AGILE

HIGHER EDUCATION
RESILIENCE IN
REFUGEE CRISES

Report

Academic libraries as niches of social cohesion

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Consortium

Partner n°	Name	Short name	Country	Logo
1.	University Paris 8	UP8	France	
2.	University Bordeaux Montaigne	UBM	France	
3.	Web2Learn	W2L	Greece	
4.	University of Ljubljana	UL	Slovenia	
5.	Polish Rectors Foundation	PRF	Poland	
6.	Lviv Polytechnic National University	LPNU	Ukraine	
7.	University of Hamburg	UH	Germany	
8.	Kaunas University of Technology	KTU	Lithuania	

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The following list presents the acronyms used in the deliverable in alphabetical order.

Abbreviation	Meaning
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution

Project summary

This publication is a result of the Erasmus+ AGILE project ("Higher education resilience in refugee crises: forging social inclusion through capacity building, civic engagement and skills recognition", http://www.agileproject-erasmus.eu/), whose aim is to increase the resilience of HE systems to address the ongoing needs of refugees through social participation and skills recognition.

The AGILE project aims to enrich HE curricula by proposing new pedagogical designs that encourage grassroots and digitally enhanced actions in both formal and informal learning environments.

The project is coordinated by the University Paris 8. The consortium is made up of six universities (University Paris 8, Bordeaux Montaigne, University, University of Hamburg, University of Ljubljana, Lviv Polytechnic National University, Kaunas University of Technology), one think-tank (Polish Rectors Foundation) and one business partner (Web2Learn) specialised in open recognition systems and social learning.

Executive summary

Most academic libraries are evolving beyond their traditional roles (Schlak, 2018). They are emerging as vital spaces for fostering social cohesion, providing inclusive environments where diverse communities can engage and collaborate. Also, the war in Ukraine has significantly challenged European HE libraries, compelling them to adapt to the needs of displaced students, so libraries play a vital role in supporting resilience and fostering collaboration between different institutions across the country (Antczak, Gruszka, 2023). The integration of refugees into the HE system can be a challenge for institutions. In order for a person to be able to successfully integrate into the academic community, it may be necessary to withdraw from the entire university department. The university library can become a unifying, inclusive and collaborative unit that can help strengthen support systems for refugee students.

In this highly interconnected era, academic libraries create the value of their knowledge base on knowledge and share it with regular service recipients (students, teachers, researchers, employees of their departments, and members of other universities) and urban and regional communities. Integrating refugees into the higher education system is a difficult task for institutions. The university library becomes a unifying, inclusive, and collaborative unit that can help strengthen support systems for refugee students and minority students by organizing various activities. This report provides an overview of academic libraries' power to promote social inclusion and cohesion through the organization and implementation of social actions by KTU.

This report provides an overview of the power of academic libraries to promote social inclusion and cohesion through the organization and implementation of social actions carried out by KTU with Ukrainian refugees. All the activities carried out as part of Work Package 4 Activity 4 to expand existing knowledge and practices on how academic libraries could foster refugees' inclusion and integration within academia.

1. General introduction

In today's rapidly changing educational landscape, most academic libraries stand out as inclusive environments that embrace diversity (Antczak, Gruszka, 2023). They become a place where students and university staff members broader community come together, transcending cultural and social boundaries. That not only enriches the academic experience but also promotes understanding and empathy among individuals with varied backgrounds and perspectives (Schlak, 2018).

Through a plethora of events – ranging from community discussion sessions and art exhibitions to psychological support sessions and film screenings – libraries create opportunities for meaningful dialogue and collaboration between refugees and students. These events have potential to encourage individuals to explore complex issues, share personal experiences, and forge connections that extend beyond academic pursuits. By nurturing a supportive environment that values inclusivity, dialogue, and personal growth, academic libraries cannot only enrich the academic journey but also contribute significantly to the fabric of social cohesion within and beyond educational institutions (Antczak, Gruszka, 2023).

2. The academic library as trigger initiator of social actions

An academic library is a vital participant in the communities it serves and can help those communities become more vital and more vibrant (Scott, 2011). Currently, there are five areas where libraries contribute to the development of thriving communities:

- facilitating access to information and learning;

- promoting social inclusion and equity;

- enhancing civic engagement;

- bridging resources and community participation;

- fostering community economic vitality (Scott, 2011, p. 197).

Libraries can create communities of interest by organising various writing workshops, book discussions, exhibitions of work by local artists, and other programmes aimed at different groups of community members (Willingham, 2008). In community building, "libraries can help ameliorate some of today's social ills, including isolation, a lack of well-being, access, and the inability to engage" (Scott, 2011, p. 195).

The challenges faced by displaced populations (in the context of our project, Ukrainian refugees) are immense, encompassing the trauma of loss, the uncertainty or danger of travelling to a new country and the ongoing difficulties of establishing themselves in the host community (Gordon, 2023). In these challenging times, libraries have the potential to stand as beacons of hope, offering essential support to help refugee students overcome these challenges.

To enhance resilience of academic communities, academic libraries should encourage academia-society collaborations that include participating in various events at academic libraries – psychological support sessions, art, discussion events – reveals the profound role these institutions play in fostering social cohesion.

Related to these aspects, Kaunas University of Technology Library organised 8 social actions, attended by 238 participants during 5 months period.

2.1 Psychological support

Refugees are people who are forced to flee their country due to political conflict or other circumstances that threaten their security. The multiple potential traumas and disasters experienced by most refugee youth cause psychological deterioration and related problems (Bürgin, et al., 2022).

Research on refugee welfare has highlighted several key issues. One is restoring a sense of security and belonging, usually associated with 'home.' Another issue is integrating the past and present self, life before and after leaving the life before, during, and after fleeing, to find meaning and regain faith in a future over which one has some control (Akthar & Lovell, 2019; Gordon, 2023).

When the war started, a lot of Ukrainians came to Lithuania, like in other European countries. A total of 41,422 Ukrainian war refugees have temporary residence permits issued on the basis of temporary protection in our country (Migracijos departamentas MIGRIS, 2024). This means that a large number of people who arrived, require a lot of help and support. Contribute to the improvement of the situation of refugees, through actions aimed at various areas, one of which was psychological help.

On February 27, 2024, a meditation session together with psychologist Eimantas Lukosevicius was held at the Kaunas University of Technology Library. Meditation has been shown to have a huge effect on changes in cortisol levels, which means that there is a significant effect of meditation sessions on people not only suffering from various diseases but especially those who live in stressful life situations (Koncz, et al., 2021). We can argue this by the fact that when fleeing their country, most refugees experience tension, stress and uncertainty when arriving in a new country and integrating into its culture, habits, and society. Psychological events in libraries can provide important opportunities for individuals to connect with others who share similar experiences or concerns. To provide this opportunity to many people and enhance inclusion, the meditation session was not only addressed to refugee students.

During the meditation session organised in the library of the Kaunas University of Technology, Ukrainian, Lithuanian and foreign students tried different relaxation techniques. They started with breathing exercises and gradually moved on to more and more complex techniques such as guided visualization or mindfulness exercises. During this 1-hour session Ukrainian refugee had the opportunity to forget about the problems, just calm their

minds and meet new people. The session was attended by students who shared that: "This event was a perfect way to relax and spend more time with myself. I always stressed about my family and myself in all these circumstances so this hour was best way to relax and to learn some techniques "also they "<…>hope that these techniques which I learnt in this event helps me to deal with stress and bad memories ". Meditation sessions can provide people with knowledge and skills about stress management strategies that become used in the long term, even without long-term meditation practice (Koncz, et. al., 2021). By offering activities like this, libraries can contribute to students' overall well-being and academic success.

Figure 1. Meditation session

2.2 Art therapy

Not only meditation but also art therapy could bring value to improve human psychological well-being. Art therapy gives children the opportunity to communicate non-verbally. Art techniques are believed to encourage the exploration of feelings and memories from the subconscious, allowing the unspeakable to be revealed through a work of art (Akthar, Lovell, 2019).

On December 6, an art therapy session was held at the Kaunas University of Technology Library with painters Indre Makelyte-Morkune and Marius Morkunas (December 6, 2023; March 24, 2024). Ukrainian refugee students had an important opportunity to explore their emotions and inner world through drawing. During this 1-hour session, students had the chance to consider the emotions they are currently experiencing and what changes should be made in their lives. Students could hardly believe how much about a person and their current life situation could be told by drawings and what the students themselves see in them.

In the early stages of art therapy, symptoms of depression temporarily increase as people begin to open up and explore their trauma (Zubala et al.,2021). However, the effects of art therapy are more effective and bring great benefits when you participate in it more than once (Rowe, et al., 2017). Guided by this, we organised on March 24, the second art therapy session. It was also attended by Ukrainian refugee students as in previous one. This session was more complex in terms of technique and its analysis. Students had more time to analyze their current emotional state, thoughts and problems. Drawing with colors was relaxing and gave the power to let creativity flow.

Students shared their thoughts that activity like art therapy helped them get away from difficult thoughts, allow to meet new people and think more about their emotional health. The feedback received confirms the benefits of these activities: "Art therapy encouraged me to search for answers and think more about myself "and also "<…>it helps you to understand yourself ".

By organizing this event, the university library aimed to increase the psychological resilience of student refugees and bring Ukrainian students together in one group in order to increase mutual community.

Figure 2. Art therapy

2.3 Discussions

When we think about the challenges of refugee inclusion to HE, it becomes important to discuss the obstacles and to look for possible solutions together with university and city community. It can be relevant to discuss not only in formal way, but also in an informal environment because then you could attract more people to express their attitudes and propose ideas. To implement this method, we organised screenings of two films with invited guests, as well as a webinar together with refugees and a Lithuanian audience.

On March 27, the film "The Earth is Blue as an Orange" screening was organised, followed by discussion with the Ukrainian family members who are the main characters in the film. Participants in the discussion from Ukraine shared their memories and their feelings when a situation forced them to flee and what it means to be a war refugee. This format was chosen for this event due to the opportunity for Ukrainians to provide a space where to express their experiences and the problems they face, while the Lithuanian audience could hear and understand how the refugees really feel and through the discussion try to clarify how the integration processes could be facilitated for them: "it was an honour to hear from the Ukrainians themselves about the real situation and difficulties in their lives".

Figure 3. film "The Earth is Blue as an Orange" screening

On March 14, 2024, participants gathered for the screening of the film "White Angel - The end of Marinka". After the film, there was a discussion about the city of Marinka, how hostilities developed in this city and the scale of war crimes. Discussion was led by a Ukrainian student who told about her experiences and difficulties when fleeing the country and trying to settle in Lithuania. In our case and in general, many libraries host events, workshops, and discussions that encourage interaction among students, faculty, and the broader community and these activities create opportunities for dialogue, cultural exchange, and collaborative learning. The film, out of which emerged a lot of emotions and thoughts, reminded the participating Lithuanians of the importance of community and freedom, and the Ukrainians, who not only watched but also discussed after the film and faced this painful situation in reality, were looking forward to being able to return to their native homes and it showed that it has been difficult for them to be war refugees: "such a hard experience and meaningful evening to hear things from Ukrainians".

Figure 4. film "White Angel - The end of Marinka" screening

These events both create shared experiences, spark meaningful discussions, enhance cultural understanding, and build social connections

within an inclusive and welcoming environment. By leveraging the power of film, academic libraries reinforce their essential role as niches of social cohesion, promoting a sense of community and belonging within the academic and broader community.

On 11 April, a remote webinar "Integration of forced migrants – from empowerment to social change" was organised with the speaker Valentina Demidenko who is director of the Jonava Social Service Center and two of its employees: Oksana Mentkevych from Ukraine and Awf Abdulrazzak from Syria and who are an example of successful social integration. These guests were chosen for the opportunity to reveal success stories to Lithuanians through examples, how refugees are able to adapt to a different culture and eliminate all stereotypes towards foreigners. This webinar was held in lithuanian language and was intended for a lithuanian audience. In that event participants talked about stereotypes of other foreigners, the change in the perception of integration in the state, stages of the integration and migration process and provision of social services to refugees. During this webinar, listeners ask relevant questions to the speakers, who, based on their own experience, reveal the approach from a personal perspective and work experience.

2.4 Art events

In order to raise awareness within the academic community about Ukraine refugees' inclusion, KTU adopted visual measures by organizing an exhibition related to the situation in Ukraine and inviting Ukrainian families with children to an open-minded workshop.

On March 21, the opening of the exhibition "Between Shades of Grey" of the author's works of the young generation creator, Indre Morkūne - Makelyte, took place. This is an exhibition of paintings born to reflect today's global issues, war, the refugee situation, existential and survival issues. It is worth mentioned that art transcends linguistic and cultural barriers, making it a universal medium for expression and connection (Acomi, et al., 2023). The author expresses her thoughts through symbolism in her paintings, uses dark, gloomy colors to strengthen the emotional background. Thus, appealing to historical memory and the flow of time. Participants shared that each drawing leaves the viewer to decide what they see in each painting.

Figure 5. Opening of the exhibition "Between Shades of Grey"

Also, Ukrainian families took part in an educational afternoon where they made Advent wreaths (November 30, 2023). This Christmas workshop was organised in cooperation with the Jonava District Social Services Center in order to increase the social participation of Ukrainians in community activities. Ala Volkova, senior methodologist at Kaunas County Public

Library, led the workshop and not only taught how to make wreaths but also told Ukrainians the secrets of one of Lithuania's holiday traditions, everyone shared significance and meaning of upcoming winter celebrations. Ukrainians enjoyed not only the meaningful 2 hours activity, but also the opportunity to be together and talk about important topics and it was the purpose of this activity – to create community and increase unity.

3. Academic Library experience in European countries

3.1 France case

At Bordeaux Montaigne University, the university library organises a number of activities and events which, even if it is not their sole aim, can lead to greater inclusion of international students.

For exiled students, visits and/or workshops to discover the libraries and documentary resources have been specially designed for this group. For a number of years now, we have welcomed students from the DEFLE Bridge diploma for a 2-hour session to find out about libraries, their services and the documentary tools available to them.

The International Relations Department regularly asks us to give English-language tours of the libraries for Erasmus+ mobility students and other exiled students who are not enrolled in the bridge diploma. We have identified a team of colleagues with a good command of foreign languages (mainly English) who can supervise these visits.

Their document portal has been translated into English and Spanish which enables students who are not (yet) familiar with this essential tool to get to grips with it more quickly. Obviously, the library ensures the provision of collections to support their integration: French as a foreign language collections, foreign-language press, documents and fiction in their original language, multilingual audio-visual collections, etc.

Pause doc' workshops: this scheme, set up as part of a programme to help students succeed in their undergraduate studies, provides specific support for students from specially trained monitors who help them with documentary issues, as well as issues relating to university work (exam preparation, personal organisation, etc.) and student life.

All international students, be they refugees or not, are one of the targets of this scheme, which is designed to personalize the support offered. Cultural events are regularly organised to provide the student community with opportunities to discover and share: meetings with writers, film screenings

in the original language, book clubs, exhibitions, etc.

Although these events are open to all students, we have noted that the proportion of foreign students among the spectators/participants is high, well above their actual weight in the student population. We put the emphasis on an intercultural approach in our programming (a few examples in recent months: a week on Chile to mark the 50th anniversary of the coup d'état, events to mark the Carnation Revolution, a Kafka exhibition with German-speaking students, etc.).

These various proposals for international students undoubtedly only partially meet the challenges and needs of an integration policy for foreign students. We are more than willing to think about this and develop new services. Examples from other BUs in France show the avenues that could be explored: actions aimed at developing student socialisation (conversation workshops, participative cultural actions focusing on interculturality, etc.), developing staff language skills, developing a specific welcome/training scheme for international students at the start of the academic year, etc.

Another case is about the University Paris 8 Library (BU). They receive many requests for visits, especially at the beginning of the academic year (September, October…) from teachers of various degrees. A dedicated team of librarians takes care of these mediations' visits.

Most of the time, tours are conducted in French, but sometimes the librarians conduct them in English or in 'adapted' French (slower, with selected terms, occasionally translated). This is the case with the visits for the DU FLE students (University Diploma for French as a Foreign Language students), who come every year at the beginning of the academic year in a group, brought along by a teacher.

Some of the librarians in the team are particularly keen to give these tours: those who speak foreign languages (English) or those who are used to conversation workshops, because it's not easy to express oneself naturally in a French that's appropriate for people learning our language. The groups are deliberately smaller than usual to ensure that discussions are easier.

The BU offers to the students who are learning French to loan textbooks, French-mother-tongue dictionaries, works of literature in easy-to-read editions, for a period of several months, corresponding to the duration of their course. This also includes refugee students who are part of specific diplomas (DU Passerelle, DLSU, PALSSE). These long-term loans differ from

the BU's traditional document loan arrangements, which are for much shorter periods (a few weeks). The aim is to support allophone and refugee students in their learning of French by making available to each of them, over a long period of time, documentation useful to their learning, used during or in addition to the teaching they receive at Paris 8.

In December 2021, the BU deployed for the first time a long loan of "FLE documentary kits" for students in the DU Passerelle (2021-2022 academic year). In 2022, the BU was asked to extend the service to the newly created PALSSE programme (first term) and DLSU programme (second term). The service has been extended to DU Passerelle and PALSSE students for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 academic years.

The documents making up the kits were selected in conjunction with the educational coordinators of the programmes concerned, in order to identify works that support the teaching provided or are even used for teaching purposes during lessons. The textbooks selected are for beginners (A1-A2) or intermediate (B1) level and focus on different aspects of learning French: grammar, spelling, vocabulary, communication, etc. The kits are rounded off with correction books, an "easy to read" work of literature and a bilingual French dictionary adapted to the user's mother tongue. In total, the kits contain around ten documents.

Readings of texts aloud, in the original language and translated into French

Readings are organised by and in the BU, and they invite members of the university community (students and staff) to read aloud texts in their original language. The texts, short extracts, are chosen by the participants, who may decide if they wish to read a translation and/or present the nature and content of the extract.

The readings invite the audience to share a moment dedicated to the pleasure of words and their musicality. They highlight different languages and texts from different cultures, as well as the languages spoken by members of the university community, thus underlining their diverse origins. These readings are therefore also moments of encounter between the participants and the public.

The BU's aim is to ensure that people of different backgrounds take part in the readings on the same level: students of foreign origin, exchange students or refugee students, university staff from foreign backgrounds or

language learners, local high school students learning foreign languages, etc. The aim is to ensure that people of different backgrounds take part in the readings. To ensure the participation of people from a wide range of backgrounds, the BU has set up partnerships with various stakeholders at the University.

For refugee students enrolled in the DU Passerelle or the PALSSE programme, the aim is also to eventually link these readings to educational projects developed in their courses.

In 2022, two reading sessions were organised during the first Languages Week. Held in the library's "yellow room", they brought together DU Passerelle students, secondary school pupils from local schools identified through the "Cordées de la réussite" scheme, and library staff. Omar Souleimane, an author originally from Syria who now writes in French and is published by the publishing house Flammarion, also took part in the meeting. The presence of O. Souleimane, a former student at Paris 8 University, was made possible thanks to F. Allouache.

In 2023, readings were held for the 2nd edition of Languages Week, which also included students from the DU Passerelle. As part of a course, these students had prepared readings of texts they had chosen, in their mother tongue, and then translated them into French. This strengthened the link between the readings and the teaching projects. The DU Passerelle coordinator also got involved to make it a performance time. The event was the culmination of an educational programme based on the selection and reading of texts in the mother tongue, their translation and reading in French, the relationship between the body and theatricality during these readings and the comparative study of prosody in French and other languages.

A similar scheme was offered during Language Week 2024, which saw the participation of four DU Passerelle students (for reasons of timing, this activity was not prepared as part of a course, but was offered to students on a voluntary basis).

Language week (once a year, in spring)

Since 2022, to coincide with National Languages Week, the BU has been organising a week-long series of events dedicated to languages. The linguistic wealth and creative strength of the Paris 8 community, and of our student community in particular, will be showcased.

The BU invites the community to practise, discover, read and listen to a wide range of languages, all of which are great ways of meeting and sharing.

On the programme for 2024 led by students who are native speakers of the languages represented, recruited by the BU:

- Collective introductory workshops in eleven different languages and cultures (including French);
- Language cafés with twelve languages represented;
- Individual appointments to practise spoken English, French and Italian.

Highlights:

- Readings of texts in the original language by students;
- Concert, singing of lullabies by children and broadcasting of musical creations;
- Short films by students with commentary.

Focus on group language initiation workshops

The aim of the foreign language initiation workshops organised by the BU is to introduce people who do not speak a foreign language, or who have only a basic knowledge of it, to its logic and cultural dimensions.

The BU wanted to experiment with a new form of language mediation, the discovery workshop, which aims to introduce the public at a cultural event to a foreign language in a participatory format. The workshops are aimed at people with little or no knowledge of the language in question, or who have only a few basic notions. They enable members of the university community in particular to get to grips with a language that interests them, to confirm their interest, and then perhaps go further by enrolling on a course or taking a training course.

During Language Week 2023, this experiment took the form of three workshops led by an external speaker. The languages presented at the three introductory workshops were Arabic, Japanese and Chinese. The speaker was either a native speaker or bilingual in the language, and may or may not have been a teacher. The aim of the workshops was to enable participants to discover how the language works and its cultural dimension, and to express themselves in the language in a few sentences. The format

of the workshops was participative and fun, with the speaker seeking to involve users as much as possible.

The BU then wanted to use the results of this first trial to develop this type of workshop internally in the future, adapting the content, format and languages offered to the needs of the university community. During Language Week 2024, these workshops were run by students recruited and paid by the BU, who wanted to share the specific linguistic characteristics of their language in an introductory format, and who were trained and supported by the BU in defining the mediation approach to be used in these sessions.

In this way, the BU hopes to increase the participative nature of its language-related activities, with a view to promoting cultures and recognising the skills that make up the university community, as well as helping to increase opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning (learning from each other), which creates commitment and a sense of community.

Language Cafés (8 per year):

The language cafés are a recent initiative of the BU, and their organisation is evolving as new players become involved.

Organised for the first time in April 2022 thanks to the efforts of library staff who speak a foreign language (Arabic, Slavic languages, English, Spanish, etc.) or FLE, the event was well attended by students.

Starting with Language Week 2023 and for the 8 language cafés in 2023-2024, we have decided to organise the event in such a way as to involve the major language players at Paris 8 University and to encourage student participation. The BU has offered short paid assignments to students whose mother tongue is not French, to run language tables and thus guarantee, in advance of the event, the representativeness of the languages spoken. The aim is to encourage these students to become fully-fledged players in campus life, and to promote mother tongues which are recognised as rare skills and whose mobilisation is beneficial to the whole community.

At the crossroads of education and the 'third place' for convivial encounters (breaking isolation, meeting over a cocktail) and opening up to the world (getting to know languages and the people who speak them), the language café is also intended to be a factor in the social and professional integration of foreign students (exchange students, refugee and exile students, etc.)

through short-term student employment (a few hours' work).

The UFR LLCE-LEA and the university's language centre, as well as local players, have also been asked to pass on the incentive to students who are learning languages, or to non-native speakers of languages other than French, to come and practise the languages they speak.

FLE conversation workshops (1 hour, twice a week):

Since 2016, the library has been offering intermediate-advanced French conversation workshops for all non-French-speaking users who wish to speak French.

The aim of the intermediate-advanced conversation workshops is to work on oral skills, and to offer a convivial moment where interested people can express themselves, talk, tell stories, play games in French, etc. guided by a French librarian who leads the discussion and moderates speech. This is not a French course, but an opportunity for a guided language exchange, as close as possible to an informal conversation. Enrolment is free and without obligation. From October to May.

Writing workshop in French (2 hours, once a month):

Every month, on a fixed day and time if possible, one or two librarians run a writing workshop for students who want or need to write in French. They offer a range of creative writing activities, including writing, reading and feedback. The aim of the workshop is not to teach them how to write academic texts, but rather to free up their writing skills and give them back their self-confidence and the pleasure of writing. This workshop gives students the opportunity to work on their writing skills in a creative way.

As the session progresses, methodological advice is also given and discussed (the benefits of a quick first draft, the value of rewriting, the problem of procrastination, the advantages of brainstorming, the constraints of writing in a very limited time, etc.), which can be beneficial whatever the student's background and level of study.

The heterogeneity of the audience (from L1 to PhD students, French-speaking and non-French-speaking students) and the highly participative and voluntary nature of the workshop make it very stimulating and benevolent. As well as the instructors, the students give each other advice and encouragement. Peer learning is emphasised.

Work on the written word is central to the session, but oral skills are also important (reading one's text aloud, commenting on others' texts, discussing difficulties encountered, etc.). Self-assessment is also important. Enrolment is free and without obligation.

One-to-one meetings to speak French (30-minutes sessions, 9 hours a week):

Every week, the BU offers one-to-one meetings in French, led by an experienced FLE speaker. These meetings are discussion times to practise speaking French. They are not language lessons, but personal discussions in French on a topic of your choice, to help you make progress and to point you in the direction of library documents useful for learning French. These meetings are open to everyone, from October to May.

Individual appointments for written skills in French (30-minutes slots):

This service is open to any student who needs support or advice on academic writing. A specialist member of staff, recruited by the BU, will provide 30 minutes of personalised support.

They help them to understand their errors or difficulties and directs them to the library's printed or digital resources so that they can continue their work independently. They can encourage them to rewrite their work, which can then be given to teachers on request. This service is open to both French-speaking and non-French-speaking students.

3.2 Ukraine case

The Scientific and Technical Library of Lviv Polytechnic National University is one of the largest libraries of higher education institutions in Ukraine. The library is a structural unit of the university and, performing the functions of a library and bibliographic, scientific and information, educational and cultural and educational institution, provides the educational process, scientific and pedagogical activities, research, educational and cultural and educational work with books and other information carriers that make up the library's collection. In recent years, the Scientific and Technical Library has become a center for the implementation of activities not only for the university's research and teaching staff and students, but also for other community initiatives. Since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine and with the increase in the number of internally displaced persons in Lviv, most of the events held in the Scientific and Technical Library are oriented and initiated by internally displaced persons. The purpose of these events was to provide diverse support to internally displaced persons and foster patriotism.

During 2022 year, 15 socio-cultural events were held in the premises of the scientific and technical library, including a motivational meeting for active students "Natalka Panchenko. I act - Ukraine wins". The event was aimed at inspiring active students to take action by meeting Natalka Panchenko, a Polish-Ukrainian civic activist, leader of the Ukrainian diaspora in Poland, human rights activist, head of the Euromaidan Warsaw civic initiative, activist of the year according to Wprost magazine, producer of the Ukraïner and Chernobyl VR Project, and a person who shows by her example that in times of war everyone can contribute to Ukraine's victory.

An open lecture by Gestalt therapist Volodymyr Chuprin "The Spectrum of Emotions and Skills for Living with Them" and a lecture-meeting by Takeuchi Yuma with students "Reconstruction Begins in Time of War" were held.

The project "Lyric Polytechnic". The events within this project were patriotic in nature. A creative meeting "And even like a bullet, and even like a rough wind" was organised with a young poet, librarian Natalia Sushko, and a presentation of the book "The Voice of War" by Natalia Kalynovska, a Ukrainian poet, scientist, lecturer at Lviv Polytechnic National University, organiser and chairman of the jury of the All-Ukrainian Literary Competition for Students "In Light Rhymes the Word Comes to Life". The book presents works by young authors written during the war.

"Poetic Stanzas from the Front" by Volodymyr Tymchuk is a challenging poem by Lieutenant Colonel of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, lecturer at the Hetman Petro Sahaidachnyi National Army Academy, PhD in Technical Sciences, and translator. It was the third time the author held a creative meeting with students at the Library. They shared their impressions of what they had read, talked about the intense time and its challenges.

The Library hosted an evening of patriotic song "We were born in a great hour". Polytechnic students sang to the musical accompaniment of Marta Lesiv: "We were born in a great hour", "Ballad of the Mallows", "Near the Poplar", "Chervona Ruta", "There, under the Lviv Castle", 'Partisans Were Walking Through the Village'.

A significant part of the events covered a painful topic of our time, namely russian aggression against Ukraine. Among them were lectures: "Our Centennial. The Russian-Ukrainian War from the Perspective of History" (historian, public figure and member of the Verkhovna Rada Vyatrovych), "Basic Course of Tactical Medicine" (lecturer Hrynyk N.), "Emotions of War' (psychologist and psychotherapist, head of the Laboratory of Changes mental health center Stancyshyn V.), "When We Win the War' (military expert, Colonel Chernyk P.).

Also, internally displaced persons became not only regular listeners, but also active participants in the series of meetings "South of Ukraine. De-occupation of Memory" were discussions about Kherson and Zaporizhzhia; presentation of "Unconquered Kherson' by O. Korniakov, a photojournalist of the Vgoru Media Platform; screenings and discussions of documentaries by the International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival Docudays UA "Liturgy of Anti-Tank Barriers", "Ivan's Land"," Fortress Mariupol. Orest", etc.

"Fortress Mariupol. Orest" was not just a screening and discussion, it was also an online meeting with the film's director Yulia Gontaruk and the film's protagonist, the head of the Azov Regiment's press service in Mariupol, Dmytro Kozatsky (call sign Orest), who became the voice of Azovstal and Mariupol. The event was complemented by an exhibition of Dmitry Kozatsky's photographs.

At the request of S. Dumynska, Head of the Department of Culture of Kherson City Council, visitors to the "Unconquered Kherson" event and librarians joined the All-Ukrainian support campaign "Ukrainian Book for Ukrainian Kherson Region" and donated more than 200 copies of books to public libraries in Kherson.

During 2023 year, the Library hosted an XR-exhibition "The Real Reasons for the War, or How Russian Propaganda Works" developed by the European Chornobyl Institute in partnership with the well-known founder of the NotaNota project Alyona Romaniuk as part of the project "EU Urgent Support for Civil Society" implemented by ISAR Ednannia with the financial support of the European Union. This unique and innovative exhibition is designed specifically to counter Russian propaganda, to raise awareness and media literacy in society.

Thematic and personal book exhibitions were dedicated to important events of the past and present of the state: "Free, Independent, Prosperous Ukraine" and "Live and Strong, Our Glorious Ukraine!" (Independence Day of Ukraine), "On the Watch of the Motherland" (Defender of Ukraine Day), "Symbol of State Greatness" (Constitution Day of Ukraine), "Heroes of the Country, Warriors of Light" and "Armed Forces of Ukraine - Glory, Pride, Power of the Country! " (Day of the Armed Forces of Ukraine), "The Heavenly Hundred on Guard of Ukraine" (Day of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes), "A Story of Hope and Survival" (Holocaust Remembrance Day), "The Painful Wound of the People" (Holodomor Remembrance Day), "The Zone Beyond Time" (Chernobyl Tragedy Remembrance Day), "The World of the Ukrainian Word" and "Language is the Architect of the People" (International Mother Language Day), "The Origins of Slavic Writing" (Slavic Writing and Culture Day), "National Resilience in a Changing Security Environment", "Building and Reconstruction of Ukraine", "The Main Threats to the Development and Security of Society in Modern Ukraine", "Protection of the Population" (World Civil Defense Day), "Military Journalism in Ukraine" (Journalist's Day of Ukraine).

Many of the events covered a painful topic of our time, namely russian aggression against Ukraine. Among them: a screening of the documentary "Frontline Life" (directed by M. Yaremchuk, 2023) about the life of Zaporizhzhia region in close proximity to the war zone; a lecture "The Second Year of War - What to Expect" (military expert, Colonel P. Chernyk). The reading room hosted the following presentations: a photo exhibition "About the Life of War" (Volyn Press Club and the Gender Center of Volyn Oblast with the support of the Internews Media Program in Ukraine); presentation of the catalog "Caricature Against War" by Viktor Holub.

On the anniversary of the beginning of the full-scale invasion, on 24.02.2023, the Library opened an exhibition about the war in Yugoslavia (1991-1995) called "Unshed Tears" by the Swiss photographer Kurt Sauter.

Among the significant exhibition events in the Library was the opening of the International Exhibition Project "Ukrainians. Latvians. Love. Peace", where artists from Latvia presented 20 works depicting strong women. All the works were created during the Russian-Ukrainian war and symbolise women as a victory. The event was organised with the support of the Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Latvia in Lviv.

In the reporting year, the librarians continued to support the All-Ukrainian campaign "Ukrainian Book for Ukrainian Kherson Region" and donated more than 470 copies of books to public libraries in Kherson. In addition, in October, the charity marathon "Bring a Book with You" was launched jointly with the NGOs "Center for the Rescue of Ukrainian Cultural Heritage", "Nahirnykh Charitable Foundation", and "Art Space Center" to collect books for the affected libraries in Zaporizhzhia. The campaign lasted for over three months, and thanks to the visitors, more than 2000 books were collected. The Zaporizhzhia Regional Universal Scientific Library became a hub where the books will be stored until they find their place in libraries.

On November 17, 2023, a presentation of Olha Lototska's book on haze writing and haze weaving was held. The author is an internally displaced person from the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

During 2024 year, Volodymyr Kuznetsov, an IDP from Severodonetsk, presented 2 books. The Scientific and Technical Library of Lviv Polytechnic National University remains an active center of events using the popular meeting format "Coffee on Professor Street".

3.3 Poland case

Due to the massive numbers of refugees coming to Poland[1], whether they belonged to the academic sector and asked for academic support or not, all institutions, local authorities, government, universities and their internal structures were engaged in the support activities, especially in the beginning and during the first period of the Russian-Ukrainian war (Szeptycki A., 2023)[2]. Libraries as social and cultural institutions as well as academic publishers initiated their own or joined other ongoing support activities for the Ukrainian refugees, especially minors and youth, but also those addressed to their partners in Ukraine – Ukrainian publishers and libraries, also from Ukrainian universities, and their individual workers (librarians or professionals in the publishing sphere).

Polish public libraries all over the country quickly launched a number of actions[3], the list of good practices were presented by librarians for the public libraries, that also applicable to the University libraries: disseminating reliable information, dissemination information about ongoing charitable events and collections and organising own charitable events and collections (e.g. book fairs), cooperation with local authorities, governmental and non-governmental organisations and with organisations supporting the Ukrainian minority, organising assistance for Ukrainian families, creating local information points, inviting volunteers to cooperate (especially those with knowledge of Ukrainian and Polish), distributing leaflets and materials with useful information (common language phrases, places of assistance, schools, etc.), expanding the book collection with books in Ukrainian, organising language courses, providing computers with internet access, supporting refugees in finding work, offering work to librarians from Ukraine in Polish libraries, providing facilities to help or store

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[1] Data from the first period – https://tvn24.pl/polska/wojna-w-ukrainie-ilu-uchodzcow-przebywa-w-polsce-uchodzcy-praca-statystyki-wiek-uchodzcow-st6083420, actual situation is being tracked on the UNHCR https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine. Number of "academic" refugees has been tracked by CRASP https://glos.pl/krasp-na-uczelniach-w-polsce-studiuje-ponad-21-tys-studentow-z-ukrainy

[2] Szeptycki A. (2024), Polish Assistance for the Ukrainian Refugees: Current State and Perspectives of Research, [in:] Studia Migracyjne – Przegląd Polonijny, Online First, Online First, s. 1 – 21, https://doi.org/10.4467/25444972SMPP.23.035.19344

[3] For example, https://pbw.waw.pl/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2024/02/Biblioteki-polskie-na-rzecz-uchodzcow-z-Ukrainy.pdf, https://epale.ec.europa.eu/pl/blog/uciec-przed-wojna-i-co-dalej-biblioteki-dla-uchodzcow

donated materials, organising integration and educational meetings, organising literary walks in the neighbourhood, organising spare time for refugees, facilitating library enrolment for refugees[4]. Many of these activities were also organised by the University libraries as well. Activities of the Polish libraries were analysed and presented by the researchers from Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń[5]. It should be noted, that academic libraries cooperate widely with NGOs and other partners.[6]

Key role was played by the professional associations – Polish Chamber of Books[7] (with support of the Committee of Academic Publishing under the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland), Association of Polish Libraries[8] and their partners Ukrainian Book Institute, Ukrainian Library Association[9]. Activities to support academic publishers from Ukraine are implemented within the SUPPR initiative.[10] Polish partners and members also support the initiatives of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, IFLA[11], key role here belongs to the National Library of Poland which has the status of research institution[12]. Polish Conference of Rectors CRASP launched huge data collection and

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[4] https://lustrobiblioteki.pl/2022/03/nowa-oferta-polskich-bibliotek-dla-uzytkownikow-z-ukrainy/

[5] See - Fedorowicz-Kruszewska M., Kruszewska T. (2023), Biblioteki w obliczu wojny w Ukrainie – raport z badań dotyczących działalności bibliotek w Polsce, [w:] Przegląd biblioteczny 2023 z. 3, PL ISSN 0033-202X

[6] https://frsi.org.pl/wez-udzial-w-badaniu-na-temat-dzialan-bibliotek-skierowanych-do-cudzoziemcow-spoza-unii-europejskiej

[7] E.g. Books in Ukrainian for children in Poland https://pik.org.pl/komunikaty/930/tir-ksiazek-dla-dzieci-uchodzcow-przyjechal-z-ukrainy-do-polski, free educational materials in Ukrainian for refugees in Poland https://pik.org.pl/komunikaty/929/ya-tut-czyli-bezplatne-materialy-edukacyjne-dla-dzieci-z-ukrainy

[8] E.g. Books in Ukrainian for Polish libraries http://www.polskizwiazekbibliotek.pl/pl/12-informacje-ogolne/501-ksiazki-z-ukrainy

[9] E.g. Polish-Ukrainian Dialogues on Book and Publishing branch https://pik.org.pl/komunikaty/954/ukrainsko-polski-dialog-dla-ksiazki-cykl-spotkan-online-z-ekspertami-branzy-wydawniczo-ksiegarskiej

[10] Supporting Ukrainian Publishing Resilience and Recovery (SUPRR), https://ceupress.com/suprr

[11] https://bn.org.pl/aktualnosci/5323-deklaracja-o-ochronie-archiwow%2C-bibliotek%2C-muzeow-i-obiektow-dziedzictwa-kulturowego-podczas-konfliktow-zbrojnych-i-okresow-destabilizacji-politycznej.html

[12] [12] Antczak M., Gruszka Z. (2023), Activities of the National Library of Poland and community resilience. Building following the russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Doi: 10.36155/plib.11.00002

coordination activities across the whole country[13]. Universities providing an intensive cooperation with Ukrainian universities, offered their support also to the University libraries (e.g. fundraising of the SGH Warsaw School of Economics was targeted the destroyed library and digitalisation of the library resources of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv[14]). Committee of Academic Publishers under CRASP initiated a meeting with Ukrainian library and academic publishing community that was held on 29th March, 2022[15]. Together with the Ukrainian colleagues, the list of recommendations and proposals was formed, that could be developed under different frameworks and in different contexts, including the need to create a common digital platform/electronic library to provide access to scientific books, journals, academic textbooks of Ukrainian and Polish universities - in open access or on terms beneficial to Ukrainian students and researchers to support teaching and learning process for Ukrainian students and academics both in Poland and Ukraine; organisation of joint webinars, training for scientific editors, staff of academic publishers from Ukraine and Poland; to initiate library support programmes in cooperation between academic libraries of Ukraine and Poland (including repositories). In order to make books available in Ukrainian, the overdrive platform can be used, as well as allowing the Polish side to use e-book platforms (e.g. the Librarius platform, which can serve as a common platform after further development)[16].

Polish Chamber of Books reported three areas of activity[17]: 1) material aid, computers, equipment, etc., to continue activity of publishers and libraries and raising funds for the individual representatives of the Ukrainian professional community; 2) looking for resources for dissemination of Ukrainian literature, the translation of publications about Ukrainian culture of history, as a response to the dominance of the Russian narrative in the Western academic world; 3) support of networking among publishers, training[18], skills development, participation of Ukrainian publishers as

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[13] Lis J., Koordynacja działań związanych z sytuacją w Ukrainie, KRASP, 27 października 2023 r., https://www.krasp.org.pl/files/public/prezentacje%20ZP/JLis.pdf

[14] https://gazeta.sgh.waw.pl/sgh-dla-ukrainy-pomoc-sgh-dla-kijowskiego-narodowego-uniwersytetu-knu-im-tarasa-szewczenki

[15] Minutes of the meeting, internal resources.

16 Ibidem. The authors are not aware, whether these recommendations.

17 Minutes of the meeting of the Committee of Academic Publishers under CRASP.

18 https://whova.com/web/TnWNpmx@0XFs-4pSD9eGZ-KC4mli63bDAaefeNv8ogA=/Agenda/

Guests of Honour at the International Book Fairs in Warsaw[19], webinars. Current state of the publishing, book and library branch is being monitored within the SUPPR initiative[20].

Academic libraries as a space to support University support activities for refugees

Activities initiated and done by Polish academic libraries can be seen through 4 domains, according to Antczak, Gruszka (2023)[21]: institutional (including communication and management), social (including education and acclimatisation of the refugees), physical (including provision of physical space, infrastructure and access to collections) and economic dimensions.

Based on the case-analysis, Polish university libraries being an integral part of the academic institutions offered their help to incoming refugees, both academic and non-academic by acting as:

Library as a shelter, a humanitarian hub, welcome point for refugees, e.g. Library of the Warsaw University of Life Sciences SGGW was the main hub for collections and main point for helping refugees[22]. Nicoalus Copernicus University Library acted as a humanitarian organisation and helped their partners – libraries from Ukraine, by organising numerous collections of different items, goods, clothes, food, medicine, etc.[23]

Library as a crisis management hub, e.g. UMK Library reaction to the refugee crisis was systemic and comprehensive, they contributed to the crisis management on **the university level** being a member of the University crisis management team.

Library as a space for cultural events to express solidarity with Ukraine or raise funds, e.g. virtual exhibition of photos of the professor expressing

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[19] https://targiksiazkiwarszawa.pl/gosc-honorowy-ukraina/
[20] https://ceupress.com/sites/ceupress.ceu.edu/files/attachment/basicpage/2931/suprrreport2023.pdf
[21] Antczak M., Gruszka Z. (2023), Library model of community resilience during the war. Activities of selected Polish academic libraries addressed to Ukrainians, [in:] The Journal of Academic Librarianship 49 (2023) 102752
[22] https://www.sggw.edu.pl/%d1%8f%d0%ba-sggw-%d0%bf%d1%96%d0%b4%d1%82%d1%80%d0%b8%d0%bc%d1%83%d1%94-%d1%83%d0%ba%d1%80%d0%b0%d1%97%d0%bd%d1%83/
[23] https://www.facebook.com/bu.torun/posts/7749741328384916

solidarity with Ukraine[24], Ukrainian Concert in the SGH University Library[25].

Library as a refugees' child care and youth intercultural space: University libraries may have modern space design, including recreation and entertainment zones, which were opened for the Ukrainian refugees, and library staff was involved in providing care for children and youth (e.g. UMK).

Library as a contact and information point: distribution of information (reliable information for refugees), possibility to scan, print documents or access the internet.

Library as a training center: University libraries offered the possibility to organise courses for Ukrainian refugees, children and youth

Library as books and textbooks delivery: academic libraries also did a donation of the Polish textbooks for the Ukrainian schoolchildren enrolled in the Polish schools as refugees, e.g. UMK Library and University authorities delivered textbooks on Polish as a foreign language to the schools in Torun; Library of the Wrocław University collected the artistic items and books for children in Ukrainian language for Ukrainian refugees.

Academic Libraries supporting Ukrainian academic refugees

Academic libraries could support Ukrainian refugees, students and staff by expanding their services or initiating new:

– Access to the university library for the Ukrainian refugees and access to the library resources for the students of Ukrainian universities, including those supported by the University, e.g. Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, University of Warsaw, etc. Access to the library allowed Ukrainian students who remained to be students of their home universities, to continue their studies or providing classes (for the teachers) or doing research (for researchers and PhDs), e.g. places for quiet work with individual computers in Economic University in Katowice[26]

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[24] Warsaw University of Technology, https://www.elka.pw.edu.pl/Przydatne-informacje/Materialy-dla-Mediow/Galerie2/Wydarzenia/Solidarni-z-Ukraina-w-Warszawie-wystawa-wirtualna-w-Czytelni-Cyfrowej-w-Bibliotece-WEiTI-PW-Solidarni-z-Ukraina-w-Warszawie

[25] https://gazeta.sgh.waw.pl/sgh-dla-ukrainy/sukces-pierwszej-edycji-sgh-ukrainian-week

[26] https://www.ue.katowice.pl/solidarni-z-ukraina/przestrzen-z-kacikiem-zabaw-dla-dzieci-i-

– Ukrainian language interface and website information in the Library, e.g. Silesian Academic Library CINIBA[27]

– Organising of training activities and language courses, e.g. Library of the University of Warsaw organised free Polish language courses for refugees and provided the possibility to use library platforms and e-resources for language learning, also for students and staff from Ukraine.

– Initiating information projects: fake news recognition, disinformation campaigns organised by academic libraries. University Libraries could collect, exhibit or disseminate scientific collections related to the Russia-Ukrainian war[28]. Similar catalogisation projects were provided by the Polish public libraries[29]

– Organising dedicated collection of books and scientific journals for the libraries of their Ukrainian academic partners, e.g. Library of the Warsaw Medical University collected ar. 1000 books and scientific journals and sent to Ukrainian universities[30]. University libraries organised book fairs as a whole but also by the libraries at the University departments: e.g. Book Fair 'Brick for Ukraine' was organised by the faculty libraries of UAM to raise donations to help families from Ukraine.

– Library as research institutions organised conferences or conduct studies on Ukraine and engage Ukrainian professionals and refugees[31]

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stanowiskami-komputerowymi.html

[27] https://ciniba.edu.pl/

[28] https://bg.ug.edu.pl/news/110507/brill-publishing-dostep-do-materialow-dotyczacych-ukrainy, https://bc.umcs.pl/dlibra/metadatasearch?action=AdvancedSearchAction&type=-3&val1=Subject:%22Ukraina%22

[29] https://wbpg.org.pl/dla-bibliotekarzy/szkolenia/lista-szkolen/szkolenia-zrealizowane-w-2022-r/dzialania-bibliotek-na-rzecz-spolecznosci-ukrainskiej-uchodzcow-z-ukrainy/

[30] https://www.facebook.com/BGWUM/photos/a.219904704840759/2704805849683953/?type=3

[31] https://www.sbp.pl/serwis-informacyjny/wszystkie/miedzynarodowe-forum-bezpieczne-zbiory-bezpieczne-dziedzictwo-muzea-biblioteki-archiwa-w-obliczu-zagrozen?highlight=WyJ1a3JhaW55Il0= or https://www.sbp.pl/co-robimy/konferencje/konferencja-wyzwania-wspolczesnych-bibliotek-27-28-marca-2023?highlight=WyJ1a3JhaW55Il0=

Summing it up, all these activities are extremely important, because Ukrainian libraries, also academic libraries with the valuable archives can become the targets of the Russian attacks, moreover behaviour of the Russian administration on the occupied territories shows that books, especially academic books from social sciences and humanities, are burnt immediately[32]. The book as an element for building Ukrainian cultural identity and cultural heritage must be protected, and Polish Universities and their libraries do their best to contribute to their protection, restoration and digitalisation. In Poland they became centres of cultural, educational and community integration of Ukrainian refugees and places of renewal of their academic life.

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[32] https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/jun/30/erasing-who-we-are-russias-deadly-attack-on-a-ukrainian-book-factory

Conclusions

Academic libraries follow the aim to serve as niches of social cohesion within educational institutions. By embracing their role as inclusive, engaging, and supportive environments, they contribute significantly to the social fabric of their communities. Strategic initiatives that prioritise inclusivity, community engagement, and access to information can enable libraries to continue fostering social cohesion in the digital age (Antczak, Gruszka, 2023). Events, workshops, and other social actions by libraries can provide critical opportunities for students, faculty, and community members to engage in meaningful dialogues. Libraries can enable interactions that might not happen elsewhere on campus, promoting cultural exchange and collaborative learning. This active engagement fosters a stronger, more connected community, where diverse ideas and perspectives can flourish.

Psychological support events, such as stress-relief workshops and mental health awareness sessions, can be crucial in addressing the well-being of the academic community. Workshops focused on resilience and coping strategies are instrumental in equipping individuals with the tools they need to navigate life's challenges. Reflecting on these events reveals their impact on personal development and community strength. Participants often leave these workshops with practical skills for managing stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues (Zubala et al., 2021). The communal learning environment can encourage sharing and mutual support, reinforcing the idea that no one is alone in their struggles (Koncz et al., 2021). This collective resilience can strengthen the social fabric of the library community, promoting a culture of support and solidarity.

Discussion events hosted by academic libraries can be pivotal in promoting dialogue and understanding among diverse groups. During these discussions, individuals from different backgrounds and disciplines come together to explore complex topics. The open and respectful environment of the library can encourage candid conversations and critical thinking. Participants often leave with a deeper understanding of others' viewpoints and a renewed appreciation for the diversity of thought within their community.

Art events, including exhibitions and creative workshops, can be powerful mediums for fostering social cohesion in academic libraries. These events

offer unique opportunities for individuals to express themselves and engage with others through the universal language of art and personal reflections often highlight the emotional and psychological impact of these events (Acomi et al., 2023). Engaging with art can be a deeply moving experience, providing a means of expression for those who may struggle to communicate their feelings through words. The inclusive and supportive atmosphere of the library during these events encouraged participants to explore and share their creativity, reinforcing the library's role as a nurturing space for personal and communal growth.

Reflecting on discussion, art, and psychological support events in academic libraries can show their significant role in promoting social cohesion. These events can create inclusive and engaging environments where individuals can connect, express themselves, and find support. The library's commitment to fostering dialogue, creativity, and well-being underscores its importance as a niche of social cohesion within the academic and broader community.

Recommendations

By implementing the strategies presented in the report, academic libraries can strengthen their role as vital centres of social cohesion and integration for refugees. In implementing this role, it is recommended for specific groups.

Here are some recommendations for university administration to support social cohesion for refugees:

- Develop and implement policy that promote inclusivity and diversity, ensuring refugees have equal access to university resources and opportunities.

- Establish a dedicated team to support refugee students, providing guidance on academic, financial, and emotional needs. The team can be located at the Library.

Recommendations for librarians who play a critical role in supporting refugees and promoting an inclusive and inclusive environment:

- Communication and collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders – researchers, teachers, administrators, citizens - is essential. Librarians can work with faculty to integrate library resources into coursework that addresses refugee issues, fostering a deeper understanding among all students. It is also important to work with local and international refugee organisations to better understand the needs of refugee students and identify areas for resource sharing and joint initiatives.

- Librarians can offer tailored workshops that focus on research skills, digital literacy, and effective use of library resources, specifically designed for refugee students.

- Librarians can participate in or offer training sessions on cultural competency to better understand and meet the needs of refugee populations.

- Librarians can create inviting spaces within the library where refugees can study, meet, and participate in community activities, promoting a sense of belonging.

- Librarians need actively seek feedback from refugee users to assess

their needs and improve library services, ensuring that they feel heard and included.

- Librarians can organise events, exhibits, or film screenings that highlight refugee stories and cultures, fostering awareness and dialogue among the library community. When organise the events it is very important to connect with the community and the target group for which the events are organised. Librarians need to involve them and make them co-organisers of the events.

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Dr Edita Štuopytė is an associate professor at the Faculty of Social, Humanities, and Arts of Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) and has a PhD in Educational Sciences. Her scientific activities in the educational field are the educational empowerment of socially sensitive persons (migrants, older people, children, etc.), adult education, and teachers' performance improvement. She is an active member of the Lithuanian Educational Research Association, which is also a member of the European Association for Educational Research. Edita Štuopytė has experience in implementing research and study projects: "Competence Development of Lithuanian and Ukrainian Public Sector Employees using Design-Thinking Methodology (PubCom-DT)" (period 2020-01-01 – 2022-12-31); EU Structural Funds - the pedagogical internship "Continue!" (the project is financed according to the measure 09.2.1-ESFA-V-727 "Improving the qualifications of teachers and other employees of the education system") period 2018-03-13 – 2022-12-31; Cost Action 18115 (TRIBES) "Transnational Collaboration on Bullying, Migration and Integration at School Level" project (period 2019-04- 01 – 2023-10-30).

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Lina Jonaityte works in Kaunas University of Technology, has a Bachelor's degree in social work and social rehabilitation, also Master's degree in Educology and cooperates in the implementation of Erasmus+ project AGILE: Higher education resilience in refugee crises: Forging social inclusion through capacity building, civic engagement, and skills recognition (period 2022-2025).

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Gintare Tautkeviciene is the Library Director at Kaunas University of Technology. She is also Associate Professor at the Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Humanities at Kaunas University of Technology and holds PhD in Educational Sciences. Her research interests include learning environment, academic libraries, scholarly communication and open access. She is the Chair of the Publishing Committee at Kaunas University of Technology and the Chair of the Management Board of the Consortium of Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library eLABa.

She has been involved in a number of research projects on scholarly communication and open science: OpenAIRE (2009-2012), OpenAIREplus (2011-2014), OpenAIRE2020 (2015-2018), OpenAIRE-Advance (2018-2021). She is an advocate of open science and serves as OpenAIRE NOAD (National Open Access Desk). She has been involved in Erasmus+ projects: AcSki (Development and implementation of a digital student preparatory course for developing academic skills and literacy practices) (2020-2023), LibOCS (University libraries strengthening the academia-society connection through citizen science in the Baltics) (2021-2024), AGILE (Higher education resilience in refugee crises: forging social inclusion through capacity building, civic engagement and skills recognition) (2022-2025), Baltics4UA (Supporting Ukraine through citizen engagement at Baltic Universities) (2023-2025).

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