Being together through ICTs

Transnational family practices in the context of Ukrainian forced migration

Lara Sánchez Gil
ABSTRACT

According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR, 2023), some 117.2 million people will be forcibly displaced or stateless by 2023. In this scenario, a large number of families will have to be reconfigured within a transnational setting. The ways in which they maintain their familiar ties and their feeling of being close despite the distance is worth further research. Since the Russian full-scale invasion, several countries in the European Union provided temporary protection for the first time to those arriving, who were mainly females with some of their relatives. The demographic reality of this displacement and the novelty of temporary protection open up a fruitful context to address family maintenance. This thesis explores how Ukrainian females who sought temporary protection in Burgos (Spain) have experienced the ties to their families across distance, delving in their meanings of being together, their practices of co-presence and the role of ICTs in them.

KEYWORDS: Ukrainian narratives, transnational living, co-presence, family practices, information and communication technologies (ICTs), and Spain.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACCEM</td>
<td>Spanish Catholic Migration Commission Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>CREADE</td>
<td>Reception, Attention and Referral Centers</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>EUROSAT</td>
<td>Statistical Office of the European Union</td>
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<td>ICTs</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technologies</td>
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<td>INE</td>
<td>National Statistical Institute</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>OAR</td>
<td>Asylum and Refugee Office</td>
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<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organisation for Migration</td>
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<td>TPD</td>
<td>Temporary Protection Directive</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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1 INTRODUCTION

As a result of the Russian full-scale invasion of 24 February 2022, around 8.2 million forced migrants from Ukraine have been registered across Europe based on United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2023). Approximately 1 million of these people have returned to their country of origin, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2023). Those who still remain in the host countries represent human beings who are experiencing the physical breakdown of the family. In this particular case, the imposition of martial law in Ukraine has keep Ukrainian male citizens away from crossing borders with their families. It has led to an inflow of Ukrainian forced migrants mostly consisting of young women and children (Kohlenberger et al., 2022).

In what in the first weeks of the war seemed like a conflict with an end date, more than a year later, families have been separated in a context of uncertainty about when they will be together again. According to the UNHCR report that examined the intentions and perspectives of refugees from Ukraine, the desire to go back to their home country and reunite with family members are the main reasons to plan a return soon (UNHCR, 2022). Certainly, this situation of absence, distance, and separation between family members arises the question regarding how these people remain together despite the distance.

Researchers of migration studies argue that forced migration has visible impacts on family structures in many parts of the world. The separation caused by migration and the exploration of how migrants cope with this new reality has been analysed by many scholars (Schmidt, Bhuyan and Lash, 2022; Shapiro, 2022; Tay et al., 2015). The deprivation of proximity to family and social networks has turned the information and communication technologies (ICTs) into a place where intimate connections with family and friends in the country of origin are granted (Masiero and von Deden, 2022).

The use of ICTs in the migrants' everyday lives becomes a turning point between the home and host countries. It highlights the importance of examining these practices in migration studies. While physical presence has been considered one of the core elements of maintaining transnational family ties and bonds, the emergence of new technologies has changed the modus operandi of doing and being a family beyond borders. According to Baldassar et al. (2016), the physical body is no longer conceived as the only channel
of presence, proximity, and emotional connection because it can be performed by ICTs through “virtual co-presence” (Baldassar et al., 2016: 137).

Naturally, the majority of those forced migrants moved to the countries that immediately border Ukraine (such as Poland, Germany and Russian Federation). Yet, people who have connections with friends, family members or acquaintances in other further away countries moved to join the existing Ukrainian diasporas, creating a bigger distance between themselves and their families back at home. Spain is one of these countries. According the Spanish Asylum and Refugee Office (OAR), 175,000 Ukrainian citizens from March 2022 to May 2023 sought for Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) in Spain (Ministerio del Interior, 2023).

After the implementation of the TPD, Ukrainian forced migrants find themselves in a particular legal and socio-geographical space which allows for travelling and visiting of the family. In that sense, their ability to combine co-presence through physical context and virtual is a very different one when compared to many other forced migrant groups in European Union (such as refugees and asylum seekers). Furthermore, the geographical distance between Spain and Ukraine hinders the possibilities of a physical reunion of these families. Many aspects of how families separated across borders feel about this forced separation and what they do in this situation are nevertheless yet to be investigated (Tiilikainen et al., 2023).

Taking this into consideration, an exploration of how Ukrainian female forced migrants who arrived to Spain, maintain the contact with their transnational families sheds light on the interplay of co-presence practices and the use of ICTs. With that said, the thesis is highly significant for the Spanish national context, as it will enhance our understanding of the nuances and challenges that Ukrainian families experience daily in maintaining their families across borders. It is expected that this study will bring both conceptual and empirical insights to the area of co-presence in forced migration studies.
1.1 AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTION
This case study aims to explore how Ukrainian female forced migrants in Spain use ICTs in the contact with their transnational families.

Given the exploratory nature of this research, this study aims to answer the following questions by focusing on Ukrainian female forced migrant who are beneficiary of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) in Spain:

- How have they perceived the process of maintaining the family relationship transnationally?

- What kind of co-presence practices do they engage in?

- What role do ICTs play in Co-presence practices?

1.2 DELIMITATIONS
This thesis focusses exclusively on Ukrainian female forced migrants who arrived to Spain after February 24, 2022. This decision is taken because it is mostly female who have had to flee Ukraine and who experience a new reality in the host country while maintaining their families in the country of origin. I have decided to delimit the case to a national border, in particular the city of Burgos, in order to guarantee that the interviewees are subject to the same social, cultural and legal framework. Moreover, the fact that they are all located at the same distance from their country of origin is an influential variable in the study of this thesis in terms of analysing the different types of co-presence practices.

An additional delimitation is the understanding of family in this research. In this thesis the concept of family extends the relation of the nuclear family. It implies a broader picture of family practices involving and recognizing the relation and connections between grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles. This choice helps to understand the importance of family ties in the maintain of the family unit. Furthermore, it seeks to understand family co-presence practices as an open, flexible and dynamic process of doing family.
1.3 TERMINOLOGY

- Forced migrants: this term usually refers to refugees, internally displaced persons and asylum seekers (Palattiyil et al., 2022). In this thesis, I use the term forced migrant to avoid the categorization surrounding the 'refugee label', either in the form of official residence status or as a general categorization (Hunkler et al., 2022: 4839). As I focus on Ukrainian female who received protection under the TPD in Spain.

- Transnational family: is used to describe families that most of the time live apart from each other and nevertheless “stay together and create something that can be considered a sense of collective well-being and unity, namely familyhood, even between national borders” (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002: 18). The families participating in the study themselves define who is part of the family (nuclear or extended) and these may include members living in Ukraine or other countries.

- Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs): information, technology, and communication define ICTs. These three words are a combination of technological tools such as digital and electronic devices (internet, mobile devices, computer, radio, or television). In this research, when it comes to ICTs, the focus is generally on the potential role of the Internet by telephone.

- Applications (Apps): in this thesis the use of apps refers to cross-platform free messaging applications such as Viber, Telegram, WhatsApp and Instagram. These types of applications enable users to send text messages, voice and video calls, multi-media files and be part of interactive group chats. These mobile applications use Internet connection through mobile data or Wi-Fi.
1.4 DISSERTATION STRUCTURE

After a brief terminological note, the next section of the thesis provides the background to situate the Ukrainian migration context after the large-scale Russian invasion. It also places this migration phenomenon in the Spanish national context. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework. Although it is not conventional to present the theoretical framework before the literature review, in this case it will be useful to understand the information presented in the literature review. Chapter 4 discusses previous relevant literature for undertaking transnational families, co-presence and the use of ICTs in the reality of forced migration in its broader context. The literature review concludes with a presentation of the gaps identified and my intended contribution. The fifth section introduces the methodology used in this thesis. It presents my philosophical stance, my positionality and reflexivity and the methods used. Additionally, it provides a detailed description of the semi-structured interviews, the profile of the interviewees and how the interviews were conducted. This chapter also describes the ethical considerations that were taken into account in this thesis. Chapter 7 presents and analyses the data collected through the 8 interviews conducted in Burgos (Spain). In this part the main core findings are analysed through the theoretical concepts described in chapter 3.

The analysis is divided into three parts: the first part answers the first research question as it collects the respondents' perceptions on the maintenance of family relationships transnationally. The second part explores the respondents' own definitions of being together. This leads in the third part to an analysis of the types of co-presence they engage in a context of family separation. This third part answers the second and third research question. Finally, the conclusion of the results and orientations for future research are presented.
2 BACKGROUND

2.1 FROM WAR TO EXILE: THE UKRAINIAN EXPERIENCE

On 24 February 2022, following the Russian full-scale invasion on Ukrainian territory, a war began and is still ongoing as of this writing. It has triggered the largest movement of refugees since the Second World War according to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR, 2022). This conflict has resulted in a humanitarian emergency with millions of civilians having been forced to move within the country and beyond Ukraine’s borders (see figure 1).

![Figure 1: Refugees, asylum seekers and other people in need of international protection by country of origin](chart)

On March 2022, due to the Ukrainian refugee emergency, the European Commission proposed to activate the EU Temporary Protection Directive (TPD). The aim was to protect displaced people who were coming from Ukraine and decrease the pressure on the asylum system. The Temporary Protection Directive (2001/55/CE) was adopted in 2001 but it had never been applied before. After the implementation, it has proved to be an effective solution to massive influxes of refugee arrivals to the EU, particularly at the initial stage (Parusel and Varfolomieieva, 2022). The individual EU member states are allowed to define their specific conditions, in line with the minimum requirements defined by the directive. In the specific case of Spain, the rights guaranteed to beneficiaries of temporary protection are: “freedom of movement and residence in Spain;
family reunification; administrative authorization to work; the possibility of applying for international protection; social assistance: for beneficiaries that do not have sufficient resources, and reception on national territory” (Ministerio del Interior, 2022).

If we count the number of refugees from Ukraine registered for Temporary Protection or similar national protection schemes in Europe, the number sums up to 5,027,182 in the month of April (UNHCR, 2023). This figure includes registrations in different European countries, but it can also contain incomplete applications or registrations of people who have moved within countries. Of those who have fled the country, it is estimated that 90% per cent are women and children (IOM, 2023).

At the end of March, according to data provided by the Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT, 2023), the proportion of adult females between 18 and 64 years of age represented 46.7% of the beneficiaries of temporary protection. Males within the same age group constituted an 18% and the number of children between 17-14 years and under 14 years represented about 35.3 %. The low number of males in the statistics is explained by the imposition of martial law in Ukraine. It prohibits Ukrainian male citizens between the ages of 18 and 60 from travelling abroad. However, there are some exceptions for those who have 3 or more children under eighteen years, people with disabilities, single parents or males who provide care for family members in need. Other examples include specific categories such as drivers engaged in international cargo transportation or humanitarian aid, who are allowed to cross the border, as provided by the law (Ukrainian Government, 2023).

This legal restriction has created a particular scenario in which we assist to the breakdown of nuclear family, where women with their children, in company of other family members or just by themselves have crossed borders or moved to a bordering territory inside the country.
The migration flow from Ukraine to neighboring countries and European territory has been evolving since the first months of the war until today (see figure 2). Countries such as Moldova, Romania or Slovakia have become over time mainly transit territories and Poland, Germany and the Russian Federation have been the countries where the major refugee flow has stayed. In the first phase of the conflict, the support of the Ukrainian diaspora in Poland, Germany, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Spain and Italy facilitated the relocation of a large number of families across the European Union (Kjeøy and Tyldum, 2022).

2.2 A NEW HOME AWAY FROM WAR: THE CASE OF SPAIN

Spain has traditionally been a receiving country for migrants from Schengen and non-Schengen areas, such as Latin America, Africa and other European countries. In the case of the Ukrainian population, their presence and migratory history was a reality prior to the Russian full-scale invasion. According to the Spanish National Statistical Institute (INE), Romanian, Bulgarian and Ukrainian migrants represent the largest community residing in Spain among migrants from Central and Eastern Europe (INE, 2022).

Before the Russian invasion, the registered Ukrainian population in Spain stood at 110,977 (57% female and 47.3% male), from which 96,687 had a residence permit (INE,
By the end of 2022, Ukrainians registered in the census numbered 193,292 (61.5% female and 38.5% male), among who 157,180 had residence permit (INE, 2022). These data reflect the inflow of Ukrainian citizens in Spain after the Russian full-scale invasion in Ukraine. According to the Asylum and Refugee Office (OAR), 175,000 Ukrainian citizens from March 2022 to May 2023 sought for temporary protection in Spain (Ministerio del Interior, 2023). The case of Spain differs from other European Countries because of the scope of temporary protection. Apart from Ukrainian nationals, it includes people of other nationalities or stateless persons who were legally residing in Ukraine before 24 February 2022, as well as Ukrainian citizens who were already in Spain, both as a temporary situation or as irregular residents, and could not go back to their country due to the conflict (Ministerio del Interior, 2022). The implementation of the Temporary Protection Directive has presented a challenge to the Spanish Reception System, which had already collapsed previously (Gonzalez, 2022). Thus, in order to overcome it, the very initial response to the humanitarian emergency was supported by civil solidarity initiatives, diasporic social networks, private entities, and cooperation between public entities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), who have been able to provide a swift intervention (Revesado, 2023).

However, a part of the Ukrainian population that has arrived in Spain lacks economic resources. In this situation, the Spanish Reception System “Sistema de Acogida Español” guarantees the right to the necessary reception conditions in order to ensure the satisfaction of their basic needs. The beneficiaries of these services are “those persons requesting or benefiting from international protection, statelessness” (Ministerio del Interior, 2023), and they receive support to ensure a dignified life, as well as an accompaniment in the process of integration and autonomy. They are hosted in a national network of services and institutions managed directly by the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration or by agreements with third sector entities.

Regarding reception and access to housing support, Spanish public institutions have arranged short-term and long-term reception centers, in addition to private solutions. The Spanish Government opened 4 Centers of Reception, Attention and Derivation for Ukrainians forced migrants (CREADE). The role of these centers has been the reception and initial assistance, as well as the management for obtaining Temporary Protection in a period of less than 24 hours, which grants residence and work permits and immediate
access to Spanish social services. In addition to these services, they have also managed the derivation to accommodation centers in the reception systems of other cities.

The reception of these people in need of places in the reception system has been carried out by different NGOs. One of these organizations is the Spanish Catholic Migration Commission Association (ACCEM), who has been responsible for providing assistance to a total of 29,056 people in the national territory, 65% of whom were female and 35% male (ACCEM, 2023). In the case of Castilla y Leon, 701 reception vacancies have been managed in the different centers established. The majority of the people who have applied for reception are women with children in their care. Their average age is 31 years old and the educational profile corresponds to higher education levels.

According to a report carried out by ACCEM, the creation of the “Ukraine Emergence” scheme from March to September 2022 has enabled the management of a comprehensive first stage without the constraints that could arise from the ordinary channel of reception. However, from September on, this special program was concluded and its beneficiaries were included into the structure of the general Spanish reception system for people seeking international protection. The Spanish reception system is structured in three different phases: initial assessment and referral; temporary reception and autonomy. The time allowed to stay in the system is a maximum of 18 months, although there are situations of vulnerability that allow for an extension of this period. During this process, Ukrainian refugees have access to legal, social and psychological help.
3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter, theoretical concepts that are the foundation of this thesis are delved. First, the contribution of Morgan’s family practices approach is discussed, highlighting the notion of “doing family”. I employ this concept of “doing family” to analyse the perception of the process of maintaining the family relationship. Later on, I provide a contextualization of co-presence and the different types of co-presence practices (careful, proxy, imagined, virtual, careful, ordinary and ambient) defined by Baldassar (2008), Madianou (2016) and Alinejad (2019). This classification provides an understanding of the role of ICTs in co-presence practices.

3.1 FAMILY PRACTICES APPROACH: “DOING FAMILY”

The family as an institution is an entity found in all human societies, and it has been historically analysed by the social sciences. It is a social construct that is constantly evolving due to the transformations experienced by the society it represents and the economic, political, social, cultural, and demographic situation (Benítez, 2017). The result of these transformations and external changes influence family structures, as these are active elements and never remain stationary, as the author Morgan (1971) points out. For this reason, research that addresses transnational family’s needs to be open to different definitions and forms that depend on the diverse contexts where the family institution unfolds, is created and expresses itself. In short, it is important to stretch our understanding of common family forms to include transnational families.

The transnational paradigm is useful in reflecting precisely this sense of regularity of transnational practices and the related normality of multiple linkages (Povrzanovic Frykman, 2010). Since the late 20th century, the concept of the transnational family and its dynamics have been studied. This led to the exploration of how families were affected by economic, cultural, and political globalization (Basch, Schiller, and Blanc, 1994), the reality of transnational movements, the impact of global migration on family structures (Vertovec, 1999) and the importance of transnational ties (Levitt, 2001).

Transnational families are involved in the migration process when there is an existing distance between family members (Baldassar and Merla, 2013). Hence, transnationalism can be understood not only as the sharing of family community members in at least two countries, but also as a “permanent flow of exchanges of all kinds” (Cerda, 2014:80).
Discussing perceptions of family maintenance considering only the host country would hardly make sense as these perceptions are framed in a transnational experience.

For the purpose of this study, I use the concept of family as a term in movement that expresses action or state of being. In this line Morgan (2020) explains how family should be understood as a verb and not as a noun. This implies that “doing family” is an active work of all members and it involves specific kinds of practices (Morgan, 2020: 740). As Odasso and Geoffrion (2023) contended, “doing family contributes to expand the understanding of kinship bonds beyond the nuclear family”. It introduces the possibility for non-bonded relationships and parenting outside the heterosexual relationships and even in the absence of children (Blackstone, 2014).

The family practices approach focuses on the active experiences or ‘doing’, a sense of the regular daily life, and the fluidity or fuzziness (Morgan, 2011). These practices imply actions and interactions between family members that build and maintain family ties from a specific time and space. In the case of transnational families in a situation of forced migration, where and when the family practices are performed delimit a specific “sense of we” (Morgan, 2020). In this migratory context, political regimes, access to communication infrastructures, or economic resources are factors that will shape family practices. These families have to engage themselves in intentional efforts to do family by co-presence through digital practices, sending gifts or remittances or visiting the country. It implies that the idea of doing family is not located in a physical geographical place, but can also be done online through ICTs (Bakuri and Amoabeng, 2022).

In this work, the understanding of doing family lies in the idea of co-presence practices and the sense of being together (Mazzucato et al., 2015). Exploring the relation between ICTs and family practices illustrate the value of how family on the move perform family practices in virtual spaces. In this line, Morgan (2020) stresses that everyday family practices embrace not only what people do, but also how people they can compare themselves with behave or should behave. When comparisons between people and their peers can take place, different practices can play a specific role in creating social divisions.
3.2 CO-PRESENCE AND BEING TOGETHER ACROSS DISTANCE

The way personal relationships in transnational families construct strategies of togetherness and communication has changed with the proliferation of information and communication technologies (ICTs). Long gone are the days when letters or emails were the only possible means of communication (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1996). In the analysis of these practices where presence at a distance is mediated, terms that have coalesced are emotions, care, polymedia, innovation, visuality, surveillance, and co-presence (López, 2023). This last concept is of greater relevance, as it offers an overview of how the other concepts can be linked to the social experience of transnational families. Some scholars have defined co-presence as an “experience of emotional proximity with, or feeling close to, physically distant loved ones” (Alinejad, 2019: 2) or “the emotional support experienced as a sense of being for each other” (Baldassar, 2016, 145). Following these authors, in this thesis the concept of co-presence refers to the experience of being together despite the distance.

Baldassar (2008) identifies four types of co-presence: virtual, proxy, imagined, and physical. She argues that the virtual form is understood from the sensation of hearing, whether it is through calls, text messages, or video calls. Co-presence by proxy is generated through material objects or digital objects representing those who are not there, such as a photograph, clothes, or a phone picture. The author defines that the five senses can be used to construct this type of presence, allowing it to lead to an imagined co-presence, which can as well imply the act of remembering family and therefore refer to the sense of togetherness. By contrast, the possibility of being bodily present is categorized as physical co-presence. This last definition following Baldassar et al (2016) is the most valued and contrasts the idea that supporting and exploring the idea of the online environment cannot undermine face-to-face contact.

The study of how ICTs are shaping the emotional experience of transnational mobility is growing through current scholarships coming from different approaches with an interdisciplinary perspective (Nedelcu and Wyss 2016; Madianou, 2016; Robertson, Wilding, and Gifford, 2016; Baldassar et al., 2016; Baldasssar, 2016; Leurs, 2019; Alinejad 2019; Madianou, 2018 and Aziz, 2022). This literature has identified various kinds of digitally mediated co-presence that allow us to analyze how these definitions are
not exclusive, i.e. different types of co-presence can occur in the same family, in different places, and over time.

When these physical encounters are not possible, ICTs become the “social glue” (Vertovec, 2004) of transnational families. They are transformed into a new communicative dimension that offers the possibility of “seeing and being seen” in ongoing everyday life activities (Nedelcu and Wyss, 2016: 208). Based on the case of Romanian migrants in Switzerland, Nedelcu and Wyss (2016) give an account of the ordinary routines of co-presence that shape ways of doing family at a distance. These routines are divided into three types – ritual (the act of communication per se), omnipresent (virtual family space), and reinforced (particularly in vulnerable situations). All of them are characterized by content, frequency, and meaning. Ritual co-presence is observed in calls between family members on a particular day at a specific time and is always repeated. However, reinforced co-presence is especially important in the case of older parents who remain in the country of origin. These calls have a short duration but the fact of communicating per se already has a social and emotional importance. This type of co-presence reveals that on one hand, it generates feelings of everydayness and being able to do things together in a virtual environment, but on the other hand it can become a space where people must be in a state of permanent interconnectivity.

In this line, Madianou (2016) identifies through transnational communication between Filipino migrants living in the UK and their families a term of ambient co-presence, which is the peripheral awareness of distant others that multimedia environments produce. The author explains how the popularisation of wireless services from mobile devices enables "an always-on culture of ubiquitous connectivity" (Madianou, 2016:183). She also concludes that the sense of community in the digital environment produces a sense of belonging and strengthens family relationships. But on the other hand, these polymedia environments have a strong implication of social surveillance with respect to the intimacy and individuality of people on the move.

In a transnational family relationship, keeping and sharing intimacy from a distance implies new strategies and allows new forms of co-presence. Alinejad (2019) focuses her study on how second-generation Turkish-Dutch migrants in Istanbul maintain their transnational relationships with other members of the family with Turkish backgrounds in the Netherlands. She develops the notion of careful co-presence showing how the mode
of communicating with family via social media produces experiences of intimacy in terms of the decision of when and where to communicate. She highlights how people combine different social networks depending on the emotional relationship involved in the situation.

4 MAPPING THE RESEARCH FIELD AND CONTRIBUTION

This chapter intends to provide an account of the most influential strands of literature on the co-presence, primarily through information and communication technologies (ICTs), of transnational families in situations of forced migration. It explores the interaction between the absence of family members and the use of digital media to face the context of ongoing separation.

4.1 UNDERSTANDING TRANSNATIONAL FAMILIES IN MIGRATION STUDIES

In the first stage of research on transnational families, the focus was on studies conducted in the United States of America and Europe, national borders focusing on economic motivations, and the impact of migration on the labour market. However, scholars began to study the cultural and social dimensions of the migration process through narratives of separation and how relationships across borders were formed and maintained. Levitt and Glick-Schiller's (2004) articles represent an important contribution introducing the concept of transnational social fields which define the spaces of social relations that link migrants and their families in multiple geographical locations.

Furthermore, the authors point out that transnational families maintain and negotiate different strategies that allow them to maintain their family relationships across borders. Indeed, transnational families are a source of strength, building resilient coping skills that enable them to manage the difficulties they face and turn them into challenges and opportunities (Merla, 2015).

During this first period, some scholars focused their work on the gendered nature of transnationalism. It highlighted that the people who were the primary caregivers in transnational families were women being separated from their families, and how this female profile by gender expectations and inequalities (Parreñas 2005; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001; Oso and Catarino 2012). This intersection between migration and parenting sheds light on the complex ways in which migration affects families. The need for
innovative strategies and tools that transnational families need to put in place to maintain the well-being of both mothers and children without fracturing the family is one of the researched examples (Schmalzbuer, 2004).

The microworld of families left behind changes even if they are not the ones who have crossed the border, as the migration process involves all mobile and immobile members (Fedyuk and Kindler, 2016). While most scholars have emphasized the economic benefits of migration, others have focused on the emotional cost and hardship of this separation due to cross-border movements (Baldassar, 2015 and Parreñas, 2015). In line with the emotional part of this familial mobility, Baldassar (2015) has explored how the experiences of guilt appear to relate to emotions expressed in the time of separation and absence: She underlines the significant psychological and emotional repercussions of family member migration and the need for them to be addressed in migration research. In short, these emotional reactions are shaped by care, parenting, constant negotiation, and reconfiguration of relationships that take place in a circular way at the family level (Palviainen and Kędra, 2020).

An important strand of transnational studies has focused on dispersed family dynamics, but most studies explore the narratives of labour migrants, specifically from Caribbean countries, the Philippines, or Latin America. Researchers from various disciplines have dealt with how ICTs maintain collective well-being and family ties in transnational frameworks, which has been primarily analysed through the experiences of labour migrants (Nedelcu and Wyss, 2016; Bakuri and Amoabeng, 2023). Less attention has been paid to forced migrants entering Europe and the choice to succeed sustainably in doing family beyond the borders (Zontini, 2004). The case of Zimbabwean mothers in the United Kingdom brings out the different experiences of transnationalism between asylum seekers and labor migrants (Madziva and Zontini, 2012). It showed how the context prior to the departure from the country of origin, as well as having a previous time where the family decides and puts in place the kind of alternative care arrangements are characteristics that mothers in situations of forced migration usually do not possess.

Moreover, their case study provides an example of how the lack of political and social rights “particularly the possibility to work and makes for the future” is a barrier to leading a transnational life connected to the family and children left behind (Madziva and Zontini, 2012:441). Similarly, the lack of communication and information during the process of
family separation characterizes the context of forced migration, as the legal status or the possibility of family reunification are issues that arise from uncertainty (Aziz, 2022).

The case of Ukrainian migrants has been studied before the conflict by authors such as Vianello, Finotelli and Brey (2019), exploring legal transitions and working trajectories. Also, there are comparative studies such as the one by Leifsen and Tymczuk (2012), which compares the co-presence practices between Ukrainians and Ecuadorians in Spain and their left behind relatives in the home country. After the full-scale invasion, other studies have been conducted on the economic impact of the conflict (Martínez-Carrascal, 2022), the process of obtaining a temporary permit in Spain (Monzón, 2022), and the psychological consequences of the war for adults and children (Konstantinov, Reznik and Isralowitz, 2023), but the study of how this conflict reconfigured the way families take part in the life of the family they left behind is still missing.

From an academic perspective according to authors such as Canales (2005) and Pribilsky (2004), the links and relationships of this type of family are framed in a space where remittances, digital media, co-presence, and co-residence contribute as linking mechanisms and protective factors in the face of a possible family breakdown. This is why digital media and co-presence in the transnational space play a transformative and unique part. It is due to this role that several authors have already focused their work on analyzing how new information and communication technologies mediate the co-presence in the context of forced migration, including the challenges and opportunities of the role of co-presence in shaping attitudes toward refugees, and its dynamics in different geographic and cultural contexts (Leurs, 2019; Aziz, 2022; Robertson, Wilding and Giford, 2016).

4.2 CO-PRESENCE, ICTs AND FORCED MIGRATION

In the case of refugees or forced migrants, there are specific economic, political, and social forces that restrict how they can manage to mediate co-presence with their relatives, loved ones, and friends. Influential scholarship has foregrounded how the situation of civil war in the country of origin, social connections in the lives of displacement or refugees, or the negotiation of family imaginary interconnect with the use of ICTs in the absence of a possibility for family reunification (Alencar, 2020; Aziz, 2022; Toumi, 2023). The transnational forced migrants’ families differ from other family migrants in the fact that forced separation is embedded in a common lived reality of ongoing violence, abuse and loss. At all times they are permanently "concerned about family members who
continue to live in difficult circumstances in transit countries, conflict zones and refugee camps" (Robertson, Wilding and Gifford, 2016: 222).

As shown in the section 3.2, research on co-presence usually involves labour migrants. However, other authors have examined how the ubiquity of connective media generates opportunities of co-presence and how this fact creates a favourable scenario for transnational family maintenance. This is the case of Marlowe and Bruns (2021), who through a digital ethnography of resettled refugees in New Zealand conclude that individuals with refugee status have limited access to affordable and accessible social media. The authors suggest how this reality could be addressed through improved communication infrastructures and settlement policies that support family networks and cross-border communication.

With the access to perform co-presence, particularly virtual co-presence, forced migrants obtain the agency to speak for themselves and maintain a sense of belonging through a common purpose (Witteborn, 2015: 365). However, as Smets (2019) points out, the use of ICTs can also lead to affective immobility. In his study with Syrian refugees in Turkey in 2017 and the study of Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi refugees in Belgium in 2018, the author underlines that ICTs reproduce situations in which people "turn inwards to familiar, perhaps nostalgic or imaginary engagements with ICTs" (Smets, 2019: 654). In line with the emotional aspect of transnational connectivity, Leurs (2019) proposes the notion of digital care work following her study with young refugees in the Netherlands. While most other studies reported a positive emotional outcome with sense of joy and enthusiasm among others (Grenee et al., 2019), his work noted how the affects and emotions of transnational co-presence also encompassed feelings of obligation, fear or guilt.

Interestingly, it teases out the duality of ICTs. Some studies found that ICTs provide a sense of connection and togetherness helping transnational families to stay in touch, providing emotional support, or sharing daily news (Aziz, 2022). On the other hand, using these information and communication technologies can turn into a way of control and surveillance. The pressure from the family left behind who wants to be permanently connected through calls or text messages. It leads to a sense of loss of privacy and freedom (Nedelcu and Wyss, 2016).
4.3 RESEARCH GAPS AND CONTRIBUTION:

This literature overview has provided significant insights into the analysis of the transnational families and the interplay of co-presence, forced migrants and ICTs. Previous research shows that co‐presence is consonant with emotional connectivity through ICTs. Yet, forced migrants still remain underrepresented in the literature on media and migration studies (Leurs and Smets, 2018). The unpredictability of migration crises and the continuing uncertainty of refugee settlement explain such gaps (Beduschi, 2018). The focus has mainly been on Global North countries, with exceptions including the study of ICTs in refugee camps or border areas. This is the case of the study conducted by Alencar (2020) in contexts of displacement in Brazil, Schaub’s research (2012) on mobile phone use and mobility in the context of trans-Saharan migration or the study on media and immobility in the context of forced migration by Smets (2019), among others.

A large number of scholars, particularly within Spanish research, have focused on labour migration from the Global South to the Global North, analysing transnational families, care, global chains, and transnational motherhood (DePalma, Pérez‐Caramés and Varela Varela, 2021; Oso and Martínez-Buján, 2022). Still, research on forced migrants in Spain is limited. In contrast, this study seeks to contribute to the understanding on how Ukrainian forced migrants living in Spain create and maintain co-presence mediated by ICTs. It also seeks to intertwine the narrower field of study on digital migration studies and forced migrants’ family practices with the broader conceptualization of “being together”.
5 METHODOLOGY

The current section discusses the philosophical foundations that justify the choice of an appropriate methodology, as well as practical strategies for research design, data collection, and analysis.

5.1 PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is essential to briefly clarify my philosophical standpoint in order to argue for the soundness of my research design and its proportionality for the aim and research questions, as well as the employed methods. This research project aligns with a relativist ontological perspective. It seeks to understand the perceptions and experiences of co-presence practices of Ukrainian female forced migrants living on Spain. This perspective implies that our observations cannot be accounted for “independently of the ways in which we recognise, classify, code and analyse our observations” (6 and Belamy, 2012: 54).

From an epistemological standpoint, the current study aligns with a social constructionist perspective. This perspective explores the relationship “between the inquirer and the knowable, or between the knower and the respondent” (Lee, 2012). As a consequence, diverse realities are shaped, and given that constructions are multifaceted, so too are the realities that emerge from them. In this line, it is assumed that knowledge related to social facts is acquired by examining the narratives and understandings that individuals and communities ascribe to them (Flick, 2009).

5.2 PERSONAL REFLEXIVITY AND POSITIONALITY

When writing up my thesis, it is essential for me to be aware of my personal reflexivity and positionality. This entails considering how factors like my race, class, ethnicity, gender, age, nationality, and other categories shape the "partial perspectives" that I gather in the field (Mannik and McGarry, 2017: 128). My identity impacts on how the people I interview perceive me, the responses I receive, the relationships that are formed during the process, and how this influences my writing practice.

My Spanish nationality, being female, speaking Russian, and living in a long-distance relationship are factors that create a specific scenario in the development of this study. I met the respondents for the first time in March 2022, and much of this information was already known by them before the interviews were conducted. We were in contact for 6 months, and during that time, we got to become familiar with each other and I was able
to engage in their daily lives. At that time the relationship was professional, as I was a social educator and they were users of the emergency center.

Throughout the interviews, I reflected on the unbalanced power relations between the respondents and myself. Therefore, I valued non-hierarchical interactions and from the very beginning I explained that it was a study outside of my previous labor experience. During the interview they were curious about my current life and the interview was conducted as a horizontal interaction. They were not only asked about their experiences, but I was also an active subject of the process. The interviewees knew that for the last 7 years I have been living in European and non-European countries such as Greece, Morocco, Senegal, Bolivia, Armenia and Moldova. They were familiar with the fact that I have been a migrant before and this probably affected the way they shared their vision of Spain, as they felt open in the interview to express positive points about the country but also criticisms of the education system or some cultural elements. This familiarity and trust were key in the process of gaining access to their narratives.

Moreover, the fact that I was able to communicate in Russian allowed them to express themselves without any language barriers. This aspect was pointed out by one of the interviewees:

“With you I can explain everything easily without having to explain to you. For example, if I do it in Spanish or English, I am not able to express all my feelings.”

A complementary aspect to all that has been stated before, is the fact that my partner has been working in Ukraine since February 2022. All interviewees knew this information in advance, which lead to a mutual understanding of separation and absence. We both have a loved one on the same territory and the fear of loss is a shared emotion. These aspects locate myself as a researcher in an unknown space where I am not an outsider and I am not an insider either. On one hand, the use of the informants’ native language and the presence of my partner in Ukraine allow common grounds to be created with the respondents (Carling et al., 2014). On the other hand, my experience as a migrant has been voluntary, and there is no war where my home is. My partner is in Ukraine as a voluntary choice and he can always decide to move away from a context that the participants in this research and their families did not have much personal choice about. Considering these circumstances, I have decided to embrace and explore the complexity and uniqueness of the in-between space and not to take a specific position within these
two constructed dichotomies. I am aware that this is my personal perception and it could be different through the lens of the respondents.

**5.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Since the focus of this study is to investigate how co-presence occurs in the context of forced migration by analyzing the practices of information and communication technologies involved in the daily lives of Ukrainian forced migrants in Spain, a qualitative research approach and methodology was adopted. Qualitative studies involve “the study of things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011: 43). According to this definition, qualitative research involves a systematic approach to gather and discuss empirical data, including case studies, self-experiences, introspective narratives, interviews and observations among others. These materials intend to grasp the ordinary life routines and challenging events that shape the individuals' experiences and the meanings they ascribe to them. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) state that qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world, making it visible.

For the purposes of this study, the design selected was a case study. According to Yin (2003) a case study can be helpful when:

> We are eager to answer the questions of “how” and “why” when we want to cover contextual conditions because we believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study or when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clear. (Yin in Baxter and Jack 2008:545)

The characteristic that defines a case study is the investigation of a particular situation that is limited or restricted in terms of time, space and activity. It implies that “it is a ticket that allows us to enter a research field in which we discover the unknown within well-known borders” (Starman, 2013: 42). During this process the researchers make continuous adjustments in focus and design, due to its iterative-inductive character (Kalof et.al 2008). The interplay between material and theoretical concerns in the field of research not only sheds light on the societal realities of the target subjects, but also has an influence on the researcher him/herself. In doing so, an interactive-inductive approach turns out to be an efficient one. It allows the researcher to step back and forth from analysis to the data, and from the analysis to the interpretations (O’Reilly, 2005). It means
that the approach is opened to encompassing and linking previously unexplored concepts. Through adopting this approach, the researcher may delve more deeply into the research field and explore new insights and perspectives.

5.4 METHODS
Semi-structured interviews were the chosen method to explore the perceptions and co-presence practices of Ukrainian females regarding the maintenance of their family in a transnational context. The fieldwork was conducted through these interviews, over a period of four weeks from late March to mid-April 2023. I conducted eight semi-structured interviews in person in Burgos, Spain.

5.5 QUALITATIVE DATA/ SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS
5.5.1 Semi-structured interviews
The interview questions addressed the migration experience before arriving in the host country, the family's involvement in the decision to migrate, the family situation before and after being separated, the strategies developed to deal with the distance, and their daily digital communication practices with their family beyond borders (see Appendix 1 for more details). The questions allowed me to map family relationships before and after the armed conflict, while also exploring the use of different types of co-presence practices and the role of ICTs. The semi-structured character of the interviews was in line with the purpose of this thesis. It provided me the opportunity to address the responses to my research question, as well as providing a flexible context for asking for more specific questions during the interview.

In the course of the interview, I tried to ensure that the chosen location for the conversation was comfortable for the interviewee and that the noise level allowed for the audio to be recorded. Recording the interviews and not taking notes during the conversation was a considered decision, as being physically present in a conversation involves more than just listening, it involves be aware of everything, including verbal and body language and facial expressions (Manikk and McGarry, 2017: 76).

The recruitment for the eight interviews was undertaken through ACCEM, an organization that supports Ukrainian migrants in Burgos. After establishing contact with the organization and sharing the study with the target group, the snowball method was employed to recruit additional participants. The interviews were conducted at the most
convenient time and place for the interviewees, and I conducted all of them in Russian. As will be explained later in section 5.5, eight interviews were carried out, but two meetings were held with each of the interviewees, for a total of 16 meetings. On two occasions during these meetings, I was present during their virtual co-presence practices. This allowed me not only to analyse the types of co-presence they practised, but also to identify the obstacles they faced in their daily lives in communicating with their families.

All interviews were recorded and then transcribed. The interviews took place in the interviewees' homes and cafes and lasted between sixty and ninety minutes. All the conducted interviews were recorded and transcribed afterwards.

5.5.2 Interview profiles
This sub-section provides the profile of each respondent for the semi-structured interviews. A total of 8 females from Ukraine were included in the study, with their real names substituted for imaginary ones in order to maintain participant anonymity and privacy. It is important to notice that these substitution names were chosen taking into account the country of origin, as well as avoiding names of people close to each of the participants. All participants currently reside in Burgos, having arrived in Spain between March and April of 2022. All participants were granted with Temporary Protection in 2022 and all of them have family members remaining in Ukraine.

- Vera: (mid 30s) is a female who arrived in Burgos with her son. Her husband has remained in Ukraine since the beginning of the war. Vera holds a university degree and had her own business before the conflict.

- Katia: (late 60s) is a female who arrived in Burgos with her husband and their cat. She is retired, and her husband was able to leave Ukraine because his situation is within the applicable exceptions. Their only son remains in Ukraine on the front line. She attended university and she worked in the finance sector.

- Irina: (mid 30s), is a female who arrived in Spain with her son while her husband remained in Ukraine. Irina owned her own business in Ukraine and she has a university degree.

- Olga: (mid 20s), is a female who arrived in Burgos alone, while her mother and siblings arrived in Spain days before the war. Her husband was working outside of Ukraine, which
allowed her to reunite with him in Burgos later on, but her father remains in Ukraine. Olga has a university degree.

- Tamara: (around 40s), is a female who arrived in Spain with her son and daughter and has a relative currently in Spain. Her husband lives in Ukraine but has the opportunity to leave the country due to his medical situation. She has a university degree and she worked as sales representative in Ukraine.

- Masha: (mid 30s), is a female who arrived in Burgos with her dog while her entire family remains in Ukraine. She has completed her master's degree in Spain.

- Ivanna: (late 40s), is a female who arrived in Spain with her daughter, while her husband remains in Ukraine with the rest of their family. She worked in her own food business and has a secondary education. Her husband can leave the country for medical reasons.

- Inna: (mid 40s), is a woman who arrived in Burgos with her two daughters. Her husband is in Ukraine and cannot leave the country due to legal restrictions. She has a university degree and she worked in the audiovisual communication sector.

5.5.3 Qualitative data analysis

The data analysis was conducted in different phases. Firstly, a complete transcription of the audio was done using Sonix software. The automatic translation was first checked by listening to the original audio at the same time and then a general reading was done without audio. Once the correction was finished, I listened to the interviews again making sure that the transcription was correct.

After obtaining the transcript of the interview in Russian I proceeded to translate the interview. In this process I wanted to take care of every word and make the translation as accurate as possible. The contact with the interviewees allowed me at some points in the translation to ask questions again and to make sure that what they wanted to express was reflected.

The method of analysis used was narrative analysis. This method allowed me to organise, analyse and identify in detail the information collected. Through careful readings and re-readings of the interviews, this method helps me to reveal the "themes or meanings, such as personal, family and national histories, struggles and resistances" (Squire et al., 2014:
9). In addition to this narrative analysis, individual visual maps of each interviewee were employed to help me identify and connect the different practices of co-presence performed by respondents.

5.6 CREDIBILITY, DEPENDABILITY AND TRANSFERABILITY

I hope that I have succeeded in adding credibility to my study by outlining the steps that were taken in its development. I have also tried to enhance this credibility by constantly monitoring the transcripts, making sure throughout the process that no mistakes were made and that the translations were in line with what the interviewees had said during the interviews (Creswell, 2007: 179). This thesis has been supervised by two researchers from two different national institutions Katarina Mozetič from MIM and Antía Perez from ESOMI since the beginning to the end of its development, which has involved diverse perspectives and criticisms in the constant review of the work that was being developed. I believe that the openness and reassessment that this has caused has made the presented work a trustworthy interpretation of the studied reality. In addition, the support of the Pushkin Institute, a Russian-language educational institution, in the writing of the interview guide provided the opportunity to check and verify that the concepts in the translation corresponded to the real meaning (see Appendix II).

Regarding the dependability, I provided an explanation of the methodological tools chosen, as well as presented detailed accounts of the interviewees' narratives in the analysis, as well as reactions and spontaneous moments during the interviews (6 & Bellamy, 2012).

Finally, in order to the transferability, this study does not intend to generalise its findings to other cases, yet can contribute to the existing knowledge on forced migration and co-presence practices in the specific case of Ukrainian females in Spain.

5.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When conducting research that explores personal narratives, it is essential to be ethical. This means that I have followed a set of moral standards throughout the process. As a result, this research was conducted in accordance with the rule of 'do no harm'. This has meant that the relationship between the interviewees and myself has been based on integrity, trust, respect and transparency (Mannik and McGarry, 2017: 52).
Recognising that the interviewees are situated in an especially vulnerable situation, the interview questions were framed in such a way as to avoid causing emotional distress. Furthermore, in order to create a space of trust, two meetings were held with each interviewee, for a total of 16 meetings. This was done to allow the interviewees to choose when, how and where to conduct the interviews, respecting their daily routines and emotional wellbeing. This was appreciated by the respondents, as in some cases the first meeting served as a preliminary contact in which a sense of closeness was convenient for conducting the interview in the follow-up meeting. On the other hand, other interviewees decided to conduct the interview on the first day and leave the second meeting for a walk or simply to have a coffee together. Those who decided to participate and contacted me were given an informed consent form, which allowed them to read and know all the details of the research before the interview. From the beginning, this consent form was written in a way that sought for accessibility, using simple terminology adapted to all educational and cultural backgrounds.

The informed consent included a detailed description of the project and how it would be conducted, the voluntary and confidential nature of the participation, and the rights of use of the collected material. This consent form was printed out by me, and before each interview participants were asked if they had any questions and if they consented to the interview being recorded. They were also reminded of their right to stop the interview at any time if they wished, as well as of my availability if they had any questions or concerns after the interview. Moreover, one aspect they were reminded of multiple times was the protection of their identity, as details such as dates, names, places or information that could identify them would not be revealed (see Appendix 1). In addition, to archive their personal data, files stored on my personal computer with password protection were used.
6 ANALYSIS

This chapter is focused on the analysis of the data collected during my fieldwork in Burgos (Spain). First, it analyses how Ukrainian forced migrants have experienced the process of maintaining the family relationship in order to address the first research question through Morgan's family practices approach. It then explores the different co-presence practices by addressing the role of ICTs in co-presence practices. To address the second and third questions I will use Baldassar's classification of co-presence and the concept of ambient co-presence (Madianou, 2016), ordinary co-presence (Nedelcu and Wyss, 2016) and careful co-presence (Alinejad, 2019).

6.1 ACROSS BORDERS AND BEYOND: MAINTAINING FAMILY TIES TRANSNATIONALLY

In order to unpack the maintaining of the transnational family, I first analyze in this section how Ukrainian female forced migrants took the decision to flee the country, as well as which members were involved in that process. This provides information for a better understanding of the previous and current family relationship. Subsequently, the perceptions that the interviewees experience in maintaining the family relationship a distance are described.

6.1.1 Family on the move

“At the beginning everything was at a certain distance, but then every day it got closer and closer. In short, in one beautiful night our son told us that either we leave or we die together. And that was the turning point, and the next day, at 5:00 a.m, we left our house.” (Katia)

In these words, a 65-year-old retired woman who arrived in Spain from Ukraine on March 15, 2022 describes why she decided to leave her home behind. She wanted to stay in the country. Yet, her son drove them to the border and forced them to leave Ukraine. All of the eight respondents state that leaving the country was a decision that in the early days of the full-scale invasion was not among their plans:

“I did not want to leave Ukraine and in early March, when it became clear that the war would not end on the third and fourth day, my husband insisted that my son and I leave. He told me so and I was very offended by that.” (Irina)

In this case, doing family involved the use of negotiations about time and space (when and where to leave) and if they should consider to stay in Ukraine or not. With reference
to Morgan (2011), it is apparent that individuals can be seen as doing family due to the fact that these practices are oriented to another family member. Separation from the family does not imply a family breakdown since family is what families do. In this way, the practices that families engage in in order to maintain contact and communicate with their relatives, through “the different spaces they inhabit, form an intrinsic element of how they " do " family life” (Merla and Papanikolaou, 2021).

All the interviewees demonstrate that for all of them it has been their first migratory experience beyond their national borders. It implied that it was the first time they had to separate from their family members. Initially, the idea of separation was considered to be a short-term solution, with a timeframe that could be summarized in weeks:

“When the war started, I was not planning to leave.” (Masha)

“I wanted to come back in a couple of weeks when everything was over. And I thought it couldn't be possible for Kiev to be bombed like this in the 21st century.” (Irina)

“We didn't plan to stay for long, so we didn't bring too much with us - just three backpacks, and that was all.” (Inna)

The reality has not fulfilled the initial expectation of being reunited again soon. This is why the process of "doing family" takes shape through complex articulations of election and need. Different family generations become interconnected as they move, in “the extended present, towards imagined futures” (Sakti and Amrith, 2022:461).

Thereby, it is important to bear in mind that Katia was the only one of the interviewees who arrived accompanied by her partner. Two of them traveled alone (Olga and Masha) and the other five respondents were accompanied by their children (Vera, Irina, Tamara, Inna and Ivana). This situation deepened the perceived experience of the breakdown of the physical distance. The absence of physical presence has an effect on the caring roles among the respondents with young children, because these tasks cannot be shared as they involve physical presence:

It would be easier if I were alone, but with a child. I understand that I have to pick him up from school, sometimes he gets sick, sometimes he has to do this or that, take him to his class, just go for a walk with him. It cannot be someone else who does it.” (Vera)
Unlike Vera, Katia highlighted the impact of the presence of her husband in the perception of this new reality:

“He is a big part of my family, we support each other, we do everything together, we miss and worry together, especially about our son.” (Katia)

Morgan (2020) stresses the proactive role that the family and others can play in shaping the home in all its dimensions. In the case of Katia, who has a husband in Spain, or Irina and Olga who have received visits, the perception of making family across borders is perceived as sustainable and manageable. Meanwhile, respondents who have not received family visits, do not plan to do so in the short term, or whose children are in school, perceive to do family as process of daily negotiations.

6.1.2 The perception of family despite the distance

The respondents navigate their new lives in a foreign land, shaped by their personal circumstances. They did not expect that their stay in Spain would be extended to a year. Their perception of doing family transnationally results in a transformative and dynamic process, as seen through their individual experiences. To address their perceptions, I have asked the respondents: How have they experienced maintaining the family relationship at a distance? What has been easy? What has been challenging? What strategies have allowed them to overcome these challenges? As well as exploring other aspects such as defining their own family, the role of distance, and the evolution of family relationships (see Annex 2 part 1 and 2).

Family as a verb implies understanding the different configurations it can form (Morgan, 2020). Moreover, it entails the validation of the definitions that the members give to this particular unity. According to Etzold and Fechter (2022), in the case of forced migrants, family become in many cases the most important source of support and point of orientation for the future.

When defining their own family, seven respondents referred to a nuclear family unit, including the mother, father, and children, in Olga’s case expanding to include her aunts, cousins, uncles and her husband's family. The defining characteristics of this family unit were often attributed to love, friendship, and trust, except in the case of Vera, who was unable to provide a description of her family. Vera explained in a low tone how distance has made existing problems more visible. During her life in Ukraine, her husband
exhibited jealous behavior whenever she went to the gym or took a walk alone or with friends. Therefore, this situation generates in her experience a feeling of constant judgment from him. She affirms that if she returns to Ukraine, she would not live with him again:

“I distanced myself from everyone else, but I grew closer to my brother since he was left alone after his wife moved to another country, and he now lives completely alone. My husband feels lonely. He is upset and thinks that I have abandoned him. Everyone is returning while you haven't... My mother relation it’s affected because she had the opportunity to leave, she decided that she didn't want to. Then, when she decided to leave, there were no more opportunities available. She also feels offended because, according to her, I didn't help her. I have to solve everything for my son, for myself, for my husband, solve everything for everyone. No, I can't do it.” (Vera)

In the same vein, Masha articulated that now her relationship with the husband is on pause. They love each other, they feel close, but each one has their own life. And the moments that bring them together, the desire to know about each other, is there because they know that they are the closest people for each other. But in fact, the family which they were before during the 4 years of living together, no longer exists. And therefore, their relationship as husband and wife is on hold.

In contrary to what has been described above, Ivanna, Inna, Tamara, and Irina feel that their relationship with their husbands has become stronger and the family bond more sincere than before, as despite the distance, the moments they share are more appreciated.

“With the children, everything was complicated and we were considering divorce. All because we have been together for almost 20 years, with debts, problems, and without taking a break anywhere. Our relationship was so tense that, if it weren't for the war, we might have already divorced. But when I came to Spain, I received physiological help and paradoxically the war helped me understand that my husband is the best thing I have and that perhaps I did not value him enough in some aspect. I reevaluated my values and now I know that when I return to Ukraine with my children, everything will be different.” (Tamara)

Distance has strengthened the family ties of some respondents, but in other situations it has stretched them even further apart (Baldassar, 2016). According to Yaron Mesgena and Baraka (2023), the spread of their extended and nuclear families leads forced migrants to define their families in inconsistent ways. In this journey they reshape families and family ties (Yaron Mesgena and Baraka 2023). In particular, affective
judgment has influenced the sense of security of transnational families, especially in the case of females separated from their husbands (Hiitola, Karimi and Leinonen, 2023).

This affective judgment is experienced by four of the interviewees, through the question of their exact return date to Ukraine. It is a heavy burden filled with pressure and uncertainty. When their family or partners ask them when they will return to Ukraine, a duality can be inferred. At the beginning of the conflict, when they left for safety reasons, they all claim to have received support from their families to cross the border. Now, one year later, they comment on how the reasons why they have not returned are not being understood. In this situation, their responses are mostly focused on safety and the feeling that currently no place in Ukrainian territory is safe from being bombed. Ivanna acknowledges that her husband asks them one day to return home and the next day tells them it's better to stay in Spain because there were bombings yesterday. In the case of Irina and Olga, the pressure comes more from their acquaintances, where the relationship changed when they left Ukraine:

“I honestly, I tell you, I don't know. I wonder every day how we continue to stay here for so long. Everyone stayed there, and we left. Sometimes I feel very guilty in front of them. But on the other hand, I understand that it's everyone's choice, and I have no other option.” (Irina)

“My best friend judged me a lot, and we hardly spoke. There was an amazing relationship, but she cut it all off suddenly. I asked her how she was doing, ‘Fine.' How's your mom? 'Fine, everything is fine, fine.' In other words, at first it was just a formality. Then she went to a psychologist in Ukraine and that helped her.” (Olga)

In these circumstances of judgement, family support becomes the bridge that holds family members together. Crawford and Hutchinson (2016) highlight how the lack of emotional support due to family separation contributes to feelings of insecurity. Periods of prolonged separation have an effect on feelings of security, emotional well-being and the development of family relationships (Silver et al., 2018). As presented in the narratives, the transnational connectivity between the respondents and their family members involves a digital care labour (Leurs, 2019). This notion explores how the emotional digital labour stimulates “positive and negative affect and feelings such as fear, guilt, anxiety or shame” (Leurs, 2019: 647).
In sum, the interviewees' narratives show that distance has strengthened family ties, but in other cases it has further distanced them. Interestingly, this scenario is not a dual one but rather it is also observed that there are relationships that are maintained on pause-stand by.

6.2 BEING TOGETHER

This section explores what "being together" means to the interviewees in order to later analyse the different co-presence practices they engage in.

6.2.1 How I feel us

Being together is a very personal perception that each family defines and experiences in a specific way and in a located place. The following section explores the individual meanings that the interviewees give to the concept of being together “быть вместе”.

The interviewees identified “быть вместе” as an experience that does not imply physical proximity, but knowing that even if there is a physical distance, they have the same goals. Masha, Vera and Irina agree on the power of the decision-making, being able to talk and come to an agreement. For them the shared scenario between here and there becomes identical when the objective is shared and the road is perceived to be the same.

“We are together when we can make decisions together understanding each other.” (Masha).

“Maybe we can do some different things, separately. Maybe we can't do something together, but the goal will be one for both of us. The path, respectively, is one.” (Irina)

“If you have any questions or you need to make a decision or you need advice, you can call, ask, you don't necessarily have to be physically with the person to be together.” (Vera)

Sometimes, as Tamara’s response shows, the difference between being together or being apart depends on being able to connect through a phone or video call. This was also mentioned by Olga, Ivanna and Inna. However, Olga stressed that, for her, nothing can replace the feeling of closeness achieved through physical encounters, but the opportunity to connect helps. All of them state that the sense of togetherness is dynamic and can be amplified depending on the number of calls in a day.
“Being together now is at least hearing each other's voices on the phone every day, and the more calls there are in a day, the easier it is, it's like being at home, the wings grow, and you keep moving forward. It's like coming home and being together again.” (Tamara)

In contrast, Katia emphasizes that she has never felt separated from her son during this last year. She confesses that physical proximity does not necessarily equate to being together. However, Katia acknowledges that the absence of physical touch and the inability to hold her son can be challenging at times.

Being together could be defined through their narratives as an improvised dance. In this choreography the body and mind try to stay coordinated in the scenario, but as Masha explains, the moment for the body and mind to feel in the same place has not yet happened. In Vera's case, her mind is in Ukraine every time she wakes up in the morning and starts reading the news on her phone, or writing to her relatives or friends. In fact, for her Ukraine is also the place from where the mind works. Her reference point of thinking and solving situations in Spain goes through previous patterns created when she was in Ukraine.

For Olga, on the other hand, the moment where her mind and body are in the same place has already come, she affirms it "is already here". She admitted that at first, she lived in a blurred state in which she was conscious that she was physically in Spain, safe, but her mind lingered with the family she had left behind. The idea of learning a language or getting to know new people was something she rejected. Now, after one year, she describes how the ongoing situation of uncertainty has helped her to live in such a way that her body and mind are constantly together, regardless of the place or the people around her.

Yet, for Inna, her mind is in Spain as she tries to learn a new language and adapt to the new life, as she doesn't know how much longer the situation will continue. And for her, simply waiting is not a comfortable state:

“So, all the time you have your heart in Ukraine with your family, worrying about them. But I have children here, for whom I also have to worry, to think about what the future holds for us.” (Inna)

They state how there is a tension between trying to be close to them there, while also trying to focus on the place where they are, the here. Indeed, the physical presence of children make their mind focused not only on Ukraine, but also on Spain. The feeling of
temporality generated in some of the interviewees a feeling of being there rather than here. In other words, their projects and plans for the future would be developed in Ukraine; Spain was a transit country. However, a year later, now living in Spain, they verbalize how for some of them future plans do not exist, but rather have to be decided on a day-to-day basis. The present reality of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine plays an essential role in the conception of the idea of being together, but also for many of the interviewees the academic course of their children and their education comes first. Hence, after this first year away from each other, they have been creating and exploring new ways of being together that have maintained the family unity.

On one hand, their personal experiences demonstrate that being together can be understood as emotional proximity despite physical distance (Alinejad, 2019). On the other hand, it has been described as the sense of being there for each other through emotional support (Baldassar, 2016). Furthermore, respondents underline that the feeling of being together is correlated with the possibility of taking decisions together and the feeling of being on the same page and going through the same road with common goals. Moreover, the feeling of being together is dynamic and gradual, and can be extended through the use of ICTs.

6.3 NAVIGATING CO-PRESENCE PRACTICES

After the exploration of the definition of what being together means for respondents, the next step is to analyze the co-presence practices that enable them to perform and experience this sense of being together despite the distance. In the analysis, different practices of co-presence will be presented, while observing the involvement of ICTs in them and therefore interpreting the role they play in keeping families together.

6.3.1 Physical co-presence

Physical co-presence has been considered the “gold standard” in transnational families (Baldassar, 2008). This possibility is an alternative for many of the people interviewed, but it is not a real one. In their own words, a visit to Ukraine implies for them a high economic investment for several reasons. The first one is the need to find the fastest possible option, as these visits have a limited time frame. The fact of being within the Spanish Reception System implies that the time to make this mobility is limited to seven days. The second is that most of the interviewees live in the eastern part of the country, which means that reaching their city of origin would imply the loss of several days on the
move. Hence, the solution would be to consider the possibility of accommodation as close
to the border with Poland as possible, which is already an extra cost. And the third is the
coordination of the dates, the best availability is during holidays where schools are closed
but travel costs are higher during those dates.

Ivanna, Katia, Inna, and Tamara, who come from the same geographic zone which is also
one of the most devastated areas, agree that although the desire to go exists, there are
many logistics and economic investments that cannot be made now. In addition, they
mention the emotional drain of going back and its connection to the fear they experienced
at the beginning of the war. In the case of Tamara and Ivanna, their house has been
damaged by military weapons, so returning to Ukraine means looking for a new place to
stay. Although their husbands are allowed to leave the country, the two men, according
to their wives, do not see as a solution the fact of having to flee their homeland in order
to be together. For Ivanna's husband, who has mobility limitations, it is an option that
would also involve an external help. Indeed, Ivanna cannot support him to cover the travel
cost:

“My husband has disability and he receives a very low income. About fifty euros per month. As soon as he gets it, half of it, is spent on medicine. There was a time when I was able to help him when I worked for a few months but now I can't do it” (Ivanna)

The immobility of the bodies in a specific territory can be caused by different situations,
one of them is reflected in the case of Masha's mother. She states how months before the
war started, both she and her mother planned to move to the same city, in order to be
closer to each other. For her, the fact that her mother lives in an area that has been
occupied by the Russian army is a situation that could have been prevented. Now, the
only way that she has to see her is going through the humanitarian corridors. Masha
explain that it is an alternative that can put her life in danger. In this scenario, she and her
husband only wait and hope for the territory to be liberated by the Ukrainian army:

“One hundred percent I want to go to Ukraine to see and be with my husband because visit my mother I physically cannot. The Ukrainian part that is not occupied has no buses, no trains, nothing. Before you could go with some volunteers, before it was possible, now it is impossible. If you go with your car, you can be stolen, killed, raped or your car could be hit by a missile. First it is dangerous and second it is not real to be physically present there.” (Masha)
The possibilities of a short-term physical meeting with the family left behind have only been experienced by Irina and Vera. Vera is currently planning a short visit in a period of one month, but she is still waiting to book the flights. Firstly, she needs to know the dates when her husband will have less work to go to the Polish border to pick her and her son up. Irina and Vera come from the central part of Ukraine and they can stay in their own accommodation. In Irina's case it has been her husband who has been able to come to Spain, due to a special humanitarian volunteer permit. In the time he came, Irina had a surgery, which allowed him to take care of their son. Irina admits that she felt really lucky to be able to spend time with her husband in Burgos. She explains how she cannot express in words how that first meeting was. It was the first time in their 16 years of marriage that they had been separated:

“He is my husband, my friend, someone who has always been close…For my son it was something very special, his mood changed completely from that time. They miss each other very much, they have always had a very good relationship…When you understand that he can't stay and that the distance is coming back again you wish it wasn't true, it's painful to have been together and then to be separated again.” (Irina)

Irina's son often asks her when they will return to Ukraine to see his friends. This is an answer Irina cannot provide at the moment. She is afraid that her son will enter the country and will not be able to leave. Since his age is approaching the age of majority and he could be called to serve in the army. She emphasizes that “as a mother”, she does not want to deny him the opportunity to visit his friends and family. Yet, she prefers to wait until he can decide if he wants to return and accept what it implies.

In the same case as Irina, Spain has also been a place of reunion for Olga, although in different circumstances. Olga's entire maternal family is living in Europe as Ukrainian forced migrants, whereas her father and paternal relatives remain in Ukraine. For the current time, Olga does not think of visiting them in Ukraine soon. Regular telephone contact gives her confirmation that things are running well, which is enough for her for a while. Olga expresses a strong desire to see her family again, especially who remain in Poland. She confirms that unfortunately, financial constraints prevent her from achieving this desire:

“Many of them went to Poland, because they thought that the war would end soon and we would be closer, and we would come back quickly...They are still there together while I can only be on the other side of the phone. Still, sooner or later we all want to meet each other.” (Olga)
In short, respondents affirm that the circumstances that would allow physical co-presence involve an emotional and economic cost. However, the desire to be reunited with their loved ones is the goal pursued by all interviewees. The interviews point out how the geographical region in which they live in Ukraine, the number of people they have to travel with and the financial resources they possess play a crucial role in materialising physical co-presence.

6.3.2 Proxy co-presence

Crossing borders is not always an easy task. Katia and her husband still remember how arriving in Spain was a complex journey. They, as elder forced migrants, experience specific obstacles in the host country. She confesses that as a pensioner she can no longer work, and that learning the language is difficult for her because her memory does not work as it used to do before the war. In addition, her health issues prevent her from having a normal life. Frequently, the medical treatments she receives imply that she has to rest for weeks. She explains how at first, the idea of returning to Ukraine was an imminent plan but today she does not see it possible until the war is over. She recognizes that being able to have her husband close to her is a relief to cope with the absence of his son. This points to the fact that physical co-presence of some family members allows them to cope more easily with the distance of others.

Her son is fighting in the Ukrainian army and has no possibility to leave the country. For Katia, a way to feel close despite the distance has been to send a package for New Year's Eve. These practices performed for some of the respondents are defined as proxy co-presence. These special types of transnational elements become essential because of their possibilities of being touched, taking up the physical space of the person or place missed (Baldasar, 2008):

“We bought sausage, bacon, canned peaches and cookies for New Year's. My husband had two jackets but they were too small for him so we sent them. And my son wears one of them practically all the time… When mom and dad send something, it's special to him. We can't help him with money, but we still want to feel there and take care of our son.” (Katia)

“I received a package from Ukraine in the summer. As always, my husband made sure that the children had something to eat: grandma's pastries and buckwheat.
When we received the package, we were very happy...When we ate buckwheat, we felt at home.” (Tamara)

Other practices of proxy co-presence between our respondents are the use of pictures. In Inna's case, the location of the photo of her father in an intimate place in her daughter's room, is evidence of the family's ongoing sense of commitment to the relationship with him. This photo builds a strong feeling of constant presence. They physically display their affection by dropping kisses on the photo every night:

“My daughters placed a picture next to their bed when we moved to the new house. It’s a calendar with some pictures and the words mom and dad. Every night before going to sleep we kiss him and wish dad a good night.” (Inna)

"I feel him very close when I look at pictures of us that I have on Google photos or Instagram where it is just me and him together. He often sends me pictures of when we were together." (Masha)

“[…] My husband finds the photo on his phone and sends it to me, and he writes 'my daughter I miss her so much.'" (Ivanna)

Inna is the only one of the interviewees who physically has pictures with her, while Masha uses the pictures she has on her phone to embody the presence of her husband. According to Baldassar (2008) the tangibility of these objects is described as emotionality. This states that the activity of touching and seeing “become expressions of emotion and obligation” (Baldassar, 2008: 258). However, other senses can be used to remember and feel close to places or people. In the case of the interviewees, tasting (traditional food or family recipes) has embodied the feeling of being back in Ukraine or remembering family celebrations. Katia and Tamara remember the first time they cooked "борщ" and how the smell of the soup made them feel like "home" for a few moments. However, Masha and Olga rely on music:

“The music, especially the music that talks about the fact that we will win this war, we will win the battle, that everything will be fine, that Ukraine is our homeland, that I am Ukrainian. These moments strongly inspire me and generate a feeling that ok I am here but it doesn't matter because my soul and my mind are Ukraine and I am Ukrainian. Especially when I put on the headphones and walk down the street or I am at home. I turn on the music, listen to it and feel my presence there (Ukraine).” (Masha)
As a result, these proxy co-presence possibilities can be developed with or without the use of ICTs. The five senses can be involved in this process allowing individuals to feel engaged in their family life across borders.

**6.3.3 Imagined co-presence**

For other interviewees, the lack of physical objects reinforces the creation of the place where they can be reunited again in their mind. The act of praying and the process of imagining brings back that who they left behind and where they wish to be present. Through the practice of imagined co-presence, the abstraction of a person, place, concrete situation develops a sense of being there. Vera comments how every night before going to sleep she prays and asks for health for all her family, as well as praying for the war to end soon. She confesses how sometimes when homesickness turns up, she closes her eyes and remembers family celebrations:

“[…] Probably just memories, especially before going to sleep, when you go to bed and remember how it used to be. It's not every day, but I probably wrap myself in those memories to feel closer.” (Olga)

Hence, it is crucial to keep in view that there is a “sense of togetherness that people feel and believe they share, even if they are not actively involved in communicating with each other” (Baldassar et al., 2016: 137). In the case of the interviewees, access to the internet and regular communication with their families means that imagined co-presence is usually complemented by proxy and virtual co-presence.

**6.3.4 Virtual co-presence**

*Practices of virtual co-presence*

Considering the Ukrainian legal restrictions and the geographic distance that separates the members of these families, frequent co-presence practices between the members of the respondent’s family are performed by virtual Co-presence. It is built through ICTs, which in this study will count only on those related to the telephone. Due to the accessibility of new technologies and the ongoing development of new messaging platforms, virtual practices of co-presence are for our interviewees the most widely adopted practice. It is experienced through the sense of hearing and sight. Particularly,
verbal exchanges through calls, face-to-face calls and text messages recreate the feeling of being together in the ordinary routine and particular moments:

“There is not a single day when I don't call them or we see each other by a call or video call specially with my mother and my husband. In the morning I open my eyes and ask ‘how did you sleep? and how are you?’ Sometimes I tell my husband, ‘Please, show me what's outside’, he opens the window and I see through it…It is to feel myself there for a moment with him.” (Inna)

In the everyday life, as Olga explains, it is complicated to coincide, so one of the ways that helps her to be present in a fast and flexible way are the voice notes:

“That's great about the 21st century. Because when they are busy, they send me voice messages. Then, when I am free, I answer and so on all the time, because it does not take a lot of time.” (Olga)

The respondents shared strong feeling of maintaining a strong emotional bond by "staying connected". According to Leurs (2019), this state of being "always on" involves receiving a constant “stream of phone calls, pictures, audio and messages to guarantee the safety and health of family members” (Leurs, 2019: 642). In the case of our interviewees, the ongoing military conflict creates a compulsion for constant contact. Therefore, the possibilities of virtual co-presence allow for "situating oneself in the ontological security of the family" (Witterborn, 2015: 361). In order to develop this type of co-presence, apart from the necessary coordination of family members, access to reliable internet connection is essential. This is hard to obtain due to the fact that with the amount of money they receive, the houses they can rent are either attics or ground floors, in mostly old buildings with stone walls. According to Katia, Irina, Vera and Olga this is a challenge because the weak connection in the house itself means that sometimes they can only talk on the street, or they can only make calls, as video calling becomes an impossible mission. This hinders their ability to engage in virtual practices effectively:

“I often have to go outside. And I have also got used to it, if necessary…I go close to the window, write something or send a photo quickly, or talk. But sometimes it's impossible for me. You have to go outside, during the evening we go to the park…We sit and talk there with our son and the video works well” (Katia).

I remember when we were doing the interview that her son called and she quickly picked up the phone, went to the window and extended her hand upwards so that the call would
not be cut off. The ability to respond to that call or message reinforces the sense of family closeness and affects the interviewees' own perception of their ability to keep in touch and being there for them:

“Now since the war started, we understand that every call, every day, every message can be the last one. And not answering is something I would not forgive myself.” (Masha)

“There are times when I don't have money in my phone and I need to wait for the next day to go to the phone credit store. Sometimes my husband doesn't understand, in Ukraine you can do it in 3 seconds. He doesn't believe it and he tells maybe you're lying.” (Vera)

As this last narrative confirms, the reliance on technology presents a twofold duality: the vehicle that facilitates virtual co-presence practices also presents some challenges to its effectiveness. The need for all the respondents to provide an immediate response or permanent connection transforms virtual co-presence practices into a context of bidirectional expectations. In an effort to improve this situation, the possibility that the interviewees have is to contract an internet service at home. Nevertheless, as Katia, Ivanna, Inna, Tamara and Vera explain, this has an approximate cost of 35 to 45 euros per month, which they cannot manage to cover.

*Types of ICTS*

Participant responses highlight that the predominant mobile devices used to perform virtual and proxy co-presence practices is the telephone. The access to dozens of devices and applications allows respondents to have specific preferences for one or the other. It depends on their needs, the message they want to communicate, their preferences or the specific context where they are. The apps most used by the interviewees are those that allow higher bidirectional interaction and with a multifunctional characteristic. These are Viber, Telegram and WhatsApp. These types of applications via internet access provide calls, videocalls, text messages, voice notes, photos and videos. The respondents navigate the limitations of particular applications or social networking sites by compensating for them through the use of other alternative applications.

The interviews highlight how it is not the application itself that generates a different experience to the other. In fact, Viber, Telegram and Whatsapp are platforms that offer
similar alternatives. The significance lies in the way interactions and making family use concrete digital practices. This specific preference for a type of practice (call, text or video call) reflects the intention from which it is intended to communicate. The emotional intention behind the choice reproduces the way respondents manage their family relationship (Baldasar, 2008).

“I write to him (father) through messages because it is difficult for me to talk to him on the phone. He always forces me to say what he wants to hear.” (Olga)

Irina and Katia comment on how talking to some family members is emotionally demanding because of the type of conversations. Katia explains how a conversation via videocall with her son can last forty minutes, but instead when she calls her cousin or relatives it is via phone call. It lasts no more than ten or fifteen minutes. In the same vein, Irina has experienced during this time how the relationship with the nuclear family has been strengthened through the exchange of daily messages, calls and video calls. However, relationships with other relatives or friends have become static or limited to superficial conversations.

“Who were my colleagues, we communicate but only anecdotes, no support. We are here, they are there, they have a different situation. And I cannot communicate with them because many condemn and judge us for being here. I don't have to take blame; I know why I did it and I made the choice myself” (Irina)

In general, it is noticed that it is not the ICTs themselves that encourage the use of virtual co-presence, but the family situation. In other words, those who enjoyed a good family situation developed greater virtual co-presence than those who previously had an unstable family relationship (Baldasar et al., 2016). The distance that existed in families that did not enjoy a strong relationship before the separation is translated in a scenery where communication is not as frequent. The digital practices involved in these contexts are messages on Viber or WhatsApp, which allow more distance and control over what is shared and do not involve an immediate interaction through visual contact:

Another app mentioned by the interviewees is Instagram. This application is a place visited by two of the youngest respondents, Masha and Olga, who admit to an intimate use of it. They comment on how on a regular daily routine they engage in this virtual space. In the case of Masha, she and her husband often send each other reels:
“In touch by writing to each other or sending reels on Instagram every day... He always sends me videos on Instagram, reels or pictures of dogs that remind him of our doggie. I think he misses her and that keeps him close to us.” (Masha)

In Olga's case Instagram is a platform that offers her belonging and interaction through following profiles of people who are fighting for the victory of Ukraine or photographers who are on the frontline. In her words, these interactions allow her to feel part of the ongoing battle. But she also recognizes that Instagram could turn into a very hostile place for those who are not in Ukraine:

“I can't just post a picture of my life here. Really? In Ukraine people are still hanging out, relaxing on the beach but I can't just post a picture because I have left my country.” (Olga)

She shares her desire to post some pictures of her life in Spain and how not being able to do so creates a distance from her friends and relatives. The different ways in which the interviewees experience Instagram conclude that it is a tool that is used as a connection to their home country and they share personal experience on an individual level through direct messages. However, they also have feelings of guilt and a sense of external judgment about posting pictures of their live in Spain.

6.3.5 Ambient co-presence

The media environment provides a precise background of awareness of their family members. The interviewees experience a continuous peripheral awareness and the state of being present in a virtual space. This permanent awareness is related to the concept of ambient co-presence. Vera, Inna and Olga comment how during the day even if they are not having a conversation, they periodically check the online status of relatives and close ones. It provides them ontological security that familiar routines are being maintained and that everything is going okay. Furthermore, these indirect interactions could include the practice of their “likes” in some messages on the family’s group as Olga explained:

“When I pick up the phone in the evening, I see that they were discussing some topic yesterday or this morning, and it's already late, so I put some likes”. (Olga)

According to Madianou (2016), ambient co-presence has implications for belonging and community. This awareness is not only peripheral but also social. This means that ambient co-presence “enhances the user's sense of belonging by involving them in emotional and moral spaces” (Madianou, 2016: 198). The interviewees all agree that a permanent source
of knowledge are the groups for each region in Telegram. They stress that thanks to these
groups they can always know what is going on in their city, if there have been explosions,
which supermarkets are open or simply the fact of being part of that group gives them a
sense of being present there.

6.3.6 Ordinary co-presence
Another one of the co-presence practices observed in the interviewees is ordinary co-
presence. ICTs-mediated ordinary co-presence combining possibilities of being and doing
things together across the distance. During the interviews the fact of weak connection
inside the house was a crucial factor in the development of these routines of ordinary co-
presence. For some of the interviewees, being part of this ordinary life is not based on
quantity, but on the quality of interactions. To be able to contact with them is of crucial
emotional and relational importance:

“Every day whenever there is a signal we talk or write to each other. I go to bed
relaxed, I read, I go to sleep peacefully” (Katia)

“And now we are in contact all the time, every day we write to each other” (Inna).

“The most important is the quality of the conversation. It doesn't matter how long
it takes. When someone is free, we start talking. And, of course, it depends on the
situation and whether it is with my mother, my aunts, my uncles or my friends”
(Olga)

6.3.7 Careful co-presence
The different technological challenges explained above are correlated in the way
respondents develop other types of co-presence. It is observed that those who have better
internet connection at home can develop a particular mode of communication with their
family members through ICTs. It implies a major intimate emotional experience with
their family in everyday moments. The limited position of choosing where and when to
connect has an impact on careful co-presence practices (Alinejad, 2019). In the case of
Irina, having a sensitive and safe space is essential to connect with her husband. It
provides a situation of intimacy between them:

“Well, I try to always look for a good moment, when it is comfortable for me, for
example, if I go from home to work. During this time there I can call... At work
when I have a break and I can drink coffee, there too and I definitely always do
that...After lunch when I arrive home, I also try to use this time.” (Irina)
However, this option is not possible for Katia because the contact with her son only takes place in the park or near the window of her home. This has also implications in the way they can be aware of their family's daily rhythms.

In Vera's case virtual co-presence practice can only be performed outside the home due to the weak internet connection. Vera confesses that she would like to be able to share more intimate moments of daily life inside the family's house. In this scenario, her son has contact with his father only when they are away from home. The majority of the time they used phone call, because although Vera tries to go to quiet places and without noise. For Vera's son, talking on the phone is a practice he navigates with difficulties. The meanings of these practices relating to virtual co-presence practices do not connect with his real needs. Her son does not perceive it as a space for sharing and it also generates conflict between the parents because her husband does not understand why her son does not want to talk with him.

“My son needs personal contact and to play with him, to communicate in person, not through the phone. If for me the phone can replace that communication, for him it can't.” (Vera)

This narrative points out how inadequate access to internet (Baldassar, 2016) challenges parents' and children's right to family life, accentuating potential conflict in internal family bonding (Ducu et al., 2022).
7. CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to explore the co-presence practices of Ukrainian female forced migrants who arrived in Spain due to the Russian full-scale invasion. It was also focused on their experiences of family maintenance process across the distance and the role of the ICTs in co-presence practices. Given the importance of knowing how families separated across national borders are feeling about this forced separation and what they are doing in this situation, the primary material consisted of eight semi-structured interviews.

With this thesis, I tried to explore how the respondents experienced “being together” and which co-presence practices they performed during this time of family separation. The framework of Morgan's (2020) family practices approach has made it possible to analyse the way of doing family by focusing on the temporal and spatial dimension. The results show that distance strained some interlocuters’ family ties and for others it has made their relationship more distant. It also suggests a perception of a pause in the relationship where the family remains timeless and in standby mode. The trajectory of families during forced migration has implied continuous negotiation, agreements and active efforts. According to the interviewees' experiences, in periods of sustained absence in order to maintain these family ties, problem solving and decision-making has created togetherness with the left-behind members. By drawing on their meaning of togetherness, they stressed how it is not only about feeling together but doing family together towards common imagined futures (Nedelcu and Wyss, 2016).

In this shared future, physical encounters are a possible scenario for the interviewees but only a real alternative for women living in the central part of Ukraine. All of them value physical co-presence as the best alternative among the others, but factors such as the economic investment involved and the seven-day period available to them due to being within the Spanish Protection System hinder their possibility. In this way, in the absence of the physical family reunion, the telephone has served as a place of ontological security across time and space (Giddens, 1991; Witteborn, 2015). Moreover, it symbolizes the notion of home, encapsulating both past and present memories. However, the weak connection in the house hinders their ability to engage in virtual practices effectively, in particular ordinary and careful co-presence. This scenario highlights how some of them need to be outside of the house to connect which dictates the rhythms of the daily life.
The lack of internet access hinders the fluidity of family practices and their ability to engage in virtual practices effectively. In the exploration of the role of ICTs in co-presence practices, it is observed that ICTs play a role of crossover and mediation between the types of co-presence. Analysing the different types of co-presence demonstrates the porosity of the concept. That is, how they intertwine with one another and how the boundaries that classify them sometimes promote rather than exclude the practice of another. This is reflected in the interviewees' narratives, as physical co-presence is planned through virtual co-presence. This virtual co-presence complements the proxy co-presence through the photographs, videos or voice mentions that can be experienced through the sense of sight and hearing, and as this proxy co-presence generates in turn the abstraction of the image through the ideas experienced in the minds of our interviewees making present the imagined co-presence. This imagined co-presence is in turn influenced by peripheral awareness that does not involve direct contact. This ambient co-presence offers an online and offline opportunity to remain present there despite the distance. Through the multiple media affordances, a real place to interact in everyday life becomes possible. While ordinary co-presence in the case of respondents focuses on punctual ritual practices, the ordinariness of everydayness brings them a sense of family living.

All in all, the thesis refines our understanding of how co-presence practices under the TPD status allows the Ukrainian female forced migrants to maintain and create family togetherness despite the distance. The findings of this thesis contributed to making visible how TPD offers the possibility to practice a physical co-presence, mitigating the pain of the family separation and contributing to cover the familial needs. This highlights the benefits of short visits to Ukraine, but emphasises the limited possibilities for a particular population group. These differences are found among people with fewer economic resources and living in the most affected areas of Ukraine.
7.1 FUTURE RESEARCH

This thesis has only focused on a single country of destination, Spain and specifically the city of Burgos. This allows us to explore the experiences in a specific location but cannot determine that the experiences of co-presence are equally developed in other host countries. This is why the study of how Ukrainian female residing in other countries under different legal and social frameworks would offer a comparative perspective that could provide the subject of co-presence with a broader picture.

Secondly, this study lacks the perspectives of the members of the family unit who remain in Ukraine or in other countries, as only the narratives of those living in Spain are collected. Including the perspectives of the members who have remained in Ukraine would provide insight into how co-presence is performed from the country of origin in a situation of war. An extension of the current research could incorporate the narratives of males, who are legally restricted in their mobility as they cannot leave Ukraine, it would provide an insight of transnational parenthood in a situation of immobility.

Lastly, the findings of this thesis regarding the children’s participation on virtual co-presence stress that future studies on digital communication and forced migration should be linked with children’s agency in co-presence practices (Ducu et al., 2018).
8 BIBLIOGRAPHY


Starman, A. B. (2013). The case study as a type of qualitative research. Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies/Sodobna Pedagogika, 64(1).


9 APPENDICES
Appendix I Information letter and informed consent (English)

Informed consent and information letter for an interview

Please carefully read the following description of this study:

By signing this form, you agree that you have been informed about the research study and that you consent to take part in it. If you do not choose to sign, I offer the possibility of oral consent.

I want to make sure that you clearly understand what you are being asked to participate in the study and what the associated rights and conditions of the project are. This helps you decide if you wish to be involved.

You are being invited to be part of a research study project conducted by Lara Sánchez Gil, a student of International Migration and Ethnic Relations (IMER) part of the Double Degree-Programme in Migration part of the EuMIGS network in coordination with the University of A Coruña (Spain).

I’m a master’s student at the Faculty of Culture and Society, Department of Global Political Studies (GPS), Malmö University, Nordenskiöldsgatan 1, SE 205 06 Malmö.

Project description: This study aims to explore how Ukrainian families living in Burgos (Spain) manage long-distance relationship with their families.

Implementation: If you decide to be part of this study, I invite you to an open-ended interview that is approximately 60/90 minutes long. Here are some possible question examples that you will be asked:

- How do you feel about some of your family members not being in Spain with you?
- What kind of social media do you use to connect with your loved ones?
- Can you describe a daily conversation with your mother?

Between 5 and 10 people over the age of 18 will be invited to be part of this study. You will be able to choose where and when to conduct the interview and will be asked whether you allow the interview to be recorded. Interviews may be conducted in, depending on your preference, English, Spanish or Russian and then translated into English as the required language in the evaluation of this study.

-The voluntary requirement: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary. You can stop participating at any time and no explanation is necessary. If you have any questions about the study before or after the interview or the study is submitted, you can contact me at the following email address: larsangil@gmail.com

- The confidentiality requirement: We strive to guarantee confidentiality in the study in that no unauthorized person may have access to the material. The audio and the interview transcript will be saved on a USB drive which will be destroyed once the study has been
graded. Only Lara Sánchez Gil, the author of the research study, will have access to the audio recording. All the transcripts will be anonymized.

- Right of use: This study will be published on Malmö University Website and A Coruña University Website and be able to the public to read. During the month of July, the study will be shared at the IMISCOE 2023 Annual Conference in Warsaw (Poland).

**Tick your answer:**

Do I consent to the interview being recorded?

**YES, I consent to my interview being recorded ___**

**NO, I do NOT consent to my interview being recorded ___**

I hereby submit my consent to participate in the above survey:

Date: …………………………………………………………………………………………………

Participant’s signature: …………………………………………………………………………..

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Lara Sánchez Gil
Appendix I Information letter and informed consent (Russian)

Согласие на обработку данных и информационное письмо для собеседования

Пожалуйста, внимательно прочитайте следующее описание этого исследования:

Подписывая эту форму, Вы соглашаетесь с тем, что вас проинформировали об исследовании и что вы соглашаетесь принять в нем участие. Если Вы решите ничего не подписывать, я предлагаю возможность устного согласия.

Я хочу убедиться, что Вы точно понимаете, что от Вас требуется для участия в исследовании и каковы права и условия, связанные с проектом. Это поможет Вам решить, хотите ли Вы участвовать.

Вас приглашают принять участие в исследовательском проекте, проводимом Lara Sánchez Gil, изучающей «Международную миграцию и этнические отношения (IMER) в рамках Программы двойного диплома в области Миграции в сети EuMIGS совместно с Университетом Ла-Корунья (Испания).

В данный момент я учусь в магистратуре факультета культуры и общества на кафедре глобальных политических исследований (GPS) в Университете города Мальме, Норденшельдегатан 1, SE 205 06 Мальме.

Описание проекта: Целью данного исследования является изучение того, как украинские семьи, живущие в Бургосе (Испания), поддерживают отношения со своей семьей на расстоянии.

Реализация: Если Вы решите принять участие в этом исследовании, я приглашаю Вас на открытое интервью продолжительностью примерно 60/90 минут. Вот несколько возможных примеров вопросов, которые Вам будут заданы:

• Что Вы чувствуете, когда некоторых членов Вашей семьи нет с Вами в Испании?
• Какие социальные сети Вы используете для общения со своими близкими?
• Можете ли Вы описать ежедневный разговор со своей матерью?

Для участия в этом исследовании будет приглашено от 5 до 10 человек старше 18 лет. Вы сможете выбрать, где и когда проводить собеседование, и у Вас попросят разрешите записывать интервью. Интервью могут происходить в зависимости от ваших предпочтений на английском, испанском или русском языках, а затем будут переведены на английский язык в качестве требуемого языка при оценке данного исследования.

- Добровольность: Ваше участие в исследовании является полностью добровольным. Вы можете прекратить участие в любое время без каких-либо объяснений. Если у Вас есть какие-либо вопросы об исследовании до или после
собеседования, а также после отправки исследования, Вы можете связаться со мной по электронной почте: larsangil@gmail.com

- Конфиденциальность: Мы стремимся гарантировать конфиденциальность исследования в том смысле, что ни одно неуполномоченное лицо не может иметь доступа к материалам. Аудиозапись и стенограмма интервью будут сохранены на USB-накопителе, который будет уничтожен после того, как исследование будет оценено. Доступ к аудиозаписи будет иметь только Lara Sánchez Gil, автор исследования. Все стенограммы будут анонимизированы.

- Права на использование: Это исследование будет опубликовано на веб-сайтах Университета г. Мальме и Университета г Ла-Коруньи и доступно для всеобщего ознакомления. В июле 2023 года результаты исследования будут представлены на ежегодной конференции IMISCOE 2023 в Варшаве (Польша).

Отметьте свой ответ (галочкой):

Даю ли я согласие на запись интервью:

ДА, я даю согласие на то, чтобы мое интервью было записано ___

НЕТ, я не даю согласия на то, чтобы мое интервью было записано ___

Настоящим я даю свое согласие на участие в вышеуказанном опросе:

Дата: ...............................................................

Подпись участника: ...........................................................

Большое спасибо!

С уважением, Lara Sánchez Gil
Appendix I Information letter and informed consent (Spanish)

Consentimiento informado y carta de información para la entrevista

Por favor, lea atentamente la siguiente descripción de este estudio:

Al firmar este formulario, acepta que se le ha informado sobre el estudio de investigación y que da su consentimiento para participar en él. Si no decide firmar, le ofrezco la posibilidad de dar su consentimiento oral.

Quiero asegurarme de que entiende claramente qué se le pide para participar en el estudio y cuáles son los derechos y condiciones asociados al proyecto. Esto le ayudará a decidir si desea participar.

Se le invita a formar parte de un proyecto de estudio de investigación dirigido por Lara Sánchez Gil, estudiante de Migración Internacional y Relaciones Étnicas (IMER) del Programa de Doble Titulación en Migraciones de la red EuMIGS en coordinación con la Universidad de A Coruña (España).

Soy estudiante de máster en la Facultad de Cultura y Sociedad, Departamento de Estudios Políticos Globales (GPS), Universidad de Malmö, Nordenskiöldsgatan 1, SE 205 06 Malmö.

Descripción del proyecto: Este estudio pretende explorar cómo las familias ucranianas que viven en Burgos (España) gestionan la relación a larga distancia con su familia.

Implementación: Si decides formar parte de este estudio, te invito a una entrevista abierta de aproximadamente 60/90 minutos de duración. He aquí algunos posibles ejemplos de preguntas que se le formularán:

- ¿Cómo te sientes cuando algunos miembros de tu familia no están en España contigo?

- ¿Qué tipo de redes sociales utiliza para conectar con sus seres queridos?

- ¿Puedes describir una conversación diaria con tu madre?

Entre 5 y 10 personas mayores de 18 años serán invitadas a formar parte de este estudio. Podrán elegir dónde y cuándo realizar la entrevista y se les preguntará si permiten que se grabe la entrevista. Las entrevistas podrán realizarse, según su preferencia, en inglés, español o ruso y luego traducirse al inglés como lengua requerida en la evaluación de este estudio.

El requisito de voluntariedad: Su participación en el estudio es totalmente voluntaria. Puede dejar de participar en cualquier momento y no es necesario dar explicaciones. Si tiene alguna pregunta sobre el estudio antes o después de la entrevista o tras la finalización del estudio, puede ponerse en contacto conmigo en la siguiente dirección de correo electrónico: larsangil@gmail.com
- **Requisito de confidencialidad:** Nos esforzamos por garantizar la confidencialidad del estudio en el sentido de que ninguna persona no autorizada pueda tener acceso al material. El audio y la transcripción de la entrevista se guardarán en una memoria USB que se destruirá una vez el trabajo sea evaluado. Sólo Lara Sánchez Gil, autora del estudio de investigación, tendrá acceso a la grabación de audio. Todas las transcripciones serán anonimizadas.

- **Derecho de uso:** Este estudio se publicará en la página web de la Universidad de Malmö y en la página web de la Universidad de A Coruña y podrá ser leído por el público. Durante el mes de julio, el estudio será compartido en la Conferencia Anual IMISCOE 2023 en Varsovia (Polonia).

**Marque su respuesta:**

¿Doy mi consentimiento para que se grabe la entrevista?

**Sí,** doy mi consentimiento para que se grabe mi entrevista ___

**NO,** NO consiento que se grabe mi entrevista ___

Por la presente doy mi consentimiento para participar en la encuesta mencionada:

Fecha: ............................................................

Firma del participante: ...........................................................

Muchas gracias.

Atentamente, Lara Sánchez Gil
Appendix II Sample of semi-structured interview questions (English)

Sample of semi-structured interview questions:

Please do you want to share with me something about yourself, your profession, or your age?
Would you like to choose a pseudonym for your name, or would you prefer me to do it to maintain your privacy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General questions</th>
<th>Specific questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **PART I**  
**Migration history**  
1. Where are you from?  
2. How was your life in Ukraine before the war?  
3. How did you plan your departure from Ukraine? When and why?  
4. Were you the first person in your family to emigrate?  
5. Who was with you during the journey?  
6. Why did you decide to come to Spain?  
7. During the journey were you able to communicate with your loved ones? Why not?  
8. Did you receive support from your relatives to get to Spain?  
9. What project did you have in mind when you left Ukraine? Do you plan to return to Ukraine? Why? | 1.a Where do you currently live?  
1.b How long have you been living in your country of origin?  
6.a How many countries did you cross before arriving in Spain?  
6.b Did you know anyone before you arrived?  
7.a How did you communicate with them? Calls, messages, photos, e-mails?  
7.b What did you talk about (specific people through specific media)? |
**PART 2**
*Family across borders*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General questions</th>
<th>Specific questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Could you describe your family? (Nuclear and extended)</td>
<td>1.a If you had to describe your family in three words, what would they be?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In comparison to your life in Ukraine, how would you describe your life in Spain?</td>
<td>1.b In which countries do your family members live?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you feel you have grown closer or more distant from your family? With whom? Why?</td>
<td>4.a Do you miss any of your family members? Who do you miss?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How do you feel about some of your family members not being in Spain with you?</td>
<td>4.b Are there any specific situations in which you miss them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. In what moments of your daily life do you feel the distance?</td>
<td>7.a Whenever you have needed to, have you been able to share moments or news that are important to you with your family?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How do you cope with the family's absence?</td>
<td>7.b Do you remember a specific moment when you would have liked to be there but missed it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How have you experienced maintaining the family relationship at a distance? What has been easy? What has been challenging? What strategies have allowed you to overcome these challenges?</td>
<td>9.a At which specific moments do you feel you can be there for your family members from a distance and when not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your ability to be present for people who are not in Spain with you?</td>
<td>10. Are there any situations, activities or people make you feel close to your country in Spain? Which ones? Why?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### General questions

<p>| | |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>What does it mean to you to be together? Is it possible to be close when you physically cannot be there?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>How do you try to feel close to your family in Ukraine?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Could you tell me how you communicate with your relatives on a typical day? In what ways do you contact them? And how much time do you spend?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Which type of ICTs do you use to connect with your family?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Can you remember who the person was you talked to the most yesterday and for how long? And what did you talk about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>How many times a week do you call your husband/father/mother?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>How do you manage your time to connect with your family members?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>What topics do you talk about most?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>What happens if during a day you have not been able to connect with them?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Specific questions

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.a</td>
<td>Where are you mentally most of the time – in Spain or in Ukraine (or someplace else)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.b</td>
<td>How important is it for you to be connected to them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Is there anything specific that helps you to have that feeling and why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.a</td>
<td>How do you use them? Who do you try to stay connected with?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.b</td>
<td>What time of day do you usually stay in touch online?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.a</td>
<td>What kind of social networks do you use most? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.b</td>
<td>With what kind of sense do some of these contacts via ICTs leave you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.a</td>
<td>What things do they not share/not talk about (why? With whom?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.b</td>
<td>Do you share the same messages with your family and friends?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix II Sample of semi-structured interview questions (Russian)

Пример вопросов для полуструктурированного собеседования:

Вы хотели бы рассказать мне что-нибудь о себе, о своей профессии или о своем возрасте?

Вы хотели бы выбрать псевдоним для себя или предпочитаете, чтобы это сделала я в целях сохранения конфиденциальности?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Часть I</th>
<th>История миграции</th>
<th>Общие вопросы</th>
<th>Конкретные вопросы</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Откуда Вы родом? В какой стране вы родились?</td>
<td>1.a Где Вы в настоящее время живете?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Какой была Ваша жизнь в Украине до войны?</td>
<td>1.b Как долго Вы живете в своей стране происхождения?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Как Вы планировали свой отъезд из Украины? Когда и почему?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Были ли Вы первым эмигрировавшим человеком в вашей семье?</td>
<td>6.a Сколько стран вы пересекли до прибытия в Испанию?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Кто был с Вами во время путешествия?</td>
<td>6.b Значили ли вы кого-нибудь здесь до того, как приехать?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Почему Вы решили приехать в Испанию?</td>
<td>7.a Как вы с ними общались? Звонки, сообщения, фотографии, электронные письма?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Во время путешествия Вам удавалось общаться со своими близкими? Если нет, то почему?</td>
<td>7.b О чем вы говорили (о конкретных людях, о конкретных средствах)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Где Вы в настоящее время живете?
2. Как долго Вы живете в своей стране происхождения?
3. Сколько стран вы пересекли до прибытия в Испанию?
4. Значили ли вы кого-нибудь здесь до того, как приехать?
5. Как вы с ними общались? Звонки, сообщения, фотографии, электронные письма?
6. О чем вы говорили (о конкретных людях, о конкретных средствах)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ЧАСТЬ 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Семья далеко за границей</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Не могли бы Вы описать свою семью? (ближких и дальних родственников)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Сравнивая с Вашей жизнью в Украине, как бы вы описали свою жизнь в Испании?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Чувствуете ли вы, что стали ближе или отдалились от своей семьи? С кем? Почему?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Что вы чувствуете, когда некоторые члены вашей семьи не находятся с вами в Испании?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. В какие моменты вашей повседневной жизни вы особенно чувствуете эту дистанцию?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Как вы справляетесь с отсутствием семьи?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Как вам удалось поддерживать семейные отношения на расстоянии? Что было легко? Что было сложным? Какие стратегии позволили вам преодолеть эти трудности?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Как бы вы оценили по шкале от 1 до 10 свою способность «быть рядом» с людьми, которые не находятся с вами в Испании?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Чувствуют ли они, что вы можете быть “рядом” с ними?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Есть ли какие-либо ситуации, виды деятельности или люди, которые заставляют вас чувствовать себя ближе к вашей стране, находясь в Испании? Какие из них? Почему?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.a Если бы вам пришлось описать свою семью в трех словах, какими бы они были?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.b В каких странах проживают члены вашей семьи?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.a Скучаете ли вы по кому-нибудь из членов своей семьи? По кому вы скучаете?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.b Есть ли какие-то конкретные ситуации, в которых вам их не хватает?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.a Всякий раз, когда вы нужна были, могли ли вы поделиться важными для вас моментами или новостями со своей семьей?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.b Помните ли вы конкретный момент, когда вы хотели быть там, но пропустили его?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.a В какие конкретные моменты вы чувствуете, что можете быть рядом с членами вашей семьи будучи на расстоянии, а когда нет?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ЧАСТЬ 3 Присутствие через использование средств коммуникации</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Что для Вас значит «быть вместе»? Возможно ли быть рядом, когда ты физически не можешь быть рядом?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Как вы пытаетесь чувствовать себя ближе к своей семье в Украине?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Как вы общаетесь со своими родственниками в обычный день?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Как вы связываетесь с ними? И сколько времени вы тратите на это?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Какие средства коммуникации вы используете для связи со своей семьей?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Можете ли вы вспомнить, с кем вы больше всего разговаривали вчера и как долго? И о чем вы говорили?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Сколько раз в неделю вы звоните своему мужу/отцу/матери?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Как вы распоряжаетесь своим временем для общения с членами вашей семьи?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. На какие темы вы говорите чаще всего?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Что происходит, если в течение дня вы не можете с ними связаться?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### PARTE 1 Historia migratoria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preguntas generales</th>
<th>Preguntas específicas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ¿En qué país has nacido?</td>
<td>1.a ¿Dónde vives actualmente?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ¿Cómo era tu vida en Ucrania antes de la guerra?</td>
<td>1.b ¿Cuánto tiempo llevas viviendo en tu país de origen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. ¿Cómo planeaste tu salida de Ucrania? ¿Cuándo y por qué?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Fuiste la primera persona de su familia en emigrar?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ¿Quién te acompañó durante el viaje?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. ¿Por qué decidiste venir a España?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Durante el viaje, ¿pudiste comunicarte con tus seres queridos? ¿Por qué no?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. ¿Recibiste apoyo de tus familiares para llegar a España?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. ¿Qué proyecto tenías en mente cuando saliste de Ucrania?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. ¿Piensas volver a Ucrania? ¿Por qué?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6.a ¿Cuántos países cruzaste antes de llegar a España?

6.b ¿Conocías a alguien antes de llegar?

7.a ¿Cómo te comunicabas? ¿Llamadas, mensajes, fotos, correos electrónicos?

7.b ¿De qué hablabais (personas concretas, medios concretos)?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preguntas generales</th>
<th>Preguntas específicas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PARTE 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La familia más allá de las fronteras</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. ¿Podrías describir a tu familia? (nuclear y extensa)</td>
<td>1.a Si tuvieras que describir a tu familia en tres palabras, ¿cuáles serían?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. En comparación con tu vida en Ucrania, ¿cómo describirías tu vida en España?</td>
<td>1.b ¿En qué países viven los miembros de tu familia?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. ¿Sientes que te has acercado o distanciado más de tu familia? ¿Con quién? ¿Por qué?</td>
<td>4.a ¿Echa de menos a algún miembro de su familia? ¿A quién echas de menos?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. ¿Cómo te sientes cuando algunas personas de tu familia no están en España contigo?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. En qué momentos de tu vida cotidiana sientes la distancia?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. ¿Cómo afrontas la ausencia de la familia?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. ¿Cómo has vivido el mantenimiento de la relación familiar en la distancia? ¿Qué ha sido fácil? ¿Qué ha supuesto un reto? ¿Qué estrategias te han permitido superar estos retos?</td>
<td>7.a Siempre que lo has necesitado, ¿has podido compartir con tu familia momentos o noticias importantes para ti?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. En una escala del 1 al 10, ¿cómo calificarías tu capacidad de estar presente para las personas que no están en España con usted?</td>
<td>7.b ¿Recuerda algún momento concreto en el que le hubiera gustado estar presente, pero no has podido?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. ¿Sienten que puedes estar &quot;ahí para&quot; ellos?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. ¿Hay situaciones, actividades o personas que te hacen sentir cerca de tu país en España? ¿Cuáles? ¿Por qué?</td>
<td>9.a ¿En qué momentos concretos sientes que puedes estar a distancia con los miembros de tu familia y cuándo no?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.a Si tuvieras que describir a tu familia en tres palabras, ¿cuáles serían?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.b ¿En qué países viven los miembros de tu familia?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.a ¿Echa de menos a algún miembro de su familia? ¿A quién echas de menos?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.b ¿Hay alguna situación concreta en la que los eches de menos?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.a Siempre que lo has necesitado, ¿has podido compartir con tu familia momentos o noticias importantes para ti?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.b ¿Recuerda algún momento concreto en el que le hubiera gustado estar presente, pero no has podido?</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.a ¿En qué momentos concretos sientes que puedes estar a distancia con los miembros de tu familia y cuándo no?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARTE 3</td>
<td>1. ¿Qué significa para ti estar juntos? ¿Es posible estar cerca cuando físicamente no se puede estar?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. ¿Cómo intentas sentirte cerca de tu familia en Ucrania?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. ¿Podría decírmelo cómo se comunica con sus familiares en un día normal? ¿De qué maneras te pones en contacto? ¿Cuánto tiempo les dedicas?</td>
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<td>4. ¿Qué tipo de TIC utilizas para conectar con tu familia?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. ¿Puedes recordar quién fue la persona con la que más hablaste ayer y durante cuánto tiempo? ¿Y de qué hablasteis?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. ¿Cuántas veces a la semana llamas a tu marido/padre/madre?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. Cómo gestionas tu tiempo para conectar con los miembros de tu familia?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8. De qué temas hablais más?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. ¿Qué ocurre si durante un día no has podido conectar?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.a ¿Dónde estás mentalmente la mayor parte del tiempo, en España o en Ucrania (o en otro lugar)?</td>
<td>1.b ¿Qué importancia tiene para ti estar conectado?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.a ¿Hay algo concreto que te ayude a tener esa sensación y por qué?</td>
<td>3.a ¿Cómo lo usa? ¿Con quién intentas estar conectado?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.b ¿A qué hora del día sueles estar en contacto online?</td>
<td>4.a ¿Qué tipo de redes sociales utilizas más? ¿Por qué?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.b ¿Con qué sensación te dejan algunos de estos contactos a través de las TIC?</td>
<td>8.a ¿Qué cosas no compartes/no hablas (¿por qué? ¿con quién?)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.b ¿Comparten los mismos mensajes con sus familiares y amistades?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>