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The role of cultural and linguistic mediators for Ukrainian migrants in Italy

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ABSTRACT

Italy faces substantial challenges regarding Ukrainian refugee integration because of the current migrant crisis which has brought thousands of Ukrainian refugees across its borders. The research offers a detailed comparison between Ukrainian and Russian migration by examining statistical data on population statistics and migration motivations as well as asylum procedures. The data reveals Ukrainian asylum seekers cause their departure from their homeland because of warfare combined with political oppression and economic turmoil but most Russian migrants search for safety alongside enhanced quality of life. The numerous Ukrainian asylum seekers require cultural and linguistic mediators who help them through legal procedures and social adaptation as well as psychological support. The research demonstrates why structured mediation programs in Italy need development because they serve as vital instruments for Ukrainian refugee successful integration into society. Improved services will boost their capacity to understand bureaucracy and access needed resources which leads to sustainable stability when seeking asylum in a new country.

Keywords: *Cultural médiators, Ukrainien migrants, Italy, social intégration, cultural translation, migration polices.*

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دور الوسطاء الثقافيين واللغويين في دعم المهاجرين الأوكرانيين بإيطاليا

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الملخص

اللاجئين الأوكرانيين عبر حدودها. تقدم هذه الدراسة مقارنة مفصلة بين الهجرة الأوكرانية والروسية من خلال تحليل البيانات الإحصائية حول التركيبة السكانية ودوافع الهجرة وإجراءات اللجوء. تكشف البيانات أن طالبي اللجوء الأوكرانيين يغادرون وطنهم بسبب الحرب والقمع السياسي والاضطرابات الاقتصادية، بينما يبحث معظم المهاجرين الروس عن الأمان وتحسين جودة الحياة. يتطلب العدد الكبير من طالبي اللجوء الأوكرانيين وساطة ثقافية ولغوية لمساعدتهم في الإجراءات القانونية والتكيف الاجتماعي والدعم النفسي. تبرز الدراسة الحاجة إلى تطوير برامج وساطة منظمة في إيطاليا كأدوات حيوية لدمج اللاجئين الأوكرانيين بنجاح في المجتمع. ستؤدي الخدمات المحسنة إلى تعزيز قدرتهم على فهم البيروقراطية والوصول إلى الموارد اللازمة، مما يؤدي إلى استقرار مستدام عند التقدم بطلب اللجوء في بلد جديد.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الوسطاء الثقافيون، المهاجرون الأوكرانيون، إيطاليا، الاندماج الاجتماعي، الترجمة الثقافية، سياسات الهجرة

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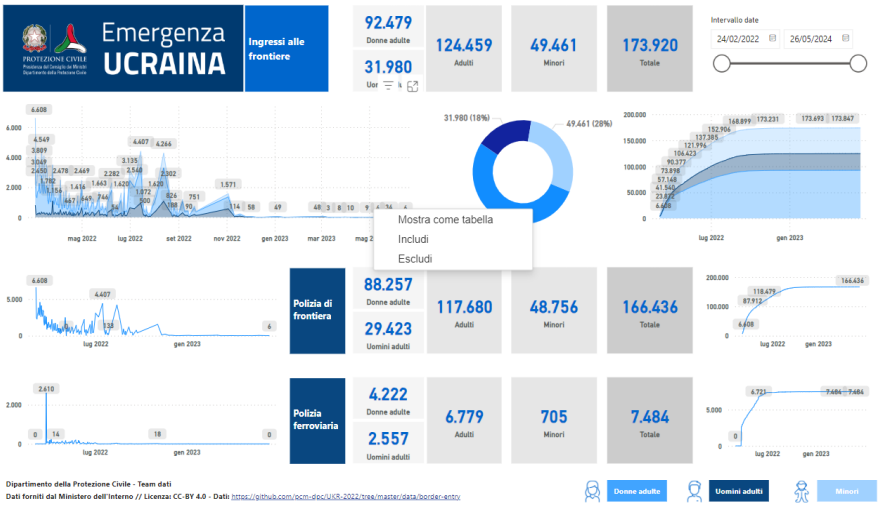
Introduction

Immigration issues are among the most prominent challenges facing modern societies. It contributes to shaping the cultural and social diversity of the receiving countries. In recent years. Italy has faced a significant increase in Ukrainian migration due to the military crisis in Ukraine that is currently ongoing (Olcese et al., 2024). Migrants immerse themselves in Italian society through their need for cultural and linguistic support as they aim to improve their lives and discover new opportunities (De Leo, Ceschi, & Mutti, 2024).

Migrants and host communities find essential points of contact through the work of cultural and linguistic mediators. Experts know the cultural norms between different peoples and speak those languages that allow for effective communication (Radicioni, 2024). Through their primary duties, mediators provide essential information as well as assistance to migrants on legal, educational and social matters. Migrants achieve adaptation in the new environment through professional mediators who demonstrate high levels of effectiveness (Lapov, 2023).

Figure 1: Refugees from Ukraine as of May 26, 2024



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The multiple difficulties that mediators face in their role include insufficient resources along with the cultural biases they encounter. This research requires investigating how mediators influence migrants' experiences and how to enhance support for them. The research aims to analyze Italian cultural and linguistic mediators who assist Ukrainian migrants by assessing the challenges they face as well as seeking opportunities that enhance their support capacities (Shelemei & Ruini, 2023). The research aims to generate guidance that strengthens migration policies while promoting productive socio-cultural adaptation.

1. **Roles of cultural and linguistic mediators for Ukrainian immigrants in Italy**

As a cultural mediator one serves as an expert in cultural understanding with specialized knowledge of social and gender issues who helps migrants beyond linguistic translation through legal assistance and psychological support and social integration practices (Baroni & Torresi, 2023). Migrants benefit from these experts who translate public institution communication and provide legal administrative help for asylum and residence paperwork (Shelemei & Ruini, 2023). The integration services also include psychological help for war-affected immigrants, and they use educational activities to assist migrants in connecting to new communities (Amato & Gallai, 2024). The Italian authorities together with NGOs introduced cultural mediators as part of their response to the Ukrainian refugee entry after the conflict started. Various organizations have launched multiple programs including "Milan City Initiative" that provides school and healthcare center support to refugees and Caritas Italy delivers support for legal and housing needs

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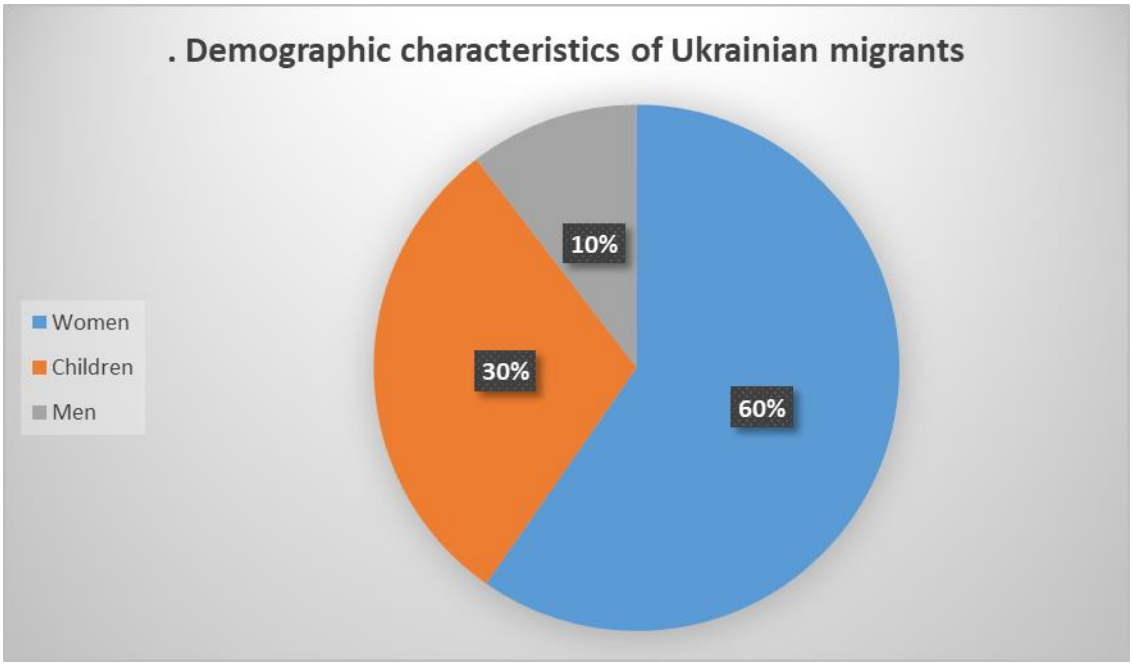
and conducts educational and health programs across Naples and Rome Statistics indicate that Ukrainian migrants in Italy surpass 134,000 people and they are mainly composed of women and children thus requiring community-based efforts for their effective integration process as presented in Table 1and Figure2 (Bolzoni et al., 2023).

Table 1: Demographic distribution of Ukrainian migrants in Italy (source: IOM**)**

Category	Number	Percentage
Total number of Ukrainian immigrants	134000	
Women	80000	59.7%
Children	40000	29.9%
Men	14000	10.4%

Figure2.: Demographic distribution of Ukrainian migrants in Italy (source: IOM)



2. literature reviews

Many previous studies have addressed the role of cultural and linguistic mediators supporting migrants because this academic topic proves to be

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of great importance in scientific literature. These mediators help migrants by conveying acceptance and integration in new countries while providing assistance against the barriers that migrants face in their transition between countries. These studies are essential for understanding how cultural and linguistic factors influence migrants' experience, as they highlight the importance of effective communication as a key tool for integration.

By analyzing these studies, the urgent need to fully understand the function of cultural and linguistic mediators in the situations of Ukrainian migrants in Italy emerges because this group requires particularly tailored support.

In this study, Girolami (2021) explored linguistic and cultural mediation in healthcare. The paper reviewed the role of interpreters in facilitating communication between healthcare providers and patients who speak different languages, emphasizing the importance of this mediation to ensure the provision of effective and comprehensive healthcare services. Challenges faced by interpreters include language and cultural gaps, time pressures, and the need to understand the cultural contexts relevant to patients. The study showed that available linguistic and cultural mediators significantly improve patients' personal experience and satisfaction with care. It also emphasized training interpreters in public health and local culture, which would add to their skills and performance.

As for recommendations, the study presented the need for specialized training programs for interpreters and increased collaboration in healthcare institutions to collaborate with interpreters for effective communication.

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The study suggested that more research is needed regarding the impact of cultural mediation on patient health outcomes, especially in multicultural contexts. She also called for studying how to enhance mediation strategies to meet the needs of the most vulnerable groups in society as a means of contributing to promoting health equity (Girolami, 2021).

The research by Olcese et al. (2024) investigated community belonging among Ukrainian refugee women residing in Italy throughout times of conflict. Research examined the lives and success of refugee women in establishing community interdependence after experiencing life-altering hardships. Through qualitative research methods the authors conducted interviews with refugee women to study their coping strategies and their community development of resilience when facing displacement challenges.

Ukrainian refugee women strengthened their feeling of belonging through creating robust support groups that provided them better ways to handle psychological and social trauma. Social support networks in the local community together with cultural initiatives enabled Ukrainian refugee women to feel more secure within their adopted environment.

The researchers proposed to implement dedicated support programs for refugee women that would facilitate better interactions between them and their local communities. The study emphasized the necessity of allowing refugee women to participate in policy development processes which affect migration and integration.

The study emphasized the necessity to study refugee women's multicultural life experiences which form their societal identity through

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more research. The understanding of women's specific challenges during conflict helps to build suitable support measures (Olcese et al., 2024).

Bolzoni et al.'s (2023) study investigated the harmful elements of solidarity support programs for Ukrainian refugees in Italian communities, which revealed discriminatory treatment between different refugee groups. The research conducted an analytical investigation to determine how feelings of solidarity evolved into discriminatory treatment, leading to an unequal distribution of support between Ukrainian refugees and refugees of different nationalities. This research used qualitative analytical techniques that collected interview data and field observation to study the difficulties of the host community.

Solidarity declarations typically include two sets of values because supporters show support for Ukrainian refugees while showing indifference towards other refugee groups. The analysis showed how this targeted support system maintains social barriers because people show limited control over the principles of social justice.

The study recommended two main actions, which include raising people's awareness of universal solidarity principles and encouraging support for the entire community, regardless of the nationality of the refugees. The study called on states to create migration policies that would protect asylum seekers through equality and justice. The research has raised an open research area where researchers should analyze the psychological and social forces that generate these contradictions as well as their impact on integration efforts. The research emphasized the need to study different refugees because this approach will help identify the global obstacles facing this population group (Bolzoni et al., 2023).

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Through his research Corbett (2021) studied mediation within intercultural language education to demonstrate how mediation improves communication and understanding among people in diverse learning environments. Research analyzed linguistic and cultural mediation elements which enable language acquisition through an investigation between scholarly works and existing practices.

The study results proved that mediation functions as a cultural process beyond language which enables students to better understand cultural distinctions, leading to improved intercultural skills during interaction. Students benefit from cultural mediators who enhance both their educational engagement and improve their classroom interactions according to the research results.

The study recommended that language education curricula should adopt mediation strategies together with training which enables teachers to develop stronger cultural mediation abilities. The plan required educational environments to build spaces where conversation and cultural relationship building can thrive.

According to the study researchers emphasized the necessity to conduct additional investigations about how mediation affects various educational settings that are diverse particularly through understanding its potential to boost learning achievements. The analysis proposed to study teacher and student perspectives about mediation practice in order to establish successful pedagogical methods (Corbett, 2021).

De Leo, Ceschi, and Mutti (2024) investigated the functions cultural mediators perform to unite institutions which offer assistance to refugees and forcibly displaced persons. The research used cultural mediator data

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to understand network development strategies between institutions that lead to superior service delivery and improved migrant care systems.

The examination proved cultural mediators provide essential support to service provider-displaced person communication since they deliver cultural and linguistic details which improve migrants' needs understanding. Throughout the research it became evident that effective institutional cooperation networks enhance quality service delivery while minimizing support disparities.

The study supported strengthening cultural mediation through training about efficient communication techniques along with the development of relationship-building competencies. The advisory proposed new policies for institution-to-institution collaboration that will help information exchange while sharing resources between different institutions.

According to the study researchers identified the necessity to conduct further investigations about cultural mediation effects throughout various service sectors including health and educational settings. The research proposed to examine better inter-institutional cooperation strategies for migrant needs alongside learning from cultural mediator experiences across various settings (De Leo, Ceschi, & Mutti, 2024).

Research Gap

The integration of Ukrainian migrants in Italy depends heavily on cultural and linguistic mediators yet research about their facilitation role remains scarce despite numerous studies of Ukrainian European migration and political conflict effects on refugees. Research about migration primarily

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examines legal and political dimensions while failing to investigate adequately how cultural and linguistic mediation boosts refugee settlement opportunities with host society. The failure to perform comparative research between Ukrainian and Russian migrants has blocked our ability to grasp their distinct requirements and determine what mediation must address between these populations.

3. Study Objectives

This study fills an academic void by exploring the necessity of cultural and linguistic mediation services which support Ukrainian migrants in their Italian integration process while delivering recommendations to better target refugee needs through policy improvements.

4. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

The research uses three principal theories which demonstrate how cultural and linguistic mediation influences refugee integration.

By applying Integration Theory (Berry, 1997) successful integration becomes achievable when people balance their cultural heritage with host culture adaptation. Through their integration of cultural and linguistic aspects Ukrainian refugees gain vital assistance from Italian mediators to access social and economic systems as well as protect their cultural heritage.

According to Gudykunst & Kim (1984) the effective exchange of information remains vital for individuals to adapt socially. Language facilitators help refugees talk to local organizations which results in better service access along with decreased communication confusion.

The Social Support Theory (Cohen & Wills, 1985) establishes that refugees experience substantial enhanced well-being when they receive

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both emotional support and information help. Refugees receive psychological help and procedural guidance from mediators who maintain a bridge function to help them experience reduced stress while improving their stability (Katan & Taibi, 2021).

Multiple theoretical concepts support the study's research Hypotheses as follows:

H1: Italian institutions underwent a positive change in their ability to integrate Ukrainian refugees when cultural and linguistic mediators became present.

H2: Access to asylum procedures together with social services and employment opportunities becomes better with effective linguistic mediation services.

H3: Ukrainian refugees face greater social isolation together with economic marginalization because cultural mediation services are not available to them.

H4: Ukrainian refugees require more linguistic and cultural mediators than Russian migrants because their migration patterns and legal challenges differ from each other.

5. Research Methodology

This study investigates government support policies for Ukrainian migrants in Italy through a comprehensive analysis of multiple data sources. Through a mixed methods design the study performs quantitative data analysis alongside qualitative evaluation to construct an all-encompassing view of different support measures (See Figure3).

I. Data Collection

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The International Organization for Migration (IOM) supplied the main research data utilized for this study regarding Ukrainian immigrants in Italy. The demographic profiles of migrants emerged from the IOM database indicating specific findings about age breakdowns together with both male and female populations alongside their social economic position. This information was obtained by reviewing official records together with reports from Italian government agencies and local institutions and humanitarian NGOs.

II. Data Analysis

Minitab along with Microsoft Excel software processes and analyzes the data to produce accurate statistical interpretations. The analysis included:

- Descriptive Statistics: Examining key demographic characteristics, such as frequency distribution of age and gender among Ukrainian migrants.
- The analysis identifies recurring trends in social incorporation efforts together with medical service delivery and educational assistance and legal guidance throughout periods of time.
- The Cultural Mediation Assessment evaluates how cultural mediation service organizations assist Ukrainian migrants to integrate into Italian society. This involved assessing the availability and effectiveness of language support programs, community engagement activities, and labor market inclusion initiatives.

III. Reliability and Validity

A comparison method was implemented between government-based information and independent reports from NGOs to verify data precision.

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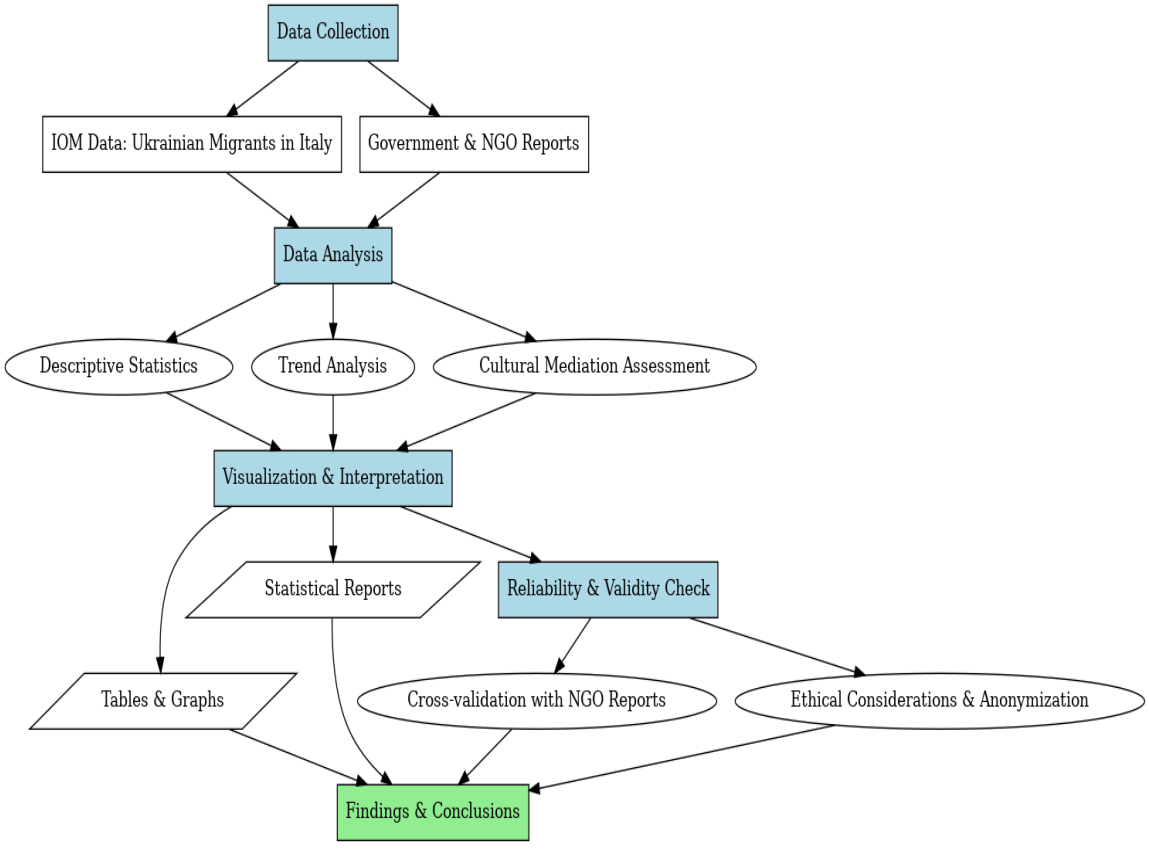
The study made use of triangulation methods to enhance the reliability of its results. The research followed ethical protocols by applying data protection standards and by anonymizing migrant personal information.

The research framework establishes a complete understanding of successful procedures which aid Ukrainian migrant social integration and well-being in Italy.

Figure3: Research Methodology



6. Results of the Study

Table 2 provides a breakdown of asylum applications filed by Ukrainians across various territorial commissions in Italy. The total number of applicants is 13,431, with significant variations across different regions.

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Some commissions processed a high number of applications, indicating differences in local policies, support infrastructure, and migrant settlement patterns.

Table 2: Asylum applications submitted by Ukrainians through various regional commissions in Italy

Territorial Commission	Number
National Commission	9
Ancona	618
Bari	213
Bologna	769
Bologna/Bologna 1	128
Bologna/Bologna Forli	838
Brescia	360
Cagliari	341
Caserta	1252
Catania	37
Crotone	920
Firenze	313
Firenze/Livorno	62
Firenze/Perugia	122
Foggia	355
Lecce	29
Milano	1516
Milano/Milano 2	274
Milano/Monza	213
Padova	339
Palermo	51
Palermo/Agrigento	5
Palermo/Trapani	9
Roma	968
Salerno	804
Salerno/Napoli	1010
Siracusa	24

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Torino	183
Torni/Genova	475
Torino/Novara	200
Torino/Torino 2	32
Trieste	202
Trieste/Udine	72
Verona	321
Treviso	239
Vicenza	128
Total	13431

The five urban centers of Milan and Caserta along with Salerno/Napoli and Crotone together with Rome collect 42.2% of total applications. The population density of Bologna and Salerno regions is medium which leads to 25.1% of applications requiring mediator involvement. Low-density regions (16.0%) still require support, but on a smaller scale. The very low-density areas demonstrate few applications which indicate that an extensive mediation program is not immediately vital. Migration centers should select cultural and linguistic mediators because most asylum seekers settle in main urban centers as presented in Table 3 and Figure3.

- Asylum hearings benefit from interpreter services that guarantee fair and transparent legal procedures take place.
- The population of asylum seekers remains high in Milan and Rome so psychological and social support plays a critical role in these areas.
- Refugees achieve integration easier through support that guides them through housing, employment and educational systems.
- The program instructs refugees about Italian law framework alongside employment opportunities and medical service benefits.

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The following recommendations derive from examined data points:

- The cities of Milan and Rome and Caserta should have their population of cultural and linguistic mediators increased.
- The establishment of local mediation services should extend to medium-density populations in Bologna and Salerno alongside other areas.
- The organization needs to create mobile mediation service teams which will operate temporarily in regions with low application levels to provide equal support.
- Asylum processing along with refugee integration needs better coordination between NGOs and governments to achieve maximum efficiency.

Table 3: Territorial Commissions and Total Applicants in each Categories

Category	Range (No. of Applications)	Territorial Commissions (Examples)	Total Applicants in Category	Percentage of Total (%)
High Application Regions	900+	Milan (1516), Caserta (1252), Salerno/Napoli (1010), Crotone (920), Rome (968)	5,666	42.20%
Medium Application Regions	300 - 899	Bologna (769), Salerno (804), Torino/Genova (475), Verona (321)	3,367	25.10%
Low Application Regions	100 - 299	Vicenza (128), Treviso (239), Trieste (202), Torino (183)	2,149	16.00%
Very Low Application Regions	Below 100	Palermo/Agrigento (5), Palermo/Trapani (9), Siracusa (24)	249	1.90%

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Figure4: Territorial Commissions and Total Applicants in each Categories

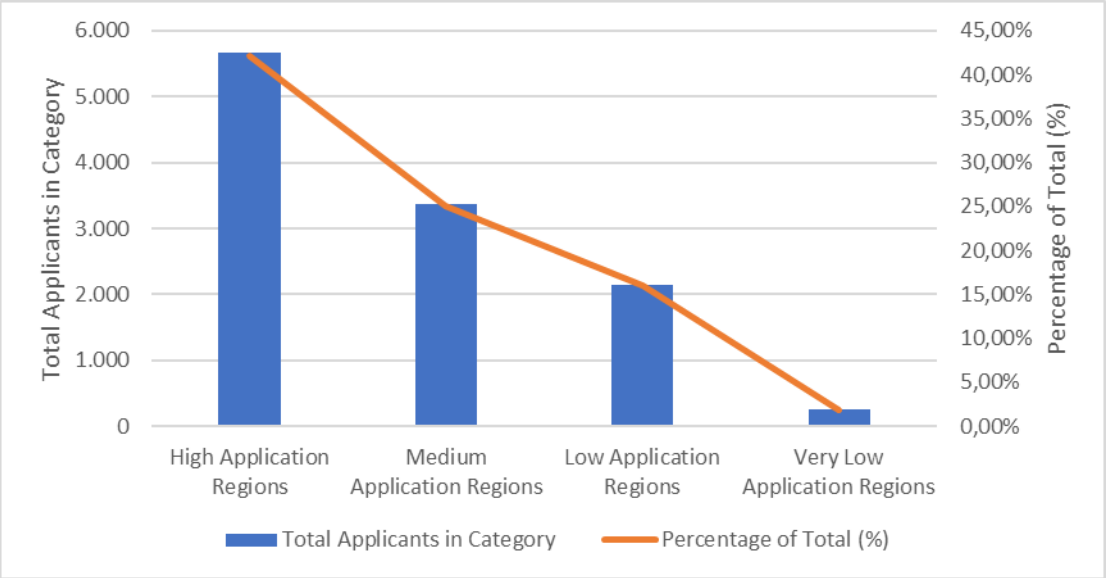

Table 4 presents analysis of asylum application results regarding Ukrainian asylum seekers in Italy from March 1, 2022, through February 15, 2023. Both the total applications numbered 13,450 and the approved decisions reached 1,314 during the indicated period.

Table 4: Results of the Ukrainian Asylum Seekers Committee in Italy

Decision	Registered	From Mar 2022 until Feb 2023
Refugee Status	355	47
Subsidiary Status	2253	1088
Rejection of an application for International Protection	2843	2
Humanitarian Protection	2357	5
Decision of inadmissibility	51	0
Decision on inadmissibility	0	0
Suspended for expulsion	2	2
Termination of proceedings	4	0
Suspended	0	0
Not considered	2	0
Transferred Dublin Unit	6	0
Non-EU	0	0

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Declaration of incompetence	6	0
Absent	0	0
Other	0	0
Special Protection ex art. 32, c.3 d.lgs.25/2008	232	51
Rejection for manifest groundlessness	91	0
Special Protection (exclusion cases)	3	3
Medical Treatment	7	1
Denial for exclusion	0	0
Special Protection (Art. 8 ECHR)	175	27
Applicant untraceable	16	0
Revocation of refugee status with granting of Humanitarian Protection	0	0
Revocation of Refugee Status	0	0
Revocation of Subsidiary Protection	0	0
Revocation of Humanitarian Protection granted by the National Commission	0	0
Confirmation of Refugee Status	1	0
Confirmation of Subsidiary Protection	4	1
Confirmation of Humanitarian Protection granted by the National Commission	0	3
Cessation of refugee status with the granting of Humanitarian Protection	0	0
Cessation of Subsidiary Protection wi the granting of Humanitarian Protection	1	0
Cessation of Refugee Status	0	0
Cessation of Subsidiary Protection	0	0
Cessation of Humanitarian Protection granted by the National Commission	0	0
Negative Absent	108	30
Rejection due to unavailability	248	43
Negative Sanitary	0	0
To be judged	1430	1
Cessation	0	0
Extension	0	0
Positive	0	0

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Withdrawal	3255	10
Revocation	0	0
Total	13450	1314

A total of 24.21% of applications received the highest number of withdrawals which indicates that either applicants decided to voluntarily depart Italy or filed applications elsewhere or failed to meet the required documentation. The process of rejecting asylum claims took up 21.14% of applications thus demonstrating substantial numbers of applicants did not qualify for international protection status. The analyzed time period revealed only two explicit rejections of applications amounting to 0.07% while formal procedures faced delays in rejection processes. Subsidiary Protection became the most prevalent form of protection which was granted to 16.75% of applicants. The grant rate of Humanitarian Protection (17.54%) exceeded Refugee Status awards (2.64%) suggesting that applicants needed protection though did not satisfy refugee status requirements. Special Protection along with other protection categories amounted to 3.09% of cases while 1,430 cases (10.63%) remained under assessment for determination.16 asylum seekers who could not be contacted made up the most instances of absent or untraceable applicants. Medical treatment cases showed that only 7 applications received approval while 1 grant decision was made in the time period.

Accordingly, Cultural and linguistic mediators serve as essential components for enhancing both asylum procedure efficiency as well as preventing unfair outcomes. For more a better method exists for asylum seekers to communicate with authorities.

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- Legal information provided to asylum seekers prevents them from withdrawing or being rejected through misinterpretation of information.
- The reduction of application errors serves to prevent delays and rejections from occurring.
- Applicants who deal with prolonged court processes can find comfort through the mental and psychological help available.

Figure5: Statistical Analysis of the Ukrainian Asylum Seekers Committee in Italy

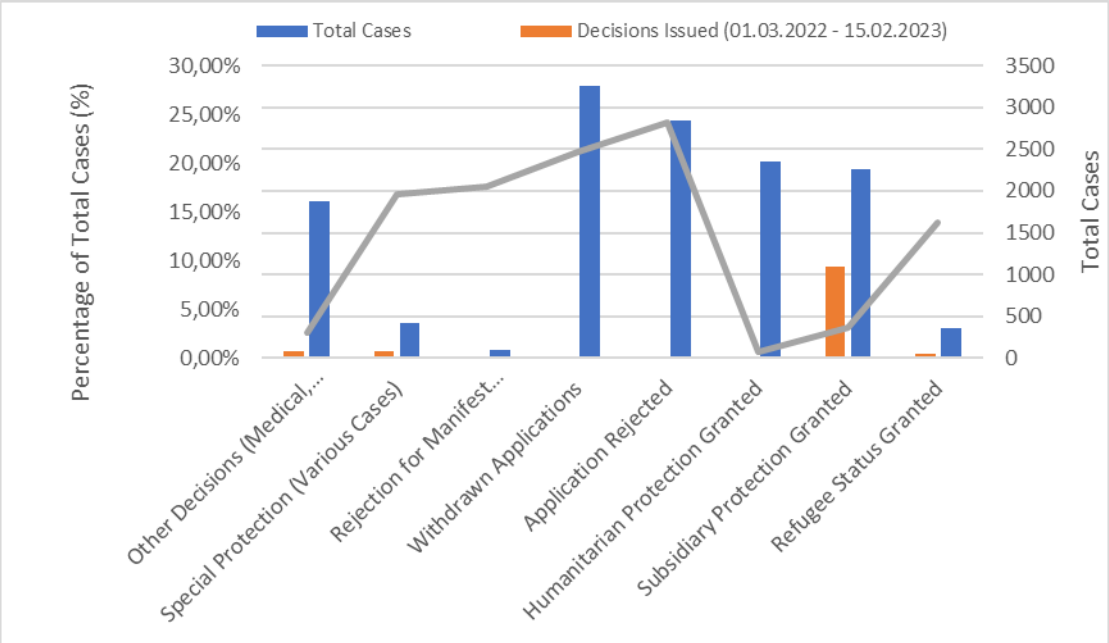

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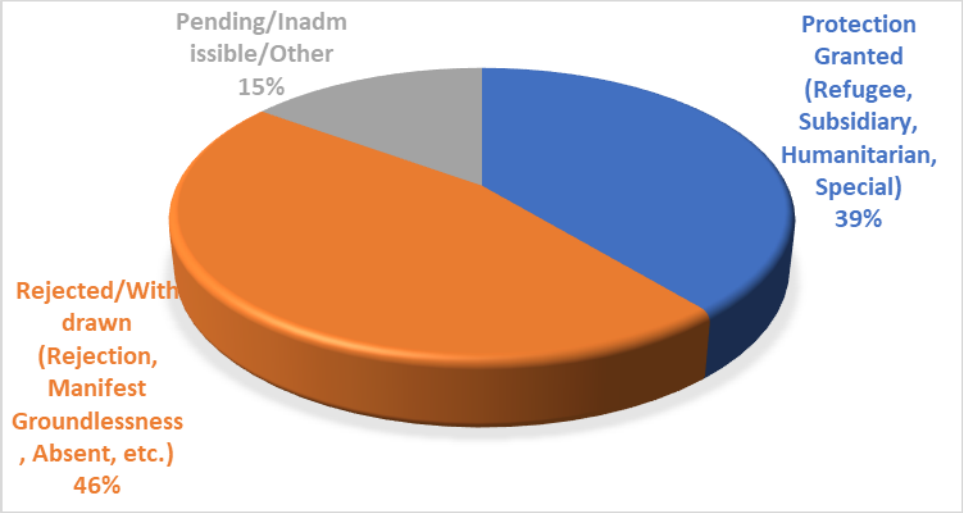
Figure 6: Decision Breakdown: Protection vs. Rejection for Total case



This dataset collected presents the distribution of Ukrainian refugees across European countries as of early 2023 as showing in Table 5. The data includes:

- Refugees registered for temporary protection
- Total number of refugees recorded in each country

The data from Poland together with Italy and Germany and Spain showed perfect correspondence between recorded and registered refugee numbers but the registered figures exceeded recorded numbers in cases like France alongside Cyprus and Georgia. Ukrainian refugees make up most refugees in Europe because Poland registers 1.55 million of them which amounts to 60 percent of all recorded cases in the region. Germany recorded a higher number of refugees than those officially registered, suggesting possible unregistered arrivals or secondary movements. Germany's 174,028 more recorded refugees than registered may indicate informal arrivals, asylum seekers outside the temporary protection framework, or delays in registration. Some countries only reported the

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total number of refugees without disclosing how many were officially under temporary protection schemes. Bosnia & Herzegovina hosts the least Ukrainian refugees (only 94), likely due to limited resources or its position outside the EU's primary migration corridors. Oland remains the primary destination for Ukrainian refugees (1.55 million). The two main European destinations for Ukrainian refugees consist of Poland and Germany along with specific countries like France and Cyprus and Georgia registering reduced refugee amounts under the temporary protection scheme.

Table 5: Number of Ukrainian refugees to Europe

Country	Data Date	Refugees from Ukraine registered for temporary protection or similar national protection schemes	Refugees from Ukraine recorded in country
Albania	31/01/2023	Not applicable	2,666
Armenia	31/01/2023	Not applicable	529
Austria	27/01/2023	Not applicable	56,072
Azerbaijan	31/01/2023	Not applicable	992
Belgium	20/01/2023	67,276	68,616
Bosnia & Herzegovina	31/01/2023	Not applicable	94
Croatia	27/01/2023	21,959	21,959
Cyprus	31/01/2023	21,136	12,596
Denmark	31/01/2023	38,798	39,636
Finland	31/01/2023	48,664	47,010
France	06/12/2022	116,094	41,760
Georgia	31/01/2023	Not applicable	26,085
Germany	31/01/2023	881,295	1,055,323
Greece	31/01/2023	20,819	28,099
Hungary	31/01/2023	31,089	31,089
Iceland	31/01/2023	2,374	2,374
Ireland	24/01/2023	74,489	77,700
Italy	19/01/2023	169,179	169,179
Latvia	24/01/2023	42,713	42,713
Lithuania	31/01/2023	71,139	71,139
Luxembourg	31/01/2023	6,824	6,824
Malta	31/01/2023	730	730

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Montenegro	31/01/2023	Not applicable	6,704
Netherlands	26/01/2023	89,734	89,734
North Macedonia	31/01/2023	Not applicable	6,129
Norway	31/01/2023	51,620	51,619
Poland	31/01/2023	1,553,515	1,553,515
Portugal	31/01/2023	56,820	56,820
Serbia & Kosovo: S/RES/1244	19/01/2023	Not applicable	1,064
Slovenia	29/01/2023	8,645	8,645
Spain	16/01/2023	168,654	168,654
Sweden	24/01/2023	51,015	51,015
Switzerland	29/01/2023	66,394	66,394
Turkey	31/01/2023	40,589	40,589
United Kingdom	22/01/2023	160,600	160,600
Total	-	**2,245,640**	**2,578,804**

7. Discussion

Many Ukrainians have fled their country due to the war and arrived in Italy through various routes, including by bus and train through other countries such as Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Romania, Macedonia, and Moldova. Some have been in Italy for up to 10 months. Despite the welcoming attitude of Italians towards the Ukrainian refugees, there have been some challenges. Many refugees report that they have not received pocket money on time, that is supposed to be provided to them by law. They have also had difficulty obtaining bus passes, identification cards, and opening bank accounts. The process of obtaining these documents has been slow and confusing.

Overall, the situation of Ukrainians in Italy is one of uncertainty and difficulty. While they are grateful for the warm welcome, they have received from Italians, the insufficient support and assistance has made their transition to life in challenging. According to figures from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 18.3 million people

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have crossed Ukraine's borders since the start of the Russian attack on it in February 2022, and the majority of them have requested asylum in neighboring countries. The latest statistics confirm that 9 million 464 thousand 510 crossed the border towards Poland, while 1 million 935 thousand 902 crossed it towards Romania, 2 million 852 thousand 395 towards Russia, and 2 million 182thousand 519 towards Hungary, while 1 million 162 thousand 862 headed towards Slovakia, and sought refuge. 765 thousand and 11 went to Moldova, while 16 thousand and 705 went to Belarus. The majority of the refugees were women and children, given that the Kiev authorities required males between the ages of 18 and 60 to remain in Ukraine to take part in the fighting.

On the other hand, this analysis of migration reasons between Ukraine and Russia shows Ukrainian and Russian immigrants differ substantially in their migration backgrounds and integration issues particularly regarding cultural and linguistic care in Italy as presented in Table 6. The main drivers behind Ukrainian refugee migration consist of political oppression together with civil unrest and economic hardship but Russian immigrants migrate because of civil unrest and feel unsafe and want better economic prospects. A substantial number of Ukrainian refugees entering Italy demands extended public assistance for legal services along with psychological and social programs. Italian society depends on mediators to help Ukrainian refugees deal with language differences as the professionals guide them through asylum applications and help them adjust to the local culture and begin coping with post-trauma issues. Due to greater obstacles Ukrainian migrants experience compared to Russians structured mediation programs should be implemented for their

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successful integration. Enhancing these services both legally and socially will enhance Ukrainian refugees' integration process when they enter their new environment.

Table 6. Analysis of the reasons for migration to Ukraine and Russia

country	name	sex	age	Reason for migration
Ukraine	Ivan	female	30	Fleeing political discrimination
	Katrina	male	28	Unaccompanied minor fleeing domestic violence and seeking protection
	True	female	29	Fleeing Political Discrimination and Seeking Freedom
	Olena	male	17	Seeking better living conditions and economic opportunities
	Ivan	male	29	Escaping the ongoing armed conflict in eastern Ukraine
	Olga	female	26	Seeking asylum due to political persecution
	True	male	31	Fleeing ethnic discrimination in his region
	Maria	female	27	Seeking safety from gender-based violence
Russia	Dmitry	male	26	Fleeing civil war and insecurity
	Elena	female	25	Fleeing Political Discrimination and Seeking Freedom
	Ivan	male	27	Seeking better living conditions and economic opportunities
	Maria	female	16	Fleeing civil war and insecurity

8. Conclusion

The cultural and linguistic mediators prove fundamental for Ukrainian migrant integration in Italy through communication support and essential service access. The research examined Ukrainian migrant integration through demographic assessment and policy evaluation of social assimilation together with legal aid and education along with healthcare provisions.

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Cultural mediators enable migrants to gain control over bureaucratic processes as well as to understand their rights and full societal participation. These services together with language training and work placement and emotional support create a valuable network of support which benefits migrants both short-term and long-term. Government institutions working together with humanitarian organizations have proven essential for improving the operational strength of mediation services.

Mediation services require additional standardized training programs together with greater appreciation for mediators' tasks and additional financial support to expand their initiatives. Future investigations need to study the extended benefits of cross-cultural mediation services together with new methods to boost their success in assisting migrant communities. By strengthening these efforts Italian society will promote social cohesion as Ukrainian migrants continue to transition into the country.

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