ola Kaczorek, an LGBT activist, wrote on Twitter about a discriminatory announcement that someone had placed on the door of the Panska Corner office building. It read: *'Admission forbidden for persons of Russian nationality'*.

GNIEZNO. On 7 March, local media reported that **Jacek Orlik**, pastor of the parish of Saint Maksymilian Kolbe, committed an act of discrimination against Orthodox refugees from Ukraine. When a resident of Gniezno asked him for help in providing accommodation for members of her family fleeing Ukraine, the priest gave a list of conditions that they would have to meet. Among them was the requirement that this should be a *'Roman Catholic or Greek Catholic family'*. The woman replied to this message: *'This is about life, this is about saving people. So now I have to tell them that they are to convert from the Orthodox to the Catholic faith? There is only one God'*. This correspondence with the parish priest Orlik was made public by Artur Kuczma a Gniezno city councilor for the Poland 2050 party. He also claimed that several other people had received a similar response from the priest regarding accommodation for refugees. In one case, he explicitly refused to help Ukrainians because of their Orthodox faith.

WARSAW. On 7 March, on the **wRealu 24** (radical nationalist YouTube channel), the host **Piotr Szlachtowicz**, and his interlocutor, **Wojciech Sumlinski** (a far-right commentator, and director of the film *'Return to Jedwabne'*, in which he questioned the responsibility of Poles for the pogrom of Jews in Jedwabne) fueled prejudice against Ukrainians and espoused antisemitic conspiracy theories. In an exchange of views on the assistance provided to refugees, Szlachtowicz said: *'The identity of the country, Ukraine, is built on Banderism [referring to **Stepan Bandera** – leader of the **Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists** (OUN), which led ethnic cleansing campaign against Poles in Volhynia during 1943-44. In practice 'Bandera' is a frequently-used ethnic slur against all Ukrainians in Poland today – translator's note], and I have the impression that Poles have forgotten about it at all'*. Sumlinski responded with the following tirade: *'In the 13th and 14th centuries, when Jews were burned at the stake in Germany and Spain, we welcomed thousands of them here in Poland. [...] Those who welcomed Jews did not suffer any consequences, it was the next generations that*

suffered and to some extent, we are suffering to this day. [...] We have been paying for it for hundreds of years, because they have always been allied with our invaders, during partitions, during Russian and Soviet invasions. Even today, you could say, we are paying a price for it, for this kind heart'. Sumlinski further warned against the alleged threat posed by refugees from Ukraine: 'Let's learn from history: our two nations on one land meant a sea of blood, a sea of misfortunes. [...] If we allow a situation in which I really, I don't know how many, because, there are different estimations, it could be five, three, four million people and indeed most of these people would stay here; my generation may not pay for it as I am 53 years old, but the generation of my children will'. Later in the programme, Sumlinski managed to somehow connect antisemitic and anti-vaccine conspiracy theories with the context of the war against Ukraine: 'For me, COVID-19, the madness of the globalists, Gates, the Rothschilds, the Rockefellers, and anyway they all have Jewish origins, let's not be afraid to say that either that they are recreating the world anew for us, they are aiming at this, and on top of that, **Putin's** actions or, in fact, I would say Russian-Chinese'.

SZCZECIN. On 8 March on the **Zielarz Polska YouTube** channel **Marta Trzcinska** ('a qualified herbal-therapist', who declares herself a fan of Jerzy Ziemia – a propagator of pseudo-science) published a recording titled 'Enough with f*cking help for Ukr***Ine!!! Thoughtless hypocrites! Ever seen a Trojan horse?' In it she spoke about Ukrainians and those who help them in a strikingly vulgar and offensive way. Here are selected excerpts of her tirade: 'Hypocrites, b*tch f*cked up, you give everything for free to Ukraine because the television told you to. [...] I hope that those who help out of the goodness of their heart that you will f*cking pay for it the most' and 'You have to kill yourselves and these Ukrainians that you took under your roofs will help you with it, let's wait a few weeks and see'. Trzcinska also shared antisemitic conspiracy theories regarding the war in Ukraine: 'These people should be held in barracks so that it's not too comfortable so that they don't want to stay here, and when the war ends so that they go back to their country. And I'm sure that these people won't go back because the territory where the war is happening has a different destiny' (at this moment the screen shows a graphic with Isaac Bashevis Singer's face, a Jewish writer with a Nobel prize, in a hat with a David Star stuck to it. His picture was attached to disparaging words towards Poles which he supposedly said during the World Jewish Congress in 1996: 'There will be no you, Poles. You will pick food from dumpsters. We have everything figured out. Steadily, slowly, step by step. This country is too rich for us to let you have it. This is our Promised Land'. Singer died in 1991. The authors of this image probably mistook Isaac Bashevis Singer with Israel Singer – a former secretary general of the World Jewish Congress. There is no evidence that he spoke these words in 1996). Trzcinska's recording had 76 thousand views in a month's time.

WARSAW. On 8 March in an interview on the **wRealu24 YouTube** channel **Krzysztof Balinski**, a former Polish ambassador to Syria, spread antisemitic conspiracy theories about the war in Ukraine. He claimed: 'Our older brothers [Jews – editor's note] have for a long time, since the end of the 19th century, had temptations to create something what they themselves called JudeoPoland in this region, that is on the former Polish lands, on the Kresy [a Polish term for the eastern Polish provinces that were lost to the Soviet Union in World War II – translator's note] where Ukraine now lies'. Balinski went on in more detail about his vision: 'Adam Michnik [a former anti-communist dissident and the longstanding editor-in-chief of the liberal daily 'Gazeta Wyborcza' – translator's note] [...] said that

his dream is to create a joint Ukrainian-Polish country, which he called Ukr-Pol. Today we can elaborate on that name and call it Ukrapolin [Polin means Poland in Hebrew – translator’s note]’.

WARSAW. On 8 March, in an interview on the far-right **wRealu 24** YouTube channel, presenter **Marcin Rola** and MP **Grzegorz Braun** from the **Konfederacja (Confederation)** party talked about the alleged privileges afforded to Ukrainians at the expense of Poles. Braun asked, *‘Is it acceptable for a citizen of Poland to be a citizen of an inferior sort? Is it acceptable for Poles to be second-class citizens in their own country? [...] Hundreds of thousands [refugees – translator’s note], more than a million today and potentially millions of people in the future, who are going to change, let’s call it the cultural landscape of Poland, who have already changed it’.* Braun further referred to antisemitic stereotypes (equating Jews with Nazis), addressing the matter of Israel’s aid to Ukrainian refugees: *‘They segregate the newcomers at home, allow the Jews in and send back those who have not shown that they have Jewish roots. [...] they carry out selection just as on the ramp of Auschwitz’.*

WARSAW. On 9 March, the **Media Narodowe (National Media)** YouTube channel released a propaganda video about the alleged privileges of Ukrainians at the expense of Poles. A man who claimed to have come to Poland from Ukraine in 2014 issued a tirade addressed to the Ukrainians: *‘Have you come here to get dental treatment? [...] Have you come here thinking that you are allowed to do everything and anything? [...] Do you think you are the Cossacks just by coming here? Oh yes, you have come here, you will shit here and then you will go back. [...] The Ukrainians from Western Ukraine [why have they come to Poland? – translator’s note] – there is nothing happening there’.*

National Media belongs to **Stowarzyszenie Marsz Niepodleglosci (March of Independence Association)**, led by **Robert Bakiewicz**, which, in 2021, together with the **National Guard Association** received grants from the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage to the amount of PLN 3,000,000. A further grant of over PLN198,000 was awarded by the Ministry to The National Media.

WARSAW. On 9 March, in a programme broadcast on the **wRealu24** (a far-right YouTube channel), **Marcin Rola** espoused extremely negative views towards refugees from Ukraine and spread false information about them. He announced: *‘We, Poles, will have to work very hard day and night to maintain the refugees’.* Later, he contemptuously asked: *‘You know, I am just curious if this fad will end when we see [...] we are disturbed by a person from the other room, whom we took in, and now it suddenly stinks, because this person occupies our bathroom and runs around our house’.* Rola also spread disinformation about the alleged privileges of Ukrainians: *‘And here, bam! – they get a personal ID number, bam! – free health care, bam! – privileges for entrepreneurs, setting up a business, no taxes, 500 plus, 300 plus, some starter kits for children [names of aid schemes – translator’s note]’* and *‘Maybe I should get myself some refugee documents, I will not pay tax, I will have all for nothing, maybe I will get a flat’.* Finally, Rola falsely created a political threat from Ukrainian refugees: *‘I am asking: they will soon get voting rights, I am asking seriously, because they will get personal ID numbers – so I understand that a given individual becomes a citizen right away, from the start’.*

WROCLAW. On 9 March, the police arrested a 49-year-old resident of the city suspected of raping a 19-year-old girl from Ukraine, whom he offered help via an internet portal. *‘Worth particular condemnation is the fact that this woman was in a crisis situation – she escaped from war-torn Ukraine, did not speak Polish, did not know the city and had never been to Poland. She trusted a man who promised to help and shelter her. Unfortunately, all this turned out to be a perfidious manipulation on the part of the 49-year-old’*, the police said in a press release. **Krzysztof J.** was charged with rape and sexual abuse of a woman. The Wroclaw-Fabryczna District Prosecutor’s Office, who conducted the investigation, requested that the suspect be temporarily held for three months, but this was rejected by the court and he was given conditional bail. On 16 March, the prosecutor’s office appealed against the court’s decision. On March 24, the court in Wroclaw issued a decision to immediately arrest Krzysztof J.

WARSAW. On 10 March, on YouTube, **Monika Jaruzelska** (a Warsaw city councilor) conducted an over one and a half hour long conversation with **Lukasz Warzecha** (a publicist for the weekly *‘Do Rzeczy’*) in the villa of General Wojciech Jaruzelski. The conversation was mainly devoted to the alleged threat from Ukrainian refugees. Warzecha stated: *‘We are in a situation where, from the point of view of those managing the state, it is necessary to make a choice between our own citizens and the others. [...] These unlucky Ukrainians are experiencing a terrible tragedy, but this is Poland, Poland is governed by Polish politicians and they are supposed to take care of Polish citizens’* (Jaruzelska expressed her approval for those words). Further in the conversation, Warzecha warned: *‘Poland will be shattered economically, probably with huge social tensions, with the Ukrainian minority strengthened several times and that will bring mass migration of young people – and this is a misfortune for Poland’*. During the conversation, the *‘Do Rzeczy’* columnist also complained about the presence of refugees at Warsaw’s Central and Western Railway Station. He stated: *‘After all, these are railway stations that Poles also want to use’*, to which Jaruzelska replied: *‘Well, that’s right, for example if they commute to work’*. The host also paid tribute to Warzecha’s recent unfavourable statements about refugees: *‘You were at the vanguard and now you need to pay for it all the time, but I think it will soon turn into a leading voice’*. Later in the programme, Warzecha made the following statement about Ukrainian refugees: *‘These are not people who specifically come here to work hard. [...] They are hard-working people, but they are also thieves, scoundrels, and so on’*.

WROCLAW. On 10 March, the ‘NEVER AGAIN’ Association was informed that the *‘unknown perpetrators’* had placed an anti-Ukrainian message on the pillar under the Warsaw Bridge. There were words on it: *‘Bandera w*ores’* (it refers to the members of the wartime **Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists** led by **Stepan Bandera**, in practice a frequent ethnic slur against all Ukrainians in Poland today – translator’s note).

WARSAW. On 11 March, on **TV Republika (Republic TV)**, a far-right TV and YouTube channel), **Rafal Ziemkiewicz** (a far-right commentator) delivered bizarre opinions about the war in Ukraine. Relativising the criminal aggression, among other things, he stated that the attitude of the European Union towards Poland regarding the rule of law, is in fact identical to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. He also added: *‘Right now I envy the Ukrainians so much, of course the country is trampled*

by bandits, by barbarians, but there is no Platforma Obywatelska there [Civic Platform – the main opposition party and nemesis of Polish nationalists who blame it for all evils – translator’s note]’. In the same broadcast, Ziemkiewicz warned against accepting refugees of non-Ukrainian origin in Poland (he referred to the situation on the Polish-Belarusian border in this way), referring to them as *‘those crowds of broad-shouldered Ahmeds’* (contemptuously about Muslim refugees).

KRAKOW. On 12 March, at the Main Railway Station, a passenger made a fuss in the public toilet, shouting out that *‘she has to pay 3 PLN for using it, and the Ukrainians have it free of charge’*. A journalist Wojciech Czuchnowski wrote about this incident on Twitter. He also added a comment that the woman had been told that *‘if her home had been bombed, she would also have been able to use the toilet free of charge’*.

WARSAW. On 12 March, on Zamkowy Square, a rally was held for antisemitic activists and right-wing streamers **Wojciech Olszanski** and **Marcin Osadowski**, who are in pre-trial detention in connection with making criminal threats against deputies. The participants of the Warsaw demonstration presented extremely anti-Ukrainian and antisemitic speeches.

Nabil Al Malazi, vice-chairman of the far-right **Polska Patriotyczna (Polish Patriotic party)**, praised the war against Ukraine. Al Malazi said, *‘Russia is acting in accordance with its interests. The purpose of this intervention is to neutralise Ukraine, not occupy it’*. He also denied Russian war crimes and that there were attacks on civilians. He then promoted an antisemitic conspiracy theory, saying that *‘A Zionist creation is to be installed there that will rule’* Poland and Western Ukraine. Al Malazi also spread fake news that incited hostility towards Ukrainians coming to Poland: *‘They are expelling old people from nursing homes to place refugees there’*.

A similar opinion was expressed by **Piotr Kedra**, who talked about the alleged privileges for Ukrainians and *‘the degradation of Poles to second-class citizens’*. He emphatically asked the gathered crowd, *‘Will we wait long until Poles are fired and their place is taken by Ukrainians without qualifications?’*

Another participant of the demonstration, presented as *‘comrade Jędrzej from **Bydgoskie Kamractwo Rodakow [Bydgoszcz Compatriot Companionship**, a nationalist and anti-vaccine organization]’* described the Russian military aggression as *‘a law enforcement intervention in Ukraine’*.

Former Warsaw councilor **Rafał Mossakowski**, leader of the **Centrum Edukacyjne Polska (Poland Educational Center**, known for promoting antisemitism), presented conspiracy theories about the causes of the war: *‘The main instigators are the great and the little Satan: the great Satan, i.e. the United States, and the little Satan, i.e. the State of Israel, USrael for short. [...] No wars for USrael!’* He presented a curious antisemitic vision of future events: *‘This war has many Jewish contexts. [...] In Ukraine, Heavenly Jerusalem is to be built in 2022. [...] This war, because there are plans that are not told to anyone, is one, great manipulation’*. He then said, *‘Citizens of the state located in Palestine are to return to Polin [in Hebrew this word means Poland – translator’s note]. [...] Polin is those*

areas, large parts of Ukraine, to where this nation wants to return'. He also shouted insults at the editor of daily liberal newspaper 'Gazeta Wyborcza', Adam Michnik: 'We will achieve our goal – Adam Michnik in Israel'. He also said that Ukrainian refugees arriving in Poland, 'is a substitution of the nation'.

Tobiasz Zuchewicz also spoke at the demonstration, condemning the Ukrainians fleeing the war: 'How easily you leave your country! Why?' He also copied the pro-Putinist propaganda and called for, 'Ukrainians, stay at home, call your government to stop the war. [...] Give up Crimea! Give up your Nazi apologists'. Moreover, according to Zuchewicz, the arrival of Ukrainian refugees would prove that the West is 'carrying out an ethnic change' in Poland.

The final speaker was **Piotr Rybak** (an antisemite repeatedly convicted of inciting hatred), who also stirred up feelings of hostility towards Ukrainians. Rybak said, 'Today in Poland everyone has rights, but not Poles'.

During the demonstration, the gathered crowd repeatedly chanted the slogan 'Death to the enemies of the motherland', calling for ideologically motivated violence.

The rally lasted over two hours, but the police did not intervene.

SZCZECIN. On 13 March, **Malgorzata Jacyna-Witt**, chairman of the **Law and Justice** (currently the ruling party in Poland) club of councilors in the Regional Council of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship, shared a Twitter post about Janina Ochojska, a human rights activist and Member of the European Parliament. The post stated: 'This mendacious wh*re is working for someone'. When to a question from a Twitter user why she supported such content, Jacyna-Witt replied: 'I did not call her that myself, because it's not appropriate for me to do so, but it's appropriate for me to like it'. In public statements, Janina Ochojska, repeatedly called to help non-Ukrainian refugees on the Polish-Belarusian border, including after the outbreak of Russia's war against Ukraine. On 8 March, during a meeting of the European Parliament, the MEP said: 'Aid is currently only reserved for some refugees – to those who are culturally closer and speak a similar language. Helping other migrants asking for international protection on the Belarusian border is criminalised, and those providing such support are persecuted'.

On 13 March, on Twitter, Jacyna-Witt called Ochojska 'polonophobic', and on 14 March, 'a nasty old woman'. Both comments were the councilor's reaction to Ochojska's statements about the need to help all refugees regardless of their origin or skin colour. On 19 March, Jacyna-Witt posted a message with racist content on Twitter: 'Poles have accepted refugees from Ukraine into their homes. Do you think they would accept the social immigrants/disturbants from Africa in the same way?... We have big hearts and big brains'.

WARSAW. On 14 March, referring to xenophobic and antisemitic conspiracy theories, **Konfederacja** (far-right party **Confederation**) MP **Grzegorz Braun** condemned the display of the Ukrainian flag in the Polish Sejm [lower chamber of Polish Parliament] as a sign of solidarity with the victims of aggression. Braun posted the following words on Twitter: 'Do we already have Ukro-

Polin here [Polin means Poland in Hebrew, in this case it is antisemitic conspiracy theory according to which '*Ukro-Polin*' would be a Jewish-Ukrainian state, formed after overtaking Poland – translator's note]? *Who is the host here?*' The politician attached a photo from the Sejm with the flags of Poland and Ukraine, under which he posed together with **Roman Fritz**, Vice President of Braun's party.

WARSAW. On 14 March, the media reported that in the Grochow district, the municipal police towed a car belonging to a Ukrainian refugee with a disability and charged him with costs 560 PLN. The car had a special marking confirming that the driver was disabled and was parked in designated blue space. **Slawomir Smyk**, a spokesman for the municipal police, delivered a media statement that the officers acted '*in accordance with the law*' because Ukrainian car designations are not respected in Poland. The owner of the car has an amputated leg, suffers from diabetes, and he and his wife had escaped from Lutsk because of the war. Their 20-year-old son stayed in Ukraine. A Polish couple, who provided the refugees with their own apartment, applied for the cancellation of the financial penalty to the Municipal Roads Authority.

KRAKOW. On 15 March, local media reported that the Head of the Board of Education for the Malopolskie Voivodeship, **Barbara Nowak**, made discriminatory decisions that made it difficult to admit children from Ukraine to schools. Nowak provided school directors with guidelines on the acceptance of Ukrainian children to schools, according to which '*the criterion of knowledge of the Polish language should be applied*'. The non-compliance of these guidelines with the existing regulations was indicated in a press statement by Anna Korfel-Jasinska, vice-president of the city responsible for education: '*It is not compulsory to go to the preparatory department, even if you do not speak Polish. If the parents choose an open class for their child, the child should be admitted*'. Nowak also blocked efforts made by Krakow City Hall to increase the quota of students in classes (from 28 to 37) in order to provide access to education for children from Ukraine. According to the media, after the announcement of new guidelines by Barbara Nowak, the August Witkowski High School in Krakow refused to accept several Ukrainian students.

TORUN. On 15 March, prof. **Jacek Bartyzel** (lecturer at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun and the **Academy of Social and Media Culture** in Torun founded by **Tadeusz Rydzyk**, a Roman Catholic priest and the director of the **Radio Maryja** station and TV station, known for antisemitic statements) posted a comment on Facebook fueling hostile sentiment towards Ukrainians coming to Poland. He wrote: '*This is not humanitarian aid for people fleeing war or refugees [...], but a great resettlement action – comparable to the one after 1945 – which may irreversibly change the ethnic structure of Poland, because the newcomers who receive privileges greater than those of the Polish population, have no motivation to return to a ruined country, even if the war ends*'.

These xenophobic words were repeatedly quoted in public statements by **Grzegorz Braun** a member of the **Konfederacja** (far-right party **Confederation**). Braun is a nationalist known for antisemitic statements. Among other things, on 17 March Braun posted a graphic on Twitter with the above quote and a photo of Bartyzel along with a comment '*I share these concerns*'.

WARSAW. On 15 March, **Fundacja Życie i Rodzina (Life and Family Foundation** – an extremist anti-abortion and conservative organization) led by **Kaja Godek** (a candidate for the European Parliament in 2019 from the list of far right **Konfederacja – Confederation** party) launched an anti-abortion campaign aimed at refugees coming from Ukraine. The foundation called for handing leaflets to women who had just fled from a country engulfed in war. The leaflets contained graphic photos of fetuses, information on penalties for abortion and the words *‘The greatest threat to peace is abortion’*. Godek stated that her foundation had printed 200,000 such leaflets in Polish and Ukrainian. Many comments appeared on social media condemning the use of the dramatic situation in which Ukrainian women found themselves for ideological purposes. Social activist and Sejm deputy Wanda Nowicka said, *‘Instead of supporting war victims, Godek wants to indoctrinate them and distributes anti-abortion leaflets in Ukrainian. Fanaticism, hatred, and disrespect for women, including Ukrainian women, poison social life and simply bring harm!’*

WARSAW. On 15 March, the **National Rebirth of Poland (NOP, far-right party)** published a bizarre manifesto in which responsibility for Russia’s aggression against Ukraine was attributed to the United States and the European Union. The NOP stated that the war was due to the *‘expansion of the spheres of influence of the American Empire, strengthened by the support of the new entity of the post-Yalta order – the centralist behemoth called the European Union. In spite of themselves [the Ukrainians – translator’s note], were chosen as guinea pigs for this U.S. imperial policy’*. The manifesto continued, *‘the moral and political responsibility for the outbreak of this war is therefore obvious: it lies with the United States, which seeks to expand its sphere of influence and military control in Europe, and the European Union, which has been corrupting the Ukrainian establishment for years, preparing the country to lose its short-lived independence’*. It was only at the end of this list of conspiracy theories and ideologies, that NOP representatives mentioned Russia. In addition, they demanded that one of the *‘necessary’* international actions was *‘the immediate withdrawal of Brussels from its efforts to occupy Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova’* and the withdrawal of NATO troops *‘behind the Elbe line’* [sic!]. The manifesto also contained antisemitic allusions: it condemned *‘the «democratic» regimes – whether their actual helmsmen sit in Moscow, Brussels, Washington or Tel Aviv’*.

KIELCE. On 16 March, the police arrested a city resident who was trying to extort money from a Ukrainian citizen, offering her to rent a non-existent apartment. *‘On one of the social networks a young woman made an announcement that she wanted to rent a flat for her family, who arriving from war-torn Ukraine. She was contacted by a man who said that he had an apartment to rent, but that there was big competition to rent it. The 21-year-old Ukrainian, wanting to ensure the priority of renting, gave the stranger several hundred zlotys using a Blik [mobile payments app] code’*, informed Assistant Police Commissioner Karol Macek, press officer of the Kielce Municipal Police Headquarters. During the meeting, the Ukrainian woman gave the man an additional amount of money, and in return she received the keys and – as it turned out – a fictitious apartment address. The woman notified the police about the incident. The man was charged with fraud and imprisoned for three months.

GDYNIA. On 17 March, Arka Gdynia football club announced on Facebook that refugees from Ukraine would be able to receive free tickets to the team's next league match (against GKS Katowice). This gesture of solidarity with the victims of the war was condemned by some Polish 'fans'. In response, they published numerous xenophobic comments about the alleged privileges of Ukrainians at the expense of Poles, claiming that refugees are in Poland on '*all-inclusive holidays*', '*they get everything for free*' and '*they are not being harmed in any manner*', because '*many of them are rich*'. Other examples of such entries include: '*I would suggest getting interested in our fan clubs from distant areas, such as Czluchow, Czersk, etc., and making tickets free for inhabitants of those towns and districts, and not forcefully attract people who don't give a f*ck about Arka... and, after one match, we will probably never see them again*' and '*No worries, fans with season passes will have a 50 PLN ticket price increase next season*'. Arka Gdynia reacted to these entries in a decisive manner. The ironic answer proposed that Polish fans who demanded free tickets should receive them – but '*in the company of teenage Ukrainians who have been training in our club for several days and will be happy to tell you how they spent the last weeks*'. The position of the club from Gdynia received approval in the world of sport and beyond.

LEGNICA. On 17 March, under the banner of **Confederation of the Polish Crown** (far-right political party), a meeting was held with **Marcin Rola** (founder of the YouTube channel **wRealu24**), **Wojciech Sumlinski** (director of the film '**Return to Jedwabne**', in which he denied Polish responsibility for the crimes in Jedwabne in 1941) and MP **Krzysztof Tuduj** from **Konfederacja** (**Confederation** party), and member of **Ruch Narodowy – National Movement**). During his speech, Rola once again fuelled prejudice against refugees from Ukraine and reproduced false information. He declared: '*Soon we will have five million people here which we will need to support*'. Referring to Katarzyna Ratkowska – the doctor who was suspended for a year for promoting anti-vaccine content, he stated: '*It was probably an attempt to make room for a doctor from Ukraine*'. Rola also spoke disrespectfully about black and brown refugees from Ukraine: '*I was in Medyka and in Korczowa, there were several characters who looked like they had just finished a harsh solarium session. [...] Why the hell was there a wall built on the Polish-Belarusian border, if all this companions anyway crossed the Ukrainian-Polish border, this is just crazy*'. Furthermore, in the context of the war against Ukraine, Rola cited one of the more bizarre antisemitic conspiracy theories: '*Additionally the Heavenly Jerusalem project – because why not? Do you remember Operation Bridge at the beginning of the 90s? Did the WSI [Military Information Services (WSI) was a common name for the Polish military intelligence and counter-intelligence agency. The agency was created in 1990 after the Revolutions of 1989 ended the Communist regime – translator's note] smuggled something over one and a half million Russian Jews to Israel? And there are huge problems with water there, and with the Palestinians on the other side. Is this really impossible, unrealistic?*' Meanwhile, in reference to the coronavirus pandemic, he stated: '*There came out this study done by a Jewish banana in America stating that anyone who denies the pandemic is also an antisemite. [...] Truther, crank, flat-earther, antisemite, Nazi, fascist – all beautiful epithets*'.

During the meeting, Wojciech Sumlinski also linked the alleged threat from Ukrainian refugees to an antisemitic conspiracy theory: '*In the film «Return to Jedwabne» we show that the Jews divided Poland among themselves and in the book [under the same title] we include documents created and signed by American, Israeli and Polish Jews, who could not agree on what would belong to whom in*

this Polin [in Hebrew it means Poland] which they are building. [...] We are exposing the Jews today'. Sumlinski referred to Rola's antisemitic arguments as follows: 'And we still got the Heavenly Jerusalem [...]. There is no more water in Israel, there are problems with everything, Israel is looking for a new place for its citizens. Polin is one thing [...], there must be a migration happening, because it [Ukraine] is the second place besides Polin that [Jews] have taken a liking to. [...] There will be a great exodus of population from the south of Ukraine, I don't know how they will do it, but they will move this population to make room for Jews'. He also repeated well-known antisemitic accusations in the context of the coronavirus: 'It is the Jews, the great globalists of this world [who] invented COVID-19'.

LODZ. On 17 March, Fr. **Marek Bak** (a resident of the parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Assistance in Lodz) in an interview broadcast on a YouTube TV channel called **Christ the King TV** (broadcast from the USA) pronounced on a number of anti-Ukrainian and antisemitic conspiracy theories. He criticized the help given to refugees: *'Those who come here do not really come from the areas where there is war'. Discussing the alleged privileges for refugees, he stated: 'Ukrainians come here as if to their own place, for their own benefit. I would be very careful. [...] Gratitude is not one of their virtues. [...] These are not people of our culture. [...] We will cease to be a Polish nation state'. The host of the programme, **Krystyna Kiwacz**, quoted another bizarre conspiracy theory: 'Ukrainians certainly feel very privileged and who knows what is behind all this. Might it be preparing a place for Jews?' This was then developed by Fr. Bak as follows: 'There is a place being prepared for Jews. One hears of a Heavenly Jerusalem that would be placed in the former territories of southern Poland, areas now in the hands of Ukraine. The Jews would move there from Palestine. [...] These are the best lands in the world and they could farm and bask in luxury there. That is why this quasi-war has broken out. It has the hallmarks of a war, but it is not a war in the classical sense'. When discussing the causes of Russia's aggression, the priest also referred to other conspiracy theories: 'There are fifteen laboratories active in the production of biological weapons in Ukraine, and Putin opposes this'. Further, he stated: 'The Jews, who rule Ukraine, want to join both NATO and the European Union. [...] And this is what Putin is referring to'. Moreover, Bak stated that with the arrival of the Ukrainians, 'there will be more murders in Poland'. In his fanatical arguments he also included refugees from Ukraine of African and Asian background: 'throw Poles out of Poland, replace them with Ukrainians, whilst among these pseudo-Ukrainians 10 percent are coloured people, who knows where from'. The presenter echoed his words: 'With such an influx of immigrants, will there still be a Polish state, or will it be Polin?' (Polin means Poland in Hebrew). At the end of the interview, Fr. Bak repeated the lie about the President of the Republic of Poland declaring that 'his grandfather was an **UPA** [**Ukrainian Insurgent Army** led by **Stepan Bandera**, armed division that collaborated with Nazi Germany – translator's note] lieutenant and participated in the murder of Poles. So what kind is his blood? He is partly Ukrainian himself, he is not a pure Pole. His family is hardly Polish. Jews rule in Ukraine, and likewise in Poland we are under the influence of Jews who have us at their disposal. They organsze our lives in such a way that we can barely live. [...] I wonder if our enslavement might have been lesser in the times of Judeo-Communism than today'.*

MEDYKA. On 17 March, the Oko.press website described cases of discrimination against dark-skinned refugees arriving from Ukraine – for example, on 28 February, an Afghan family (who had

lived in Ukraine for 10 years), including a woman who was heavily pregnant, was repeatedly refused transport by bus drivers and private people – who preferred to transport non-white refugees: *‘I asked Marek from Tychy, who has a bus, if he would take a family of twelve with six children and a pregnant woman to the H2O center in Skoczow, where I had found a place for them. He agreed willingly. But when he learned that they are Afghans (some of the children have Ukrainian citizenship), he found more and more problems. «They will detain me, because these may be illegal refugees from Belarus», he said, and finally refused to drive them. I couldn’t find any transport. I lost contact with them’.* Another incident was at a bar in Medyka, where a saleswoman threw a dark-skinned man out. *‘He did nothing. He just walked into the store. «They are cattle!» - for a few minutes [the woman] spat venom at the «coloured people»’* – reported the journalist.

The article also describes racist behaviour that took place in **PRZEMYSL**. One of the town’s inhabitants hosted some Syrians who had lived in Ukraine until the war. She reported: *‘When two of them went shopping nearby – they wanted to prepare Syrian food for everyone – they were caught by local football hooligans. One Syrian was hit with an elbow, and they ordered both of them to «get the f*ck out of here».* The next day, the refugees left the apartment again. *This time they were stopped by the «civic guard of the neighbourhood».* They kept them until their daughter was able confirm that they were staying with her’. Sikhs from Austria also got involved helping refugees (volunteers from many countries came to the Polish-Ukrainian border). However, when they were setting up a stand to serve meals in the parking lot on Lwowska Street, they heard from the volunteers’ coordinator: *‘You cannot stay here’*, even though their presence there had been previously agreed on. According to Oko.press, *‘only after the intervention of another Pole and negotiations did the coordinator change his mind’.* According to the website, the cooperation with the volunteers was to be supervised by the far-right activist **Mirosław Majkowski**, known for his anti-Ukrainian speeches.

WARSAW. On 17 March, the far right **Konfederacja (Confederation)** party) organised a press conference in the Sejm [lower chamber of Polish Parliament] aimed against Ukrainian refugees, under the slogan *‘Yes to help, no to privileges’.* In their speeches, the members of Konfederacja fueled xenophobic prejudices, arguing about the alleged privileges of Ukrainians at the expense of Poles. MP **Michał Urbaniak** criticised the support shown to people who escaped the war: *‘The refugees are allowed to use public transport for free. [...] The city of Lodz is an interesting example, because some people will have free public transport there, and the citizens of Lodz will see ticket prices increase’.* Urbaniak also warned against *‘dilapidated’ aid, ‘through which someone received privileges that currently do not belong to Poles’.* In turn, **Grzegorz Braun**, referring to Prof. **Jacek Bartyzel** (a lecturer at the **Akademia Kultury Społecznej i Medialnej** – the **College of Social and Media Culture** in Torun, founded by **Tadeusz Rydzyk** – a Roman Catholic priest and the director of the **Radio Maryja** station and TV station, known for antisemitic statements), said, *‘This is no longer helping war refugees, this is resettling people’.* He also added, *‘This is aimed at a radical transformation of the Republic of Poland into some other country. [...] These are not war refugees, but displaced people’.* Due to its xenophobic nature, the press conference was boycotted by journalists. Jan Strzeżek, spokesman for the Porozumienie (Agreement party), said of Konfederacja’s actions: *‘It is disgusting to rescue your ratings in the polls by attacking women, children and seniors who are constantly on the run from Putin’s military machine’.*

ZIELONA GORA. On 18 March, on Glogowska Street, in the **ForRest** hotel, a meeting was held by the far-right **Konfederacja (Confederation party)** MP **Grzegorz Braun** (a nationalist known for antisemitic statements), during which he mocked the victims of Russia's aggression against Ukraine and presented Ukrainian refugees as a threat to Poland. He spoke about the ongoing war on the territory of Ukraine: *'My appeal: ignore it!'* [i.e. ignore the war – editor's note]. He also condemned the provision of humanitarian aid to Ukrainians: *'Whoever rushes to the aid of the hungry in distant corners of the world, and has his own children malnourished, sins'*. He argued about the alleged privileges of Ukrainians at the expense of Poles: *'The Ukrainian Plus Act is an act of explicit discrimination against Poles'*. Fostering a xenophobic mood, Braun once again referred to the statement of Professor **Jacek Bartyzel** (a lecturer at the **College of Social and Media Culture** in Torun, founded by **Tadeusz Rydzyk**, a Roman Catholic priest and the director of the **Radio Maryja** station and TV station, known for antisemitic statements), saying *'This is no longer helping war refugees, this is resettling the population. [...] This is the Vistula Operation 2.0'*. He later said, *'In a moment we will have a completely different country, but I do not know if this will be Poland'*. He also said that it was necessary to *'set conditions'* for Ukrainians coming to Poland, *'They should decide who they want to be, whether they want to be a nation of special care until the end of the world?'*

POZNAN. On the night of 18/19 March, pseudo-fans of **Lech Poznan** (football club) staged a loud display of pyrotechnics in front of the city stadium on Bulgarska Street to commemorate the club's 100 anniversary, the sounds of which were reminiscent of wartime explosions. It took place near two refugee shelters that are temporarily hosting several hundred refugees from Ukraine: the Arena hall and the Poznan International Fair. Many of the city's residents expressed their outrage at the hooligans behaviour on social media. Prof. Andrzej W. Nowak from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan spoke publicly on the matter: *'Someone thoughtlessly decided to cover the sky with a cannonade at midnight in a city where many refugees from the war zone have found shelter. Hasn't it crossed their minds what the people living in those temporary camps in Arena and at the Fair, might experience when seeing and hearing those explosions through the windows?'* Meanwhile, Lech Poznan's spokesman **Maciej Henszel** praised the setting off the pyrotechnics by the hooligans. He posted a video of the cannonade on Twitter with the following comment: *'Best wishes to our beloved club!'* Speaking to the media, he laconically stated: *'The club did not organise it and I will therefore not comment on it'*.

PILA. On 19 March, the **Salesian Society of St. Jan Bosko** made the auditorium available for a meeting with MP **Grzegorz Braun** (a nationalist known for spreading antisemitic conspiracy theories), member of the **Konfederacja (Confederation, far-right party)**. It took place within the walls of the Secondary School of the Salesian Society of St. Jan Bosko on Dembowski Street, the director of which is priest **Artur Kucharski**. Originally, the meeting was supposed to take place at the Gromada Hotel, but due to numerous objections from the guests and residents of the city, it was canceled. The hotel owners publicised the decision in a statement and additionally stressed: *'We would like to inform you that the Gromada Hotel in Pila supports refugees, for whom we have allocated several dozen rooms for accommodation'*. Since the first days of the war in Ukraine, Braun

has been making xenophobic comments and promoting conspiracy theories during meetings organised in various localities, as well as criticising the aid provided to refugees. His speech in Pila with the Salesians was boycotted by the local media. The editorial office of *'Glos Pilski'* newspaper sent questions to the school's headmaster, Father Kucharski, asking whether they were *'not disturbed by the views of MP Grzegorz Braun on helping refugees from Ukraine, which have little to do with the attitude of hospitality and kindness encouraged by the Polish Church? Isn't the school, in his opinion, appropriate place for political rallies? Did the parents of the students know about the meeting?'* These questions remained unanswered.

Meanwhile, on 18 March, the Rector Major of the Society of St. Francis de Sales, priest Ángel Fernández Artime SDB, wrote a letter to the Salesians in which he called for action on behalf of Ukraine and refugees. The priest expressed special thanks to the Salesians from Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia, Moldova and Romania: *'I know that many Salesian houses welcome refugees, bestowing them with great dignity'*.

WARSAW. On 19 March, on the YouTube **Media Narodowe (National Media)** channel, in an interview with **Jan Bodakowski**, the commentator Dr. **Marcin Masny** said that in Ukraine there were allegedly *'American laboratories with pathogens'*, which the Russians *'treat as a weapon, thus they may well be afraid that Western weapons of mass destruction are very close to their borders'*. Masny further said: *'Russia is not trying to build an empire. There have been no imperial activities in Russia since Soviet times. What some call imperialism are [...] acts of defense'*. Marcin Masny has in the past cooperated with, amongst others, the extreme-right weekly magazine *'Najwyższy Czas!' (High Time!)* set up by **Janusz Korwin-Mikke** (leader of the **Konfederacja – Confederation** party) and had been a candidate for the European Parliament in 2009 from the list of the far-right party **Libertas**.

The **Media Narodowe** website belongs to the **March of Independence Association (Stowarzyszenie Marsz Niepodleglosci)** led by **Robert Bakiewicz**. This organisation is subsidised by the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage.

WARSAW. On 20 March, on the **Biznes Misja** YouTube channel, columnist **Piotr Zychowicz** (member of the editorial board of the right-wing weekly *'Do Rzeczy'*) expressed shocking opinions on the war against Ukraine and the international situation. He stated that: the *'Cold war is in our interest, it is certainly not in our interest to overthrow Putin immediately'* and *'the best recipe for security and peace in the world is, of course, nuclear weapons'*.

Moreover, Zychowicz called for Poland not to accept non-white migrants: *'The Polish model to attract workers from Ukraine and Belarus is, of course, 1000 times safer and better than the model of colonial states such as France, which brought these people from Africa and the Middle East – for a million reasons obvious to viewers'*. Zychowicz also argued about the possible negative effects of appearance of a large number of Ukrainians in Poland: *'These people [refugees from Ukraine – translator's note] for example, now they require medical care, a lot of people have come with very serious illnesses, and the Polish health service had problems with treating Poles'*. These statements were published under the title: *'The twist in negotiations with **Putin** – the end of the war is not in the Polish interest'*.

WARSAW. On 20 March, in the programme on **Telewizja Republika** (far-right TV and YouTube channel) hosted by **Rafal Ziemkiewicz** (a commentator known for his nationalism), **Lukasz Warzecha** (a popular columnist for the right-wing weekly *'Do Rzeczy'*) fueled prejudices against Ukrainian refugees who had come to Poland: *'There will be a problem with jobs, this may also mean increased tensions, because there will necessarily arise such situations that «Ukrainians are taking my job». This problem will surely be raised'*. He also complained that Ukrainians had allegedly been granted *'all possible benefits. [...] Could this not have been limited? Secondly, I believe that some privileges or conveniences for refugees are planned very poorly. [...] Free travel for everyone with Ukrainian ID, including those who have been here for ten years and have nothing to do with refugees'*. Stanislaw Janecki, who was invited onto the programme, responded to these words: *'They have a lot to do with the refugees, because they have taken them under their roof'*. Warzecha continued: *'When this ends, there will begin problems'* and added *'We are not here in some «Open Your Heart» programme'*, which was met with Janecki's retort: *'We are not here in some «What a son of a b*tch you are» programme [...]. This is a drama of two million people, and you are making some theoretical deliberations. [...] You do not bear any consequences, because you do not identify with anyone, you are not helping anyone'*.

WARSAW. On 21 March, an interview with **Tomasz Grabarczyk**, a spokesman for **Konfederacja** (the far-right **Confederation** party), was broadcast on the **Media Narodowe (National Media)** YouTube channel. Grabarczyk described refugees from Ukraine as *'a financial threat to Poland'*. According to him, granting refugees social rights may *'encourage these people to stay and remain in Poland, unfortunately, not on the basis of work, but on the basis that they receive something from the Polish state'*.

WARSAW. On 21 March, on the **wRealuz4** YouTube channel of the **Banbye.com** platform (a far-right streaming platform founded by **Marcin Rola**), **Krzysztof Lech Luksza** condemned Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki's social media post of a photo with the Ukrainian flag, shared as a sign of solidarity with the victims of the war. Stirring up xenophobic contempt and invoking conspiracy theories, Luksza said: *'I think he got the wrong flag! I don't know if anywhere there was a situation where the prime minister of a country sets up the flag of a foreign country next to him. Oh dear, I said a terrible heresy, Ukraine is a foreign country! Contrary to what the actor Zelenski, Duda and others are saying, Ukraine and Poland are not the same thing, we have conflicting interests on many levels, and this is something that is not being discussed. Of course, this does not mean that we want to fall into Russia's hands, this part of the «Russian world», a foreign civilisation, a lower civilisation. By the way Ukraine also belongs to it, to a large extent'*. He also added: *'If [the Prime Minister] dares to set himself the flag of a foreign country, the question is whose interests is he pursuing? [...] Mateusz Morawiecki has completely discredited himself by putting up this flag'*. In the same programme, Luksza showed a photo of cookies in the colours of Ukraine – produced as a gesture of solidarity by one of the pastry shops – with the caption: *'Glory to Ukraine cake'*. He commented with the words: *'I honestly wouldn't swallow it, I would rather vomit because of that slogan'*.

SOSNOWIEC. On March 22, a primary school teacher was suspended from her duties due to anti-Ukrainian content she published on the internet. According to *‘Gazeta Wyborcza’* (a major liberal newspaper), a few weeks before Russia’s attack on Ukraine, the woman wrote: *‘Ukrainians have been and are often involved in smuggling people’, ‘Both Russia and Germany have always been Poland’s enemies. Ukraine too, so don’t cry over Ukraine’*. The teacher was also active on Twitter, where she disseminated (retweeted) anti-Ukrainian and antisemitic content, for example: *‘Ukraine is a hostile country to us’ or ‘Kosher people absolutely want to draw us into the war. Let us not give up. We know who will benefit from it. We know that Poland and Poles will suffer the greatest sacrifice. As usual. Let’s not be dumb’*. She had also written longer, xenophobic texts for several years. In one of them, she stated that the Ukrainians *‘are steeped in hostility towards Poles and boast of the mentality from the times of the Volhynia massacre’* (**parezja.pl**, May 2017). According to Rafal Lysy, spokesman for the City Hall in Sosnowiec, the case of the teacher’s behaviour would be dealt with by the disciplinary spokesman of the Silesian Board of Education, and would also be reported to the prosecutor’s office on charges of inciting national hatred.

WARSAW. On 22 March in a programme lasting almost 40-minutes on the **Pro vita bona Research Institute Foundation** channel of the the **Banbye.com** platform (a far-right platform founded by **Marcin Rola**), two political scientists, Prof. Adam Wielomski (lecturer at Siedlce University of Natural Sciences and Humanities, and an associate of the extreme-right weekly magazine *‘Najwyższy Czas!’* [*‘High Time!’*]) and **Malgorzata Zietek-Wielomska** (president of the above mentioned foundation) presented a friendly discussion of **Aleksander Dugin’s** manifesto *‘The Great Awakening’*. Dugin is the founder of the neo-fascist ideology of so-called National Bolshevism and a leading apologist for **Putin’s** aggression against Ukraine. According to Wielomski, Dugin’s ideology is an alternative to the so-called *‘great reset’* allegedly planned by world elites and the so-called *‘globalists’* (a conspiracy theory according to which a communist world order is to be introduced and a pandemic is to be used to solve the problem of overpopulation and to enslave the part of humanity that survives with vaccines). They also encouraged viewers to read Dugin’s writings published by the editors of the pro-Russian nationalist weekly *‘Mysl Polska’* (which publishes, among others people like **Mateusz Piskorski**, leader of the **Zmiana [Change]** political party, who has been accused of spying for Russia). On her Twitter profile Wielomska has repeatedly published posts expressing dislike for Ukraine and Ukrainians, and using antisemitic tropes, including the use of the term *‘Ukropolin’* (the word means Poland in Hebrew; according to the conspiracy theory, Polin is Poland appropriated by Jews).

WARSAW. On 22 March, in a program broadcast on the **National Media** channel on YouTube, the host, **Brunon Rozycki** and his interlocutor, **Marian Miszalski** (commentator for the far-right magazine *‘Najwyższy Czas!’* – *‘High Time!’*, and author of a book under the title *‘The Jewish Political Lobby in Poland’*) promoted anti-Ukrainian and antisemitic conspiracy theories. This broadcast was entitled: *‘Marian Miszalski on «Heavenly Jerusalem». Is this a true theory?’* To Rozycki’s question: *‘To what extent does this concept of Heavenly Jerusalem, which claims that Ukraine is to be inhabited by the Jews, make sense?’*, Miszalski replied: *‘Is such a Judeo-Ukraine possible? We do not know what will arise when the Ukrainian quarrel ends’*. And later: *‘It is possible to build a second Israel in Ukraine, there are many indications for this. [...] The Jewish lobby in*

*Ukraine is very powerful, when we look at the present government, where the president and the minister of defense are of Jewish origin. [...] If a Jewish government resembling the Mazowiecki government in Poland in 1989 is installed in neutral Ukraine [...], with the support of the Jewish lobby in America and Israel, building a second Israel in Ukraine would be very real'. Both interlocutors freely developed their conspiracy theories: 'Could **Putin** consciously participate in this project?' (Rozycki), 'It is very possible that such a neutral Ukraine, but ruled by a strong Jewish lobby, Judeo-Ukraine, could be used by Putin for further purposes' (Miszański), 'Putin is pleased that such a number of refugees are flowing into Poland. [...] These hostilities in the East are exceptionally delicate, although we are dazzled by these photos and explosions. [...] The depopulation of eastern Ukraine is favourable for Putin, the Jews and perhaps the West' (Rozycki). Within a week, this broadcast gained over 100,000 views on YouTube.*

The **National Media** channel belongs to the **Stowarzyszenie Marsz Niepodległości (March of Independence Association)** led by **Robert Bakiewicz**, a far-right organisation subsidised by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage.

WARSAW. On 24 March, on the **wRealu24** channel of the **BanBye.com** platform (a far-right platform founded by **Marcin Rola**), **Krzysztof Lech Luksza** expressed xenophobic comments about Ukrainian students fleeing the war to Polish universities: *'Is the main point here to educate a Ukrainian elite for the Ukrainian state and to pay for it with Polish money? – and to what extent is it profitable for us? I'm just asking. I have the right to ask the question. [...] What will be the relationship of these graduates with Poland, apart from the fact that they will know that Krakow is a nice place for a party? [...] And what will we get out of it, apart from the fact that they will thank us kindly, Zelensky or whoever will be there, will pat us on the back? And the issue of Volhynia and the remembrance of the genocide against Poles [...] will remain unresolved [...] This, in my opinion, is a prerequisite for any agreement with Ukraine. I understand that most Poles don't think so, but I don't give a damn'.*

WARSAW. On 26 March, during a meeting at the Hybrydy club, a far-right commentator **Stanisław Michalkiewicz**, devoted a scandalous speech to jokes and ironic comments about the aggression against Ukraine, which he compared to the coronavirus pandemic (in which he does not believe). He minimised and challenged the war crimes committed against the civilian population. He complained about the alleged censorship of views unfavourable to Ukraine. He said, among other things: *'Is the Ukrainian Pravda [truth, name of major news source – translator's note] really true [play on words – translator's note]? [...] You can see that the experts in shaping opinions of the masses got down to work. [...] We are forced to accept this truth and everyone who does not believe in this truth, is totally ostracised'.* In agreement with the views of **Janusz Korwin-Mikke** (a Member of Parliament representing **Konfederacja – Confederation**, a coalition of far-right political parties), he also warned against the 'superpower Ukraine' allegedly threatening Poland, linking it with the presence of Ukrainian refugees: *'If Ukraine were a superpower, we would be surrounded by superpowers. [...] If Ukraine wins, it will undoubtedly become a superpower and then Poland may join Ukraine [...], especially if we have a Ukrainian diaspora – maybe five, maybe six million, and this diaspora may not want to return there anymore, which is when the European Union can grant EU citizenship to this diaspora. Then these people, not being Polish citizens, would have active and*

passive voting rights in elections for local governments, so at first local self-governments, and then all the rest'. In his speech, Michalkiewicz also included anti-American themes: *'President Biden used this war to grab the whole of Europe by the face'* and antisemitic ones: *'Jews do not expect us to settle claims in return for the supply of some goods, no, but in exchange for nothing. The United States have made a commitment to ensure that Poland meets these claims'*.

The meeting at the Hybrydy club (managed by the **Universitatis Varsoviensis Foundation** for the benefit of students and graduates of the University of Warsaw) was organised under the pretext of celebrating the 30th anniversary of the extreme-right weekly magazine **'Najwyższy Czas!'** (**'High Time!'**). It was attended by politicians and commentators associated with **Konfederacja** (**Confederation**, far-right party): Tomasz Sommer (editor-in-chief of *'Najwyższy Czas!'*), **Janusz Korwin-Mikke**, **Slawomir Mentzen**, **Rafal Ziemkiewicz** and **Grzegorz Braun**. During this event, the film **'Jedwabne. True story'** by **Wojciech Sumlinski** (a far-right activist, anti-vaxxer involved in conspiracy theories on COVID-19 and Jewish lobbies) was also broadcast, in which the responsibility of Poles for the anti-Jewish crime in Jedwabne in 1941 is questioned.

STANISLAW DOLNY. On 27 March, during a holy mass retreat in the Church of St Stanislaus the Bishop and Martyr, Father **Jacek**, a Benedictine monk from Tyniec, spoke about refugees from Ukraine insultingly and spread false information about the causes of the war. According to the report published on the Facebook page of 'Pod Klasztorem i Zamkiem – Website of the Kalwaria and Lanckorona Community Resident', the priest warned during his sermon: *'Polish women should be careful with Ukrainian women who came to Poland, because they will soon seduce and take away their husbands'*. He also added: *'The Americans started the war in Ukraine, and now they want to blame it on the Russians'*. Villagers and Ukrainian refugees were present at the mass. Some people left the church in protest against the priest's words. In relation to his behaviour, the Benedictine Abbey in Tyniec stated: *'We strongly distance ourselves from such views. We thank the faithful who have chosen to pay attention to the abuses, and we assure you that we take the matter seriously. The situation requires deeper reflection, so today we can inform you that if the reports of the faithful are confirmed, the priest will be reprimanded [...]. Since the beginning of the war beyond the eastern border, the abbey has been supporting those who suffer from Russia's unprovoked attack on Ukraine: dozens of refugees from Ukraine have found shelter and material assistance in our monastery'*.

WARSAW. On 27 March, **Lukasz Warzecha** (a columnist for the right-wing weekly **'Do Rzeczy'**) published a video on his YouTube videoblog in which he presented a vision that Ukrainian children would pose a health risk in Polish schools. Warzecha, who also sympathises with the anti-vaccination movement, said: *'Refugees who come to Poland [...] have a problem with vaccinations [...] against genuinely dangerous diseases [...] and this problem, unfortunately, concerns children who immediately join Polish children in schools. We are talking about diseases such as whooping cough and polio. And here we do not hear the voices of the health authorities [...]. This threat is real'*. In the same broadcast, he supported the petition of the parents of the students of Primary School No. 16 in Lublin against making the gymnasium available to help refugees. He added: *'The state cannot help refugees at the expense of its own citizens'*. In addition, he publicly read a question he addressed to the Ministry of Health (in a letter of 7 March), repeating the insinuations: *'In connection*

with the messages that are reaching me, I would like to know if it is true that Ukrainian patients, including children, were given priority over Polish patients in medical care facilities?’

Among the comments that appeared under this video, some were antisemitic: *‘Objective and matter-of-fact as usual. It seems that Putin’s aggression will also be paid for by the Polish-speaking-memorial community of Polin [in Hebrew this means Poland – translator’s note]. I will not even mention the words of the spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the servants of the Ukrainian nation. Anecdote at the end: President Zelenski called on Judean people from all over the world for help. Two came, from Warsz Aviv’.*

GDANSK. On 29 March, Radio Gdansk informed listeners that residents of one of the housing estates had received false notifications in their postboxes about the forced accommodation of refugees from Ukraine. The purported sender of the letter was the ‘Chelm’ Housing Cooperative, it had the signatures of the president and vice-president of the cooperative, as well as their stamps. The content of this notification was as follows: *‘We would like to inform you that we have been forced to undertake activities aimed at assisting refugees from Ukraine. In connection with the above, the management board of SM Chelm have decided to select at least one or more apartments in each staircase, in which it would be possible to settle Ukrainian citizens. Within a few days, an audit will be carried out in order to select the appropriate apartment’.* The same message had been published a few days earlier on the Facebook page of Grupa Gdansk Chelm. These activities were aimed at inciting prejudice against Ukrainians. In a statement, the cooperative responded that both the letter sent to the residents and the post on Facebook were forgeries. The prosecutor’s office was notified about the case.

PILKA. On 29 March, **Daniel Wachowiak**, parish priest at the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Pilka (a village in the Czarnkow-Trzcianka parish), for years widely known for his online activity, posted a curious message on Twitter, in which he suggested that the help and solidarity shown to refugees from Ukraine pose a threat to Polish identity national. He wrote: *‘Not having a sense of your own identity is something I disagree with. This is manifested, for example, in the complex change of the native language [from NA Ukr to W Ukr – a recent change in Polish prepositions referring to Ukraine – translator’s note], mass displays of flags of another country, while omitting the national flag, lack of priority for Poles’.*

POZNAN. On 29 March, on the air of **Radio Poznan** (public broadcaster), **Janusz Korwin-Mikke** (MP from the nationalist, radical **Konfederacja – Confederation** party) denied Russian war crimes in Ukraine. He stated that *‘we know nothing about the war, because there is a monstrous censorship’* and added: *‘Mariupol is an obvious Ukrainian mystification, Poles do not see this’* (Mariupol is a city in eastern Ukraine, besieged, bombed and cut off from humanitarian aid by the Russians). The host of the programme, **Piotr Barelkowski** did not react to this statement. also praised Putin: *‘I defend European values and of the great leaders only His Excellency Vladimir Putin defends European values’.* Again, Barelkowski did not comment on these words. During the broadcast, Korwin-Mikke expressed his appreciation for the system of power in Russia, because *‘there is less democracy there than in Poland and therefore, Russia is richer than Ukraine’.* Finally, he also expressed his support for the Tiananmen Square massacre in China: *‘Today China is much richer than Poland because the*

majority was not listened to. When students protested, they were shot at. If these students had not been shot at, today China would have borrowed another tranche from the World Bank' (In 1989, Chinese students, supported by workers, demonstrated for several months, demanding the democratisation of public life, political reforms and an end to corruption. The protests were bloodily suppressed). Radio Poznan released a statement about the dismissal of Piotr Barelkowski, adding that *'he did not maintain his journalistic professionalism'* during the interview.

WARSAW. On 29 March, a press conference held by **Konfederacja (Confederation)** party the party MP **Grzegorz Braun** (a nationalist known for scandals), took place in the Sejm [lower chamber of Polish Parliament], which concerned the alleged privileging of students from Ukraine at school at the expense of Polish students. **Marta Czech** (a candidate from Konfederacja's list in the 2019 parliamentary elections) criticised the consultations of the Minister of Education with the Union of Ukrainians in Poland and accused him of *'demanding that Ukrainian students be treated as equal to Polish, and even privileged'*. In turn, **Piotr Heszen** presented the alleged *'postulates of the Ukrainian community'* aimed at *'introducing one's own Ukrainian life, also with the participation of non-governmental organisations, which would be admitted to the school premises, using Polish taxpayers' money. [...] Minister Czarnek [Przemyslaw Czarnek, Minister of Education], you are from a weak race'*.

WARSAW. On 31 March, on **wRealu24** (a far-right channel on YouTube), **Krzysztof Lech Luksza** once again criticised the support provided to refugees and envisioned a conspiratorial vision of the takeover of power by Ukrainians in Poland. He said desperately: *'I'm fed up with these politicians, why can't normal people rule so that Poles can rule in Poland, Poles with a Polish heart, and not with a Ukrainian heart or somebody else's! [...] Are Poles supposed to be servants? There is probably no such case in the history of the world that one nation is so massively favoured for the benefit of another nation, i.e. Poles for the benefit of Ukrainians, with privileges and so on. [...] Today, the Polish national interest is being trampled on by those who were supposed to get up from their knees, and are on their knees in front of the Ukrainians'*.

WARSAW. On 1 April, on **wRealu24** (a far-right channel on YouTube), **Marcin Rola** delivered a tirade laden with conspiracy theories, in which he criticised helping Ukrainian refugees and showing solidarity with the victims of aggression. He stated: *'I was outraged because I understand helping humanely and so on, but there are limits to idiocy. If I enter the city of Malbork and see the flag of Ukraine in the City Hall, I'm asking: is this normal? At the Polish office, in a Polish city, in Poland, the flag of Ukraine! This is a scandal, this is not normal. [...] I am asking, where is the Polish flag? Maybe we should really let the strangers come here and introduce their order, maybe we must be eternal slaves. I feel like crying. In which direction is this going? [...] Will Poland even be able to exist?'*

WARSAW. On 1 April, a press conference was held in the Sejm [lower chamber of Polish Parliament], during which the leader of the **Ruch Narodowy (far-right National Movement)** **Robert Winnicki**, and **Michal Wawer** an MP from the **Konfederacja (Confederation)** party, presented a draft *'law on a moratorium on granting Polish citizenship'*. According to the draft, such

a moratorium would be valid for ten years (sic!). Wawer referred to the issue of refugees from Ukraine: *'This is a policy of permanent changes to the social structure of Poland. [...] We call on the parliamentary majority to put a limit to this suicidal policy of changing the social structure in the Polish country'*. Winnicki, on the other hand, declared: *'After the Second World War we had a homogeneous state [...] and this is a clear value'*, and declared: *'We are definitely saying 'no' to changing the national structure of the Polish state'*.

On the same day, Winnicki appeared in a programme hosted by **Pawel Zdziarski** (columnist for the right-wing weekly *'Do Rzeczy'*) on the **wRealu24** YouTube channel, where he stated: *'we have already accepted over two million war refugees, there is such a risk, the threat of [...] rapid change of ethnic structure in Poland. [...] This cannot be a mass settlement plan, because the nation did not consent to it. [...] You have to remember that the Polish nation is the host in our country'*. Zdziarski complained about the *'ubiquity of the colours of the Ukrainian nation'* in Poland, and Winnicki echoed him: *'These things come to exaggeration and paranoia, and this will end badly. [...] An explosion of exaggerated Ukrainianophilia. [...] Everywhere there is this pushy propaganda that Poles should learn Ukrainian'*. The Konfederacja MP called for an alliance with Iran, because *'it would be a satisfaction for us to slap a state in Palestine that hates us in the face, that is, Israel'* (*'a state located in Palestine'* is a phrase used by antisemites promoting the destruction of Israel).

WARSAW. On 4 April, an anonymous sender sent out death threats and anti-Ukrainian slurs to several public figures, including Member of the European Parliament Radoslaw Sikorski (former Speaker of the Parliament and Minister of Foreign Affairs), Dr Maciej Lasek (MP Member of Civic Platform and former Chairman of the State Commission for Investigation of Aviation Accidents), Marek Rzasa (MP of Civic Platform), Patryk Jaki (Member of the European Parliament) and Katarzyna Lubnauer (MP of Modern party). The content of the message read: *'You will die, traitor, for Volhynia, I will murder you for what you did. [...] The number one priority should always be the Poles, not some sub-humans and cattle from across the eastern border. If you want Ukraine in Poland, f*cking go abroad and join the banderists [referring to members of the **Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists**, who took part in the Volhynia massacre of Poles as well as in Jewish pogroms in 1943-1944. The term 'banderists' is frequently used in Poland today as an ethnic slur against all Ukrainians – translator's note]. I will beat your multiculturalism out of your head with my baseball bat. [...] I will force you to dig a grave. You will die for Volhynia, you fucking bastard. The sentence was passed in the name of the Polish Underground State'*. The case was passed to the public prosecutor's office.

LONDON. On 5 April, **Jakub Grygowski**, chairman of the London branch of the **KORWiN** (political party), a member of the National Council and the party's representative in the UK and Ireland, Tweeted comments in which he denied Russian war crimes committed during the war in Ukraine: *'Actor Zelensky did not want to leave his industry colleagues in the lurch. After becoming president, he got them the acting jobs of their lives with audiences numbering in the billions... he let them play corpses lying on the streets'*. On the same day, he expressed his wish for as many war victims as possible: *'I wish they would massacre each other and weaken each other'*. Grygowski also posted other entries with anti-Ukrainian content, for example: *'The fact is that Ukraine is an artificial state. The territories of western Ukraine – Lwow, Luck, Belz, Kamieniec Podolski, Zytomierz, Braclaw,*

Korsun, Czehryn, Podhorce, Mohylow, Raszkow - were, are and will always be Polish. You can only dream about Przemyśl' (4 April), 'What kind of genius came up with the idea of opening the border to all Ukrainians, even to those without valid documents? I have not heard of a more stupid thing today' (26 February). And on the day the war broke out, he expressed admiration for Putin's Russia: 'The past several decades went to waste, which Russia, unfortunately, used much better than us. The West has been preoccupied with nonsense, like urging people to become vegan, because of animals suffering, climate change and the development of socialism, while Russia was becoming stronger'.

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