Explaining Refugee Assistance: Evidence on Syrian and Ukrainian Refugees in Poland

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Abstract: We explore the correlates of assistance to refugees from the Global South (Syria) and Global North (Ukraine) in Eastern Europe in a nationally-representative face-to-face survey of 2,500 Poles. We find that dispositional empathy, a stable personality trait, strongly predicts both current and future assistance, while situational empathy activated in a perspective-taking experiment has no effect. In a conjoint experiment, we further show that refugees in greater humanitarian need are more likely to receive help, and that hosts with higher dispositional empathy are more responsive to these refugee profiles. We show that Poles whose families were victimized during WWII have higher levels of dispositional empathy. We advance existing research by distinguishing between different forms of empathy, deploying multiple measures of refugee assistance, and demonstrating that preferences for refugees with specific traits are consistent across Global South and Global North refugees.

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1. Introduction

Forced displacement is among the most acute challenges of this century. In 2022, 108 million people were forcibly displaced due to conflict and natural calamities; 35 million of them crossed international borders as refugees (UNHCR 2023). Despite the scale and urgency of the problem, scholarly understanding of who helps refugees and why remains incomplete. Addressing this gap is important for assessing a society's capacity to incorporate refugees and for designing policies that mobilize support from host communities.

Refugee assistance exists at the intersection of supply-side factors having to do with the willingness of hosts to help, and demand-side characteristics of refugees that trigger helping behavior. This article explores which characteristics of citizens in host communities predict helping behavior and how refugees' demographics affect the willingness to help. We advance the literature by studying the role of dispositional empathy, understood as a naturally occurring variation in how empathetic different individuals are in the same situation (Davis, Luce, and Kraus 1994; Lishner, Stocks, and Steinert 2020). On the supply side, we show that citizens of host countries with higher levels of dispositional empathy are more likely to help. On the demand side, we show that refugees who are in greater humanitarian need are more likely to receive assistance, and that it is individuals with higher levels of dispositional empathy who are more responsive to refugees' humanitarian need.⁵

⁵ Hypotheses in this study were pre-registered. [Link to PAP redacted for anonymity.] Deviations from PAP are discussed in Appendix A and in the text.

To date, most studies in political science, while recognizing the importance of empathy to decisions to help, have instead focused on situational empathy – activated through perspectivetaking (Adida, Lo, and Platas 2018; Audette, Horowitz, and Michelitch 2020; Williamson et al. 2020). Situational empathy tends to be target- and situation-specific, and its effects are typically short-lived (Todd and Galinsky 2014; Adida, Lo, and Platas 2018). In contrast, dispositional empathy is a more stable trait that evolves throughout life as a product of socialization and life experiences. We argue that, while dispositional empathy is harder to manipulate, it has greater potential to drive prosocial behavior than situational empathy. Dispositional empathy is a necessary, if insufficient, condition for the activation of situational empathy (Baron-Cohen 2004), and individuals with higher dispositional empathy are more likely to act prosocially across a wide range of situations. While dispositional empathy is at least partially acquired through socialization and education in childhood and adolescence, and perhaps even genetically (Abramson et al. 2020), it can also be developed through lived experiences in adulthood. For instance, studies have suggested that individual or family exposure to adversity, such as displacement and violence, may enhance dispositional empathy (Lim and DeSteno 2016; Sirin, Valentino, and Villalobos 2017); this is known as the empathy born of violence hypothesis (Hartman and Morse 2018).⁶

This paper advances the literature on the correlates of prosocial behavior by studying the role of dispositional and situational empathy in assistance to refugees in Eastern Europe, an understudied context where the stark contrast in the reception of refugees from the Global South and Global North has fueled debates about the "racial empathy gap." We conducted a nationally representative face-to-face survey of 2,500 Polish citizens in the fall of 2022. Poland is an especially interesting

⁶ Evidence for this hypothesis is mixed, and relevant studies do not measure empathy directly (Hartman and Morse 2018; Wayne and Zhukov 2022; Wayne, Damann, and Fachter 2023; Ghosn, Braithwaite, and Chu 2019).

case because it came under strong pressure to accept refugees from the Global South and North: Syrians, alongside Afghans and Iraqis, under a European Union (EU)-wide quota in 2015 and Ukrainians after Russia's invasion in February 2022. The Polish government refused to accommodate Syrians, breaking EU laws, but welcomed refugees from Ukraine. Public discourse about these two groups is very different: Syrians are framed as a threatening outgroup, whereas Ukrainians are seen as Europeans and fellow victims of recurrent Russian aggression.

We show that dispositional empathy is a key predictor of actual helping behavior (charitable donations), past self-reported assistance, as well as the willingness to help in the future. An increase by one-standard-deviation on the dispositional empathy scale adapted from social psychology is associated with an increase in the willingness to help Ukrainian refugees by 10 percentage points and Syrian refugees by 13 percentage points. In line with previous studies, we find that dispositional empathy is higher among female, older, and better-educated respondents. Furthermore, we show that Poles whose families were victimized during World War II (WWII) have higher levels of dispositional empathy and are more likely to assist both Syrian and Ukrainian refugees. This lends support to the empathy born of violence hypothesis. In contrast, an attempt to trigger situational empathy through a perspective-taking exercise in a survey experiment – where we draw a parallel between the historical suffering of Poles in WWII and the experiences of refugees today – fails to elicit helping behavior toward either refugee group.⁷ This suggests that

⁷ Standard perspective-taking interventions ask respondents to imagine themselves in the shoes of another in order to break down the ingroup-outgroup boundary. Activation of historical parallels between the respondent's or her family's past experience and the present-day experience of another pursues the same goal (Dinas, Fouka, and Schläpfer 2021; Wayne and Zhukov 2022; Wayne, Damann, and Fachter 2023). Therefore, we refer to our intervention as perspective-taking, although it is a modification.

the effectiveness of perspective-taking is context-specific and that this approach might fail when the memory of suffering and awareness of historical parallels are already highly salient.

When it comes to refugee characteristics, in a conjoint experiment that was part of the same survey, we find that irrespective of refugee origin, respondents weigh the humanitarian needs of refugees more heavily than their potential economic contributions. Mothers with children, poorer individuals, and those who suffered more intense violence are more likely to be helped than single young men and better-off individuals with professional skills. This challenges studies suggesting that highly-skilled refugees are particularly welcome in the Global North due to their potential for economic integration (e.g. Adida, Lo, and Platas 2019). Instead, our findings are consistent with the argument that attitudes toward refugees are less sensitive to economic concerns than attitudes toward economic migrants (Abdelaaty and Steele 2022; Abdelaaty 2021; Newman et al. 2015). We link our demand-side findings on variation in dispositional empathy among host-society citizens to these supply-side findings on refugee characteristics by showing that respondents with higher levels of dispositional empathy are more responsive to vulnerable categories of refugees.

While generally responsive to refugees' humanitarian needs, respondents are much less likely to assist Muslims (on the anti-Muslim bias see also Adida, Laitin, and Valfort 2016; Adida, Lo, and Platas 2019) and those of a different race. Importantly, these penalties apply equally to refugees from the Global North and Global South and are not moderated by dispositional empathy. Nevertheless, because Syrians are more likely to be young men – and therefore less likely to trigger empathy – and also Muslims of a different race, they are less likely to be helped overall. It bears noting that the migrant characteristics included in our empirical model – humanitarian need,

religion, and race – do not fully account for the variation in helping behavior toward Syrians and Ukrainians; there is a bias in favor of the Global North refugees, upward of five percentage points, due to other factors.

This study is among the first in political science to distinguish between dispositional and situational empathy (see also Brophy and Mullinix 2024), measure dispositional empathy directly, and demonstrate the relationship between dispositional empathy, intergenerational exposure to violence, and refugee assistance. Second, we evaluate refugee assistance using a multifaceted measurement strategy, which assesses both self-reported real-world helping behavior (see also Hartman and Morse 2018) and actual charitable contributions toward refugees' welfare (see Lazarev and Sharma 2017), in addition to the more commonly used metrics of pro-refugee attitudes and policy preferences. Recognizing the importance of citizen engagement, governments are increasingly relying on private individuals to offer direct assistance to refugees, which makes this paper's focus on actual helping behavior especially pertinent (Fratzke, Pulkkinen, and Ugolini 2023).⁸ By asking respondents to donate money to a charity, we reduce concerns about cheap talk and social desirability bias. Using multiple measures, each with its strengths and weaknesses thus enhances overall measurement validity and increases confidence in our findings. Third, ours is one of the few studies to compare helping behavior toward refugees from the Global North and South side-by-side and explore the relevance of various elements constituting these broad regional identities, from religion and race to demographic and economic traits (see also Bansak, Hainmueller, and Hangartner 2016, 2023). Such a direct comparison is central for understanding the gap in empathy and helping behavior toward different refugee groups. Ukrainians and Syrians

⁸ For example, the United States (US) launched the Welcome Corps program in 2023, allowing US citizens to nominate and sponsor refugees of their choice.

differ in traits shared with host-country citizens – such as religion, skin color, cultural and historical identity – as well as in characteristics that signal humanitarian need, such as gender, age, and economic status. Both sets of features have been theorized as relevant for empathetic response and, in combination, go a long way toward explaining the differential treatment of the two groups. Finally, by studying Poland, we explore refugee assistance in an understudied context, adding geographic diversity to a field that has primarily concentrated on Western Europe, North America, and the Global South.

2. Literature and Hypotheses

Research on attitudes toward refugees was initially focused on citizens' concerns about economic or cultural threats posed by involuntarily migration, as reflected by hosts' preference for individuals who are high-skilled, educated, speak the host country's language, and share the same religion (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014; Bansak, Hainmueller, and Hangartner 2016, 2023).^o More recent studies have suggested that attitudes toward refugees are driven substantially by humanitarian factors, leading to a preference for more vulnerable individuals (Adida, Lo, and Platas 2019; Alrababa'h et al. 2021) and that empathy plays a central role in shaping refugee support (Abdelaaty 2021; Adida, Lo, and Platas 2018; Hartman and Morse 2018; Newman et al. 2015; Williamson et al. 2020). Yet despite the growing focus on empathy, few studies on refugee reception have actually measured empathy,¹⁰ gone beyond light-touch perspective-taking interventions in studying its effects, or distinguished between its different forms.

⁹ Bansak, Hainmueller, and Hangartner (2016, 2023) consider not only refugees' ascriptive and economic characteristics but also special vulnerabilities, such as being handicapped or tortured, on hosts' preferences.

¹⁰ Newman et al. (2015) measure empathy as a trait but treat it as a moderator rather than an explanatory variable. Chatruc and Rozo (2021) measure respondents' empathetic capacity as an outcome following a perspective-taking

In this paper, we draw on psychology and neuroscience, which have been at the forefront of empathy research, and differentiate between dispositional and situational empathy. Dispositional empathy is usefully conceptualized as a basic "tendency to react to other people's observed experiences" (Konrath, O'Brien, and Hsing 2011, 181). Those with higher dispositional empathy are capable of reacting to others' emotions at a greater level of intensity or have an easier time adopting others' perspectives. By contrast, situational empathy is elicited in specific circumstances and directed toward a particular person (Jauniaux et al. 2020). Simplifying, dispositional empathy is a relatively stable personality trait, whereas situational empathy is context- and target-specific. These two forms of empathy are positively correlated but conceptually distinct. Dispositional empathy is a necessary but insufficient condition for the exercise of situational empathy; a person who is unable to connect with others is unlikely to be able to respond empathetically to someone in distress (Baron-Cohen 2004).¹¹

Although dispositional empathy has a genetic component, it continues to evolve through experiences and social interactions in early childhood, adolescence, or even adulthood (Abramson et al. 2020; Sirin, Valentino, and Villalobos 2017; Riess 2017; Heyes 2018). Dispositional empathy typically increases with age and education, as people "build increasingly sophisticated cognitive representations of other people's emotional experiences" (Sirin, Valentino, and Villalobos 2017,

exercise, with mixed results. Williamson et al. (2020) use respondents' empathetic response toward immigrants as a mediator in a perspective-taking exercise.

¹¹ Scholars conceptualize empathy as including both an emotional response to another person (an affective component) and an understanding of the other person's perspective (a cognitive component) (Decety and Jackson 2004; Jauniaux et al. 2020). The affective component entails sharing in the other's emotional state; the cognitive component involves "putting oneself in the other's shoes" (Todd and Galinsky 2014).

430). It is well-established that women have higher average levels of dispositional empathy than men, due to both neurobiological characteristics and socialization experiences (Rochat 2023).

Adverse life experiences may significantly contribute to the development of dispositional empathy. According to the "altruism born of suffering" hypothesis, experiencing adversity increases empathy and prosocial behavior (Staub and Vollhardt 2008; Hadjiandreou and Cameron 2022).¹² The more severe past adversity, the greater dispositional empathy and willingness to help others (Lim and DeSteno 2016). Psychological processes leading to this outcome include perceived similarity with other people in need and a greater ability to understand how others feel (Staub and Vollhardt 2008). These processes can occur at both individual and group levels. For instance, Sirin, Valentino, and Villalobos (2017) show that historically disadvantaged populations are more empathetic toward marginalized outgroups because of their own "salient narrative of group oppression and struggle," internalized through parental socialization, friendships, schooling, and workplace experiences.

In political science, empirical studies in Liberia, Syria, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have shown that individuals who have personally experienced displacement are more likely to host refugees and the internally displaced; a finding that this work has attributed to their greater empathy (Hartman and Morse 2018; Hartman, Morse, and Weber 2021; Peisakhin, Stoop, and Van der Windt 2024). The results have been mixed with respect to intergenerational transmission of empathy caused by past trauma. Although Wayne and Zhukov (2022) show that, in the US, the

¹² A related concept is "post-traumatic growth," whereby individuals who have struggled with traumatic events experience positive transformations, which include improved connections with others and greater empathy (Tedeschi and Calhoun 2004).

descendants of Holocaust survivors are more supportive of hosting refugees, Wayne, Damann, and Fachter (2023) do not find these patterns in Israel. Notably, most studies relating empathy to displacement and violence do not measure dispositional empathy directly or distinguish between empathy and altruistic behavior.¹³

To date, much of the focus in political science has instead been on situational empathy activated through perspective-taking interventions. These interventions may consist of asking respondents to imagine having to flee their home or exposing them to refugees' personal narratives, which has been shown to promote refugee acceptance and increase support for immigration (Adida, Lo, and Platas 2018; Simonovits, Kézdi, and Kardos 2018; Audette, Horowitz, and Michelitch 2020; Chatruc and Rozo 2021; Williamson et al. 2020). In a variation on regular perspective-taking primes, several studies have sought to activate the memory of past family suffering among those in host countries in order to increase their perceived similarity and identification with refugees. For instance, Dinas, Fouka, and Schläpfer (2021) reminded Greek and German respondents of their families' displacement in the aftermath of the two world wars and linked these experiences to those of present-day refugees, showing that this prime increased pledged donations to the UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, and improved attitudes toward refugees (also see Hong, Mo, and Paik 2024). These studies, again, do not measure empathy or distinguish between stable individual differences in dispositional empathy, produced by the history of past suffering, and changes in situational empathy, triggered by the experimental prime in response to perceived refugee-host similarity.

¹³ Empathy and altruism are distinct but related concepts (see Batson et al. 2002). Prosocial behavior may also be motivated by fairness, reciprocity, norm following, and other factors.

Perspective-taking interventions are attractive because they can be studied experimentally and translated into low-cost policy interventions. However, empathy generated through perspective-taking has been shown to apply only to the targeted group and does not easily transfer (Todd and Galinsky 2014). In addition, the effects of perspective-taking tend to be short-lived (Adida, Lo, and Platas 2018). In this, perspective-taking suffers from the same limitations as other low-cost prejudice-reduction interventions, whose effects rarely outlast the study period and which fail to capture the range of real-world interventions and influences (Paluck and Green 2009).

The characteristics of incoming refugees likely moderate the impact of dispositional and situational empathy on helping behavior. Refugees who are perceived as ingroup members because they share traits with potential hosts – religion, ethnicity, regional origins, or common historical experiences – elicit more empathy and receive more assistance (Arceneaux 2017; Hadjiandreou and Cameron 2022; Williamson et al. 2020). Situational empathy generated through perspectivetaking may be particularly sensitive to target characteristics (Todd and Galinsky 2014). Dispositional empathy arising from past experiences of violence might potentially transcend group boundaries and lead to a preference for more vulnerable individuals regardless of their group identity, but support for this conjecture remains inconclusive. One study finds that individuals who experienced violence are more likely to host refugees from ethnic and religious outgroups and are more responsive to humanitarian considerations (Hartman and Morse 2018), but a similar study elsewhere reveals that respondents exposed to violence react differently to indicators of humanitarian need based on refugees' religious identity (Hartman, Morse, and Weber 2021). An important limitation of this innovative research is its focus on refugees from the Global South, which restricts the set of refugee characteristics that can be studied.

Building on this discussion, we hypothesize that assistance to refugees will be higher among individuals with higher dispositional empathy (H1). We further expect that dispositional empathy will be higher among respondents who were exposed to violence and displacement, directly or through their families (H2). We tentatively follow the standard expectations in the literature on perspective-taking and hypothesize that drawing parallels between a family's experience of historical displacement and refugees' current experiences will increase helping behavior (H3). Finally, we hypothesize that respondents will be more supportive of refugees with traits that signal greater humanitarian need, and that respondents with higher dispositional empathy will be more responsive to such traits (H4).¹⁴

Alongside testing these hypotheses, we consider alternative, pre-registered explanations for helping behavior. These are (1) perceived economic threat, proxied by the concern that refugees might take the natives' jobs (Sniderman, Hagendoorn, and Prior 2004; Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014), (2) perceived cultural proximity between respondents and refugees (Pepinsky, Reiff, and Szabo 2022); (3) respondents' anxiety about the geopolitical situation, theorized to exacerbate the outgroup empathy gap (Arceneaux 2017); and (4) the respondents' education level (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2010), political ideology, religiosity, and wealth.

3. Context

¹⁴ These hypotheses were pre-registered before data collection. The exception is the second part of H4: that respondents with higher dispositional empathy will be more sensitive to refugees that are in need. Note that we also pre-registered the focus on differences in assistance to Syrians and Ukrainians.

We focus on Poland, a middle-income Eastern European country that faced unique pressure to accept refugees from the Global South and Global North and exhibited stark differences in the reception of these groups.¹⁵ In 2015, when 1.3 million refugees from Syria sought asylum in Europe, the centrist Civic Platform (PO) government reluctantly agreed to accept a small number of Syrians under an EU deal but said that religious background would be considered in asylum decisions (Financial Times 2015). Subsequently, the newly elected rightist Law and Justice (PiS) government refused to accept Poland's refugee quota. The PiS prime minister caused controversy by suggesting that Syrian refugees were a major threat to the country's security and public health (*POLITICO* 2015). As a result, there were under one thousand Syrian refugees in Poland, most of them Christian, at the time of the study.

The issue of Syrian refugees, however, did not fade from public view. In the summer and fall of 2021, thousands of migrants from the Middle East tried to cross illegally into Poland, encouraged by Belarusian authorities. The Polish government declared a state of emergency and in 2022 began constructing a 190-km border wall to keep these refugees out, perceiving the crisis as an operation by Belarusian and Russian security services to destabilize European security (*Euronews* 2022). The refugee crisis at the border continued through 2022, with Polish border guards recording thousands of illegal crossing attempts.

Poland's response to Ukrainian refugees was markedly more welcoming. The first wave of forcibly displaced Ukrainians arrived in Poland shortly after Russia annexed Crimea in 2014. At that time,

¹⁵ Ukrainians are commonly described as refugees and granted a temporary protection status introduced in 2022 specifically in response to the Russian invasion, which provides them with a humanitarian residence permit. The status of Middle Eastern migrants is more ambiguous, requiring them to apply for asylum and prove their eligibility for refugee status in the EU.

Poland granted work permits to upward of 300,000 Ukrainians. In the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Poland opened its borders and revised immigration laws to grant Ukrainians full access to the formal labor market and social benefits. At the time of our survey, nearly 1.4 million Ukrainians had temporary protection status in Poland (UNHCR 2022). Assistance efforts were driven primarily by voluntary, grassroots initiatives, with local governments, private citizens, and NGOs playing key roles in supporting Ukrainians fleeing the war. However, as the Russia-Ukraine conflict persisted, some Poles grew frustrated with the Ukrainian refugees' access to the labor market and public health services, prompting the government to reduce refugee benefits in the summer of 2023 (Krzysztoszek 2023).

Polish discourse emphasized that, unlike Syrians, Ukrainians were fellow Europeans and therefore culturally proximate. Islamophobic rhetoric was prominent in the discussions about Syrians, a predominantly Muslim group portrayed as a security and cultural threat by the far right. Some politicians also explained their reluctance to host Syrians by the fact that they were predominantly young men and thus economic migrants rather than refugees (Polsatnews 2017). The refugee status of Ukrainians – mostly women and children, as males aged 18-60 were prohibited from leaving Ukraine – was never questioned.

Polish media and politicians further stressed that like Ukraine today, Poland experienced Russian aggression.¹⁶ In 1939, Poland was attacked by Nazi Germany from the west as the Soviet army marched in from the east, and over six million Poles are estimated to have perished in WWII.¹⁷

¹⁶ Some Polish media also drew analogies between Poles' experience in WWII and that of Syrians, but this framing was rare (Gazeta Krakowska 2015; Na Temat 2015).

¹⁷ This statistic includes Polish Jews, of which around three million were killed (Bankier and Gutman 2003).

Many Polish families were deported to Siberia in 1939-41, and most of the Soviet-occupied territory was permanently annexed to the Soviet Union in 1945, uprooting another two million Poles (Davies 2005).¹⁸ The Russian invasion of Ukraine raised fears that Poland would be next. In a March 2022 CBOS survey, 85% of Poles agreed that the war in Ukraine was a serious and urgent threat to their own security. In summary, Poland offers an important litmus test for the empathy born of violence hypothesis as well as for the effectiveness of perspective-taking interventions highlighting shared experiences between refugees and the host population.

4. Data and Empirical Strategy

4.1. Data Collection and Sample

The survey was fielded face-to-face in the autumn of 2022 in a nationally representative sample of 2,500 individuals over the age of 18. The fieldwork was implemented by a leading public opinion firm, DANAE. Details of the sampling strategy are in Appendix B, and we describe the respondent pool in Table 1.¹⁹ The typical respondent is 49 years old and is relatively comfortable economically (3.4 on a 6-point scale).²⁰ About half (53%) are female. Most respondents are Catholic (77%), and around a fifth (18%) have higher education. The wording of all the survey questions and their description are available in Appendix D.

¹⁸ At the same time, the history of violent interethnic conflict between Poles and Ukrainians, which escalated into the ethnic cleansing of Poles in 1943-45 and continues to be a contentious issue in Polish-Ukrainian relations, was, for a time, de-emphasized.

¹⁹ The response rate is a little under 16%, which is representative for Eastern Europe. DANAE used RIM (Random Iterative Method) weighting to correct for sampling biases, aligning the sample with the relevant population benchmarks on gender and age. Throughout the paper we present results based on unweighted regressions. Weighted regressions can be found in Appendix C; results remain qualitatively unchanged.

²⁰ This corresponds to a situation where households have enough money to buy food and clothes, while leaning towards being able to buy new electrical appliances and travel abroad on vacation.

4.2. Measuring Helping Behavior

We measure assistance to Ukrainian and Syrian refugees in multiple ways, as summarized in Table 1. The first of these measures is self-reported past helping behavior. Just over half (51%) of respondents indicated having helped Ukrainian refugees since the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Respondents reported donating food and clothes (42%) as well as money (22%). Only 5% said that they volunteered and 3% that they assisted Ukrainian refugees with jobs or housing. Helping rates toward Syrians were much lower, with only 8% of respondents reporting any type of assistance since 2015; this is not surprising, as there were few Syrian refugees in Poland. Correspondingly, 69% of respondents reported that they have not met any Syrian refugees, 5% reported donating food, clothing, or money, and none said that they assisted with finding jobs or housing. When respondents were asked about the future, the gap in willingness to help Ukrainian (74%) versus Syrian (57%) refugees narrowed considerably.²¹

We also recorded respondents' opinions about the Polish government's refugee policy. We asked whether respondents supported the admission of as many Ukrainian refugees as wished to enter Poland. As to the Syrian refugees, given that the government policy vis-à-vis this group is already very restrictive, we asked whether respondents favored more Syrian refugees being allowed in or if they supported the existing policy. Forty-seven percent of respondents supported allowing all Ukrainian refugees into Poland, and 37% favored easing restrictions for Syrians.

Table	1.	Descri	ptive	Statistics
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	Obs.	Mean	Std.	Min	Max
Demographic information					
Respondent is female (0/1)	2,500	0.53	0.50	0	1
Respondent's age	2,500	48.69	16.85	18	89

²¹ The order of the question blocs about Syrian and Ukrainian refugees was randomized to guard against question order effects.

Respondent's economic condition (1= We don't have enough money for food; 6=	2,396	3.40	0.99	1	6
We do not experience any financial limitations)	, , , ,	0.10		<u>^</u>	_
Respondent has higher education $(0/1)$	2,492	0.18	0.38	0	1
Respondent is Catholic (0/1)	2,500	0.77	0.42	0	1
Refugee helping behaviors					
Previous assistance to Ukrainian refugees (0/1)	2,440	0.51	0.50	0	1
Previous assistance Syrian refugees (0/1)	2,404	0.08	0.27	0	1
Future assistance Ukrainian refugees (0/1)	2,329	0.74	0.44	0	1
Future assistance Syrian refugees (0/1)	2,237	0.57	0.49	0	1
Support entry Ukrainian refugees into Poland (0/1)	2,226	0.47	0.50	0	1
Support entry Syrian refugees into Poland (0/1)	2,116	0.37	0.48	0	1
Contribution to charity supporting Ukrainian refugees (0-1000)	2,284	161.51	206.98	0	1,000
Contribution to charity supporting Syrian refugees (0-1000)	2,284	96.68	139.67	0	1,000
Assistance index, Ukrainian refugees (0-4)	1,950	2.35	1.35	0	4
Assistance index, Syrian refugees (0-4)	1,776	1.52	1.16	0	4
Explanatory variables					
Dispositional empathy (0= Does not describe me well; 3= Describes me very well)	2,481	1.42	0.65	0	3
Sociotropic concern economy (0/1)	2,284	0.40	0.49	0	1
Egocentric concern job (0/1)	2,416	0.45	0.50	0	1
Cultural similarity Ukraine (1= completely different from Poles; 10 = Poles)	2,273	6.30	2.45	1	10
Cultural similarity Syria (1= completely different from Poles; 10 = Poles)	2,117	2.97	2.31	1	10
Concern Russia (1= Not at all;; 4= very concerned.)	2,452	3.05	0.77	1	4
Family member died or displaced in WWII	2,500	0.38	0.48	0	1
Right-wing political ideology (1-5)	1,484	2.95	1.10	1	5

Notes: Descriptive statistics on demographic, outcome, and explanatory variables. Detailed variable descriptions in Appendix D.

Survey-based measures of helping behavior may be influenced by social desirability bias, with respondents potentially overstating their past or intended assistance in order to align with what they perceive as socially acceptable or "right" behavior. To obtain a more objective measure of helping behavior we asked respondents to divide 1,000 złoty (around 200USD at the time of the survey) among five large Polish charities – two supporting Syrian and Ukrainian refugees and three dedicated to domestic issues (public health, animal shelters, and environmental protection). We described the causes that the charities support but did not provide specific charity names. The order of these options was randomized across respondents. Respondents had to allocate the entire endowment across these options, knowing that we would implement the choice of ten randomly

selected surveys. An organization aiming to improve healthcare in Poland received, on average, 364 złoty (75USD), and one providing shelter for abandoned animals received 223 złoty (45USD). A charity working with Ukrainian refugees received 162 złoty (33USD), slightly more than a domestic environmental organization (155 złoty; 32USD). The charity catering to Syrian refugees came last with an average donation of 97 złoty (20USD).

Past helping behaviour, willingness to assist refugees in the future, attitudes toward the government's immigration policies, and charitable donations all measure different facets of the same underlying concept. To capture this empirically we built an assistance index that combines all four measures. We first created a variable indicating above or below median charity donations, and then summed the values of the four indicator variables; this resulted in an index of helping behavior that ranges from 0 to 4. On average, respondents score 2.35 on this index when it comes to assistance toward Ukrainians and 1.52 in relation to Syrians. An additive index is more intuitive than a standardized z-transformed index, and the two are almost perfectly correlated (at 0.95 for assistance to Syrians and 0.96 for Ukrainians).

4.3. Explanatory Variables

To measure dispositional empathy we use a modified Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) (Davis 1983), validated across different contexts and considered "one of the most comprehensive measures of self-reported empathic disposition" (Ingoglia, Lo Coco, and Albiero 2016, 461). A potential weakness of the IRI is that, like all self-reported measures, it is susceptible to social desirability bias. While women are generally more empathetic, their IRI scores may also reflect the fact that empathy is a more desirable trait for women (Feldman et al. 2020). The IRI may also

be less interpretable for people with lower IQ and verbal skills. To mitigate against these concerns, we include gender and education as control variables in all the analyses. In line with earlier studies, we shortened the standard 28-item scale to seven items that are representative of each subcomponent of the IRI, to fit within the strict time constraints of field interviews. Respondents rated each item on a four-point scale ranging from "Does not describe me well" (0) to "Describes me very well" (3). Our measure of dispositional empathy is the mean score across the seven items.²² An average respondent scored 1.4, around the middle point on the scale, with higher scores indicating higher empathy (see Table 1).

The role of dispositional empathy in helping decisions is assessed against alternative explanations stressing economic concerns, cultural distance from refugees, anxiety over Russia possibly attacking Poland, ideological leanings, and respondents' demographic characteristics. We measure respondents' risk of unemployment and, separately, their sociotropic concerns about refugees' impact on the job market. Forty-five percent of respondents were worried that they or a close relative might lose their job in the next six months. Forty percent of respondents agreed that refugees' entry makes it harder for (all) Poles to find jobs.²³ Cultural distance from refugees is measured on a 10-point scale of cultural similarity where respondents separately arranged Syrians and Ukrainians on a ladder relative to Poles who are at 10. On average, respondents place Syrians at 3 and Ukrainians at 6.3. We include a measure of respondents' concern about a potential Russian attack against Poland as a proxy for geopolitical anxiety. An average respondent is "somewhat concerned" about a possible Russian attack, at three on a four-point scale. To measure family

 $^{^{22}}$ More information on the modified scale, along with tests for internal validity and consistency of this shortened version of the index, is provided in Appendix E.

 $^{^{23}}$ That the two measures, as operationalized in this study, get at different underlying concepts – egocentric and sociotropic economic concerns – is evidenced by the fact that correlation between them is negative at -0.17.

exposure to suffering in the past we asked whether any family members died, were killed, or disappeared during WWII, and whether anyone experienced displacement during the war or its immediate aftermath. Considering the average respondent is 49, most were reporting information about their grandparents. Thirty-eight percent of respondents said that at least one family member died or was displaced in the war. To measure ideology, we asked which political party respondents would vote for in the next parliamentary election, placing them on a 5-point Left-Right scale from 1 on the left (Lewica, Agrounia) to 5 on the extreme right (Konfederacja). An average respondent rated right of center at 2.95.

4.4. Survey Experiment

We embedded a perspective-taking experiment in the survey to explore whether priming perceived similarity between hosts' and refugees' experiences of displacement and violence can increase refugee assistance by activating situational empathy. The intervention consisted of text and images that draw a direct parallel between the experiences of Syrians/Ukrainians and Polish suffering during WWII (for similar interventions see Dinas, Fouka, and Schläpfer 2021; Wayne and Zhukov 2022; Wayne, Damann, and Fachter 2023; Hong, Mo, and Paik 2024). We reminded respondents that many Polish families lost family members in the war and were displaced during the fighting or in its immediate aftermath. This text was accompanied by two evocative images: one of Syrians/Ukrainians fleeing bombed-out Aleppo/Kyiv on foot and another of Polish civilians escaping war-torn Warsaw in 1944. The effectiveness of this treatment is compared to a pure control and another intervention where we presented the text and the image only pertaining to the experiences of Syrian/Ukrainian refugees without any mention of parallels to Polish historical suffering. Thus, there are five treatment arms: a pure control, information about the suffering of

Syrian/Ukrainian refugees, and a treatment that draws a parallel between this suffering and the historical suffering of Poles. The text and photos of the treatments are in Appendix F.²⁴

4.5. Conjoint Experiment

Attribute	Level
Family status	- Single young man of 32 years old
	- Single young mother of 32 years old with child
Physical appearance	- White skin, blond hair, blue eyes
	- Dark skin, black hair, black eyes
Religion	- Christian
	- Muslim
Prior history of suffering	- Refugee. Had relatives killed by Russia
	- Refugee
Economic status and occupation	- Well-off. A programmer
	- Poor. A cleaner

Table 2. Description of the Conjoint Experiment

Notes: Respondents participated in two conjoint experiments in random order; one assessing Ukrainian refugee profiles and another with Syrian refugee profiles. Each conjoint was repeated three times. Attribute order was randomized across respondents.

To test how much demand-side characteristics – refugees' ascriptive traits and humanitarian needs – affect the decision of citizens in host countries to help, and whether dispositional empathy increases responsiveness to those in greater need, the survey also included a conjoint experiment. We asked respondents about their willingness to host refugees in their home, which is an especially costly form of assistance. Respondents participated in two conjoint experiments in random order: one about Ukrainian and the other about Syrian refugees. In each experiment, they chose which of two presented refugee profiles they preferred to host, with profiles varying randomly across five

²⁴ The treatment activating a sense of *shared* suffering is longer than the pure control or treatment with information about Syrian/Ukrainian suffering. The texts were piloted, and we found that in face-to-face interviews respondents were able to fully absorb the longer text and images. We tested for heterogeneous effects by education level and found none.

attributes: family status, physical appearance, religion, prior history of suffering, and economic/professional status.²⁵ Table 2 summarizes the variation in attribute levels.²⁶ Respondents completed three rounds of each conjoint experiment. By design, we thus aimed to present 15,000 Ukrainian and 15,000 Syrian profiles for evaluation. In addition to the forced choice, we also asked respondents to score how willing they were to host the different evaluated refugee profiles, and to help by donating food/clothes or money.²⁷

4.6. Estimation Strategy

To examine the correlates of helping behavior we estimate the following model:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + \Gamma W_i + \varepsilon_i \tag{1}$$

where Y_i is the outcome variable for respondent *i*. X_i represents dispositional empathy, the key explanatory variable, and W_i is a vector containing other potential correlates of helping behavior including economic and cultural concerns, anxiety about the Russian threat, ideology, family's experience of suffering, and respondents' demographic characteristics. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level to account for within-municipality correlation of the residuals.

For the survey experiment, we re-estimate equation (1) where we additionally include the four treatment assignment indicators, comparing them to the pure control group. Balance tests for the

²⁵ We drew on public discourse about Ukrainian and Syrian refugees in Poland and the EU to select specific attributes. As discussed in Appendix H, we included the rare profiles of a blond and blue-eyed Syrian and a dark-skinned Ukrainian refugee in the conjoint experiment because the media frequently mentioned race and because doing so did not threaten inference.

²⁶ To maximize statistical power, we limited the number of levels per attribute to two (Schuessler and Freitag 2020). To avoid ordering effects, the order of the attributes was randomized across respondents but fixed across rounds for the same respondent.

²⁷ In 36% of cases, respondents did not make a forced choice, as they equally preferred both profiles; as a result, the total number of refugee profiles in the forced choice analysis is 19,178. Respondents were much more likely to answer how willing they were to host each refugee profile on a four-point scale; the missingness for that outcome is only 8%. The question about the willingness to donate was asked only after the first round of the conjoint for each respondent and is available for around 10,000 profiles.

survey experiment are reported in Appendix G. For the analysis of the conjoint experiment, we follow Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto (2014) and estimate the average marginal component effect (AMCE) using ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions with standard errors clustered at the respondent level. The AMCEs measure the marginal effect of each attribute on the choice of a refugee profile, averaged over the joint distribution of the other attributes.

5. Results

5.1. Dispositional Empathy as a Key Correlate of Refugee Assistance

In Table 3, we examine the correlates of different forms of refugee assistance. All the coefficients are standardized, so that effect magnitudes can be compared directly across variables; non-standardized results are available in Appendix I.1.²⁸ Thus, the coefficients denote the change in the standard deviation in the outcome variable associated with one standard deviation change in the explanatory variable.

The results indicate that dispositional empathy is a key predictor of helping behavior and prorefugee attitudes. The coefficients on this variable are large and statistically significant across all the outcomes except for past assistance to Syrians, an outcome with minimal variation due to the low number of Syrian refugees in Poland. Dispositional empathy also emerges as one of the most impactful variables in the models, with the largest or second-largest coefficient in terms of magnitude. For example, a one-standard-deviation increase, 0.65 on the four-point empathy scale, is associated with an increase of 0.22 of a standard deviation, or 10 percentage points, in the willingness to help Ukrainian refugees in the future. For Syrian refugees, a one-standard-deviation increase in dispositional empathy is associated with an increase of 0.27 of a standard deviation, or

²⁸ Results remain unchanged when controlling for respondents' treatment assignment in the survey experiment; see Appendix I.2.

13 percentage points, in future assistance. These results are consistent with the hypothesis that individuals with higher levels of dispositional empathy are more likely to assist refugees (H1).²⁹

We further find support for the proposition in Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014, 2015) that sociotropic economic concerns weigh more heavily on hosts than egocentric ones. A one-standard-deviation increase in concerns about refugees' impact on the Polish economy is associated with lower willingness to help Ukrainian and Syrian refugees in the future by 11 and 10 percentage points, respectively. By contrast, respondents' fear about their or a close relative's job loss is not statistically significant in most estimations and small in magnitude.

The coefficients on dispositional empathy and sociotropic economic concern have the largest magnitude in these analyses. We further find that a feeling of greater cultural similarity between Poles and the refugees predicts a greater willingness to help.³⁰ Anxiety about a potential Russian attack predicts greater willingness to assist Ukrainian refugees, but the coefficient on this variable is not always significant and sometimes turns negative when it comes to assisting Syrians.³¹ Those whose relatives had experienced violence and displacement in WWII are generally more likely to help. We do not find a consistent association between education, wealth, affiliation with the Catholic Church, or gender, and refugee assistance.³²

²⁹ In Appendix I.3 we show that both affective and cognitive components of empathy are correlated with the greater willingness to help.

³⁰ We caution against overinterpreting these results due to potential endogeneity concerns.

³¹ Despite Russia's support for the Assad regime in the Syrian conflict, Poles do not draw a strong association between Russia's aggression and the Syrians' plight.

³² Household wealth is not a major concern when it comes to Syrian refugees because practical opportunities to help them are limited. As to Catholicism, it measures a different underlying concept from dispositional empathy (correlation of 0.005).

		Ukra	ainian Refu	gees			Sy	rian Refuge	es	
	Past assistance	Future assistance	Donate	Support entry	Assistance index	Past assistance	Future assistance	Donate	Support entry	Assistance index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Dispositional empathy	0.186***	0.224***	0.087**	0.140***	0.260***	0.039	0.265***	0.120***	0.173***	0.291***
	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.040)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.036)	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.036)
Sociotropic concern economy	-0.136***	-0.261***	-0.214***	-0.350***	-0.352***	-0.070**	-0.211***	-0.153***	-0.171***	-0.267***
	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.033)	(0.035)	(0.033)	(0.035)	(0.037)
Egocentric concern job	-0.026	-0.048*	-0.054*	0.013	-0.021	0.041	-0.046	-0.005	-0.087**	-0.036
	(0.029)	(0.026)	(0.031)	(0.028)	(0.025)	(0.037)	(0.030)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.030)
Cultural similarity Ukraine	0.146***	0.097^{***}	0.078^{**}	0.077^{**}	0.144^{***}					
	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.036)	(0.030)	(0.027)					
Cultural similarity Syria						0.140***	0.053	0.161***	0.189***	0.148^{***}
						(0.049)	(0.038)	(0.041)	(0.039)	(0.040)
Concern over Russia	0.095^{***}	0.097^{***}	0.103**	0.000	0.087^{***}	0.016	0.084^{**}	-0.029	-0.077**	-0.013
	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.040)	(0.027)	(0.026)	(0.039)	(0.035)	(0.037)	(0.035)	(0.033)
Respondent is female	0.001	-0.010	-0.042*	-0.025	-0.041**	-0.022	-0.013	-0.026	0.017	-0.003
	(0.021)	(0.019)	(0.022)	(0.020)	(0.018)	(0.024)	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.023)
Respondent's age	-0.102***	-0.060***	-0.044*	-0.023	-0.065***	-0.040	-0.095***	-0.035	-0.078***	-0.090***
	(0.025)	(0.023)	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.029)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.026)	(0.027)
Respondent's economic condition	-0.008	0.127***	0.077^{**}	0.152***	0.153***	0.096*	0.006	0.086^{***}	-0.046	0.056
	(0.037)	(0.024)	(0.032)	(0.030)	(0.027)	(0.051)	(0.040)	(0.026)	(0.034)	(0.039)
Resp. has higher education	0.075^{***}	0.009	0.010	-0.033	0.009	0.004	0.012	-0.022	0.037	0.019
	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.018)	(0.027)	(0.026)	(0.025)	(0.026)	(0.024)
Respondent is Catholic	-0.023	0.051^{**}	0.001	0.006	0.008	0.015	0.020	-0.004	-0.086***	-0.017
	(0.028)	(0.023)	(0.030)	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.029)	(0.027)	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.028)
Family member died or displaced in WWII	0.038	0.059^{**}	0.050^{*}	0.081^{***}	0.106^{***}	0.083**	0.047	0.025	-0.020	0.071^{**}
-	(0.027)	(0.024)	(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.041)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.032)
Observations	1,993	1,927	1,883	1,885	1,702	1,856	1,756	1,776	1,715	1,510
R^2	0.138	0.231	0.102	0.230	0.357	0.048	0.159	0.083	0.137	0.234

Table 3. Correlates of Assistance toward Ukrainian and Syrian Refugees

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; Standard errors are clustered at the level of the municipality. Outcome variables and covariates are standardized.

Political ideology is not included in the main models because many respondents did not disclose their vote choice. The association between political ideology and helping behavior is therefore explored separately in Appendix I.4. We find that respondents on the right and far right are equally willing to help Ukrainian refugees as other respondents; this finding is in line with the media narrative that Europeans share a broad ideological consensus that Ukrainian refugees deserve help. However, those on the right are considerably more likely to support the Law and Justice government's restrictions on accepting Syrian refugees. This suggests that the role of ideology is contextual and that right-wing voters are not always opposed to humanitarian assistance (see also Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014).

The results described thus far have are based on observational data; this raises a concern about possible unobserved confounders that might be correlated with dispositional empathy and/or helping behavior. To address this, we use the *Sensemakr* tool (Cinelli and Hazlett 2020) to test the sensitivity of our results to omitted variable bias. We find that the coefficient on dispositional empathy would remain positive and statistically significant in the presence of a confounder three times as strong as sociotropic economic concern or as the grouped benchmark of exposure to WWII violence, gender, and education;³³ as reported in Appendix I.5. In other words, while potential confounders cannot be ruled out, their effect would need to be extremely strong to reduce the reported coefficient of dispositional empathy to zero. Because our models already include key covariates suggested by prior work, we find such confounding implausible.

5.2 Increasing Situational Empathy

³³ These variables were selected because they predict refugee-helping behavior (see Table 3), dispositional empathy (see section 5.3), or both.

The analyses thus far show that dispositional empathy is strongly associated with the willingness to help refugees. Much of the existing literature, though, emphasizes the role of situational empathy activated through perspective-taking exercises. In this section, we explore whether drawing a parallel between the historical suffering of Poles in WWII and the recent suffering of Ukrainian and Syrian refugees can increase refugee assistance. The results of the survey experiment are presented in Table 4. The outcomes are the same as in the previous analyses, but past helping behavior is excluded because it was measured before the experiment.³⁴ Respondents randomized into the pure control are the comparison group, and coefficients are not standardized. We do not include covariates because there is balance across treatments (see Appendix G), and most covariates are measured post-treatment.

A simple informational treatment about refugee suffering – text and an illustration explaining why there are refugees from Syria and Ukraine and the nature of their experiences – is statistically indistinguishable from the pure control group.³⁵ This suggests that most respondents are aware of the wars in Syria and Ukraine and emphasizing refugees' suffering fails to elicit any effects. Highlighting parallels between Poles' suffering in WWII to that of Syrian (Ukrainian) refugees also fails to increase the willingness to assist. None of the coefficients for the shared experience treatment reach significance, and several are negatively signed. Thus, we fail to find support for the hypothesis that priming shared historical suffering unconditionally increases refugee assistance by activating situational empathy (H3).³⁶

³⁴ The assistance index in Table 4 thus excludes past behavior.

³⁵ The only exception is a weakly significant result on donations to Syrian refugees, but the information appears to decrease the willingness to help Syrians, which is contrary to expectations.

³⁶ In Appendix J we examine the heterogeneity of treatment effects by whether respondents' families had direct experience of violence or displacement in WWII and, separately, by respondents' levels of dispositional empathy. We find that neither those whose families had experienced suffering nor those with higher dispositional empathy are,

		Ukrainia	n refugees			Syrian 1	refugees	
	Future assistance	Donate	Support entry	Assistance index	Future assistance	Donate	Support entry	Assistance index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Suffering Syrians	-0.020	7.150	-0.022	-0.067	-0.008	-16.308*	-0.008	-0.044
	(0.031)	(15.673)	(0.036)	(0.085)	(0.035)	(8.423)	(0.034)	(0.082)
Suffering Ukrainians	-0.012	7.405	0.001	-0.006	0.001	-4.646	-0.030	-0.058
	(0.029)	(12.952)	(0.033)	(0.077)	(0.033)	(8.189)	(0.029)	(0.071)
Suffering Syrians + shared experience	-0.030	16.140	-0.012	0.013	0.037	4.775	-0.018	0.031
1	(0.031)	(14.454)	(0.034)	(0.084)	(0.036)	(8.439)	(0.033)	(0.083)
Suffering Ukrainians + shared experience	-0.019	8.573	0.035	-0.015	0.018	-8.200	0.019	0.076
-	(0.027)	(13.997)	(0.033)	(0.080)	(0.034)	(9.016)	(0.033)	(0.081)
Observations	2,329	2,284	2,226	1,965	2,237	2,284	2,116	1,812
R^2	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.001	0.002

Table 4. Survey Experiment

Notes: Survey Experiment. Reminders of past family suffering and willingness to help refugees in the present. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level. Outcome and covariations are not standardized.

There are several plausible explanations for why the experimental interventions failed in this instance. One possibility is that the treatment is weak because it seeks to appeal to distant family experiences rather than something that happened to respondents in their lifetime. However, in studies that find treatment effects for the activation of shared history of suffering, the family experience of violence and displacement is also some 70-100 years in the past (Dinas, Fouka, and Schläpfer 2021; Hong, Mo, and Paik 2024). Alternatively, it might be that our prompts failed to resonate with respondents. For instance, the mention of Ukrainians alongside the activation of the memory of WWII might awaken the recollection of violent ethnic conflict between Poles and Ukrainians³⁷ or the association of Ukraine with the Soviet Union, an aggressor against Poland in

generally, more susceptible to the treatments. This is possibly because these respondents are already highly aware of parallels between their family experience and those of the refugees.

³⁷ In 1943-45, Ukrainian nationalists killed thousands of Polish civilians in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia, and there is ongoing disagreement between the two countries on whether this constitutes an act of anti-Polish genocide on Ukrainian soil (Snyder 2004).

WWII. Respondents who do not have a detailed understanding of the Syrian conflict might not automatically grasp the relevance of a comparison between Poles' and Syrians' experiences. Encouraging perspective-taking for two separate populations with one prompt is particularly challenging: treatments that are general enough to apply to both Syrians and Ukrainians may not be as effective as group-specific treatments.

Our hunch, however, is that the experiment failed because the suffering of Poles during WWII is already highly salient in Poland, and that, therefore, attempts to activate situational empathy around these experiences might be ineffective. That reminders about historical suffering can fail to increase refugee support in societies with high awareness about past violence has been demonstrated among Holocaust survivors and their descendants and, more generally, in Israel (Wayne and Zhukov 2022; Wayne, Damann, and Fachter 2023). In addition, informed by their country's WWII experience, Poles expected their country to be under significant threat at the time of our survey. High levels of anxiety can undercut perspective-taking and reduce empathy toward outgroups (Arceneaux 2017). Overall, our findings caution that attempts to trigger situational empathy might fail where the awareness of past suffering and its parallels with the experiences of present-day refugees are already commonplace. The results highlight that dispositional empathy remains a key predictor of helping behavior even when situational empathy fails.

5.3 Does Past Experience of Suffering Correlate with Dispositional Empathy?

In this section, we explore the correlates of dispositional empathy. The altruism born of suffering hypothesis suggests that, among other life experiences, past exposure to violence increases the ability to empathize with others. We extend this hypothesis to include the past suffering of respondents' parents or grandparents, as the literature on the legacies of violence suggests that

trauma can be effectively transmitted across generations (Lupu and Peisakhin 2017; Charnysh and Peisakhin 2022). The death of relatives (35% of respondents), their displacement (21%), and the combination of the two (38%) are the three key explanatory variables in these analyses. Alongside these measures of past family trauma, we include other known correlates of dispositional empathy: whether the respondent is female, their education level, and age. We also control for respondents' economic status and Catholic religion.

	Dispositional empathy (1)	Dispositional empathy (2)	Dispositional empathy (3)
Family member died in WWII	0.081***		
	(0.030)		
Family displaced in WWII		0.106^{***}	
		(0.032)	
Family member died or displaced in WWII			0.132***
			(0.031)
Respondent is female	0.234***	0.243***	0.239***
	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)
Respondent has higher education	0.061**	0.057^{**}	0.060^{**}
	(0.026)	(0.027)	(0.026)
Respondent's age	0.016	0.018	0.004
	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.021)
Respondent's economic condition	0.057	0.065^{*}	0.068^{*}
	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.035)
Respondent is Catholic	-0.039	-0.039	-0.036
	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.036)
Observations	2,178	2,203	2,373
R^2	0.075	0.083	0.088

Table 5. The Correlates of Dispositional Empathy

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; Standard errors are clustered at municipality-level. Outcome variables and covariates are standardized.

In Table 5 we report the results of these correlational analyses. Past family experience of violence, irrespectively of how it is measured, is significantly correlated with dispositional empathy. An increase in the probability of family experience of either death or displacement in WWII by one standard deviation (48 percentage points) is associated with an increase in a respondent's dispositional empathy levels of 0.13 of a standard deviation, or 0.09 of a point on a four-point

scale. All in all, there is support in this population for the empathy born of suffering hypothesis (H2). In line with other research, we also find that women and respondents with higher education have greater levels of dispositional empathy (see Appendix E).

5.4 Humanitarian Concerns and Willingness to Help

Thus far, we focused on the characteristics of citizens in host communities; the supply side in the decision to assist refugees. Here we explore the demand side and focus on refugee characteristics. Specifically, we vary the incoming refugees' humanitarian profiles and ascriptive characteristics in a conjoint experiment.³⁸ The design is premised on the idea that a young mother with a child is in greater need than a single young man; that poorer, low-skilled refugees need more help than wealthy, high-skilled ones; and that refugees who lost relatives in the war are more deserving of assistance than those whose families survived. Indeed, our data suggest that these claims are consistent with how respondents perceive variation in refugees' humanitarian need (Appendix H.2).³⁹ Sociotropic economic concerns, on the other hand, would suggest a bias toward young men without dependents, as well as toward high-skilled refugees, who pose the least burden on the public purse. This design thus allows us to compare the relevance of humanitarian versus economic concerns. In addition, we investigate whether varying the incoming refugees' humanitarian profiles has a stronger impact on those individuals with higher levels of dispositional empathy. Finally, the conjoint allows us to evaluate the importance of ascriptive traits refugees may share with potential hosts, such as race and religion, which were prominent in public discourse about Syrians and Ukrainians and theorized to influence empathetic responses in academic research.

³⁸ A discussion on the selection of the attributes we use in the conjoint experiment can be found in Appendix H.1.

³⁹ After the first round of each conjoint experiment, we asked respondents to indicate for each profile to what extent they agreed that the refugee was "in great need", "will increase crime or terrorism" and "will take our jobs and benefits".

The results from the conjoint experiment are reported in panel (a) in Figure 1 for all refugee profiles combined and separately for Ukrainian and Syrian refugee profiles.⁴⁰ In line with our previous findings, we find that humanitarian factors are a key determinant of the willingness to help among hosts. Single mothers with children are around 29 percentage points more likely to be hosted than single young men. Refugees who lost relatives as a result of violence are around four percentage points more likely to be hosted than those whose families are intact. And poor cleaners are around seven percentage points more likely to be hosted than well-off computer programmers.

Panel (b) combines Ukrainian and Syrian refugee profiles but separates out results by respondents' levels of dispositional empathy into two groups: high (above the median) and low (below the median). Among high dispositional empathy respondents, single mothers with children are around 32 percentage points more likely to be hosted than single young men; this effect size is only 26 percentage points for low empathy respondents. And whereas poor cleaners are around four percentage points more likely to be hosted than well-off computer programmers among low empathy respondents, this effect doubles to eight percentage points for high empathy respondents. These differences are statistically significant at p<0.01 (Appendix H.3).⁴¹ All in all, there is support for the hypothesis that individuals in host societies are sensitive to refugees' humanitarian needs, and that dispositional empathy predicts greater responsiveness to more vulnerable categories of refugees (H4).

⁴⁰ Full tabular results that also control for treatment assignment in the survey experiment on situational empathy that preceded the conjoint are in Appendix H.2.

⁴¹ These findings are in line with the observation that those profiles of a young mother with a child and those where the refugee is a poor cleaner are considered by respondents to be especially in need; considerably more so than those profiles where the refugee had lost relatives in the war (Appendix H.3).

Figure 1. Conjoint Experiment - Refugee Types that are More Likely to be Hosted





Panel (b). Low versus high dispositional empathy respondents

Notes: Panel (a) presents estimated AMCEs for all refugee profiles (N=19,178), Ukrainian profiles (N=9,992) and Syrian profiles (N=9,186); Panel (b) does so for all refugee profiles (N=19,178), low empathy respondents (N=9,586) and high empathy respondents (N=9,578). Standard errors are clustered at the level of the respondent. Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals. Tabular results are in Appendix H.2.

Returning to panel (a) in Figure 1, consistent with the literature, we find that other factors influence helping decisions, too. Most notably, Muslims are heavily penalized relative to Christians. Muslim refugees are less likely to be hosted than Christians by around 21 percentage points; this is the second largest effect by magnitude after single motherhood (on the Muslim penalty in helping behavior see Adida, Laitin, and Valfort 2016; Adida, Lo, and Platas 2019). The racial penalty is a lot smaller, but it is there as well: refugees with darker complexion are around five percentage points less likely to be hosted relative to otherwise identical peers who have light complexion. The interactions between these attributes and dispositional empathy are not significant.

The other pattern that stands out from these results is the stability of respondents' preferences. Greater willingness to help single mothers and poorer refugees extends equally to Syrians and Ukrainians. Likewise, Ukrainians who are Muslim and those with a darker complexion are penalized very similarly to Muslim and darker-skinned Syrians. This confirms Bansak, Hainmueller, and Hangartner's (2016, 2023) finding that Europeans' willingness to admit different refugee groups is driven by the same set of factors irrespective of refugee origin. Nevertheless, the stability of preferences does not equal a similar willingness to help different refugee groups. While the same refugee characteristics among Syrians and Ukrainians determine helping behavior, the baseline level of assistance toward Ukrainian refugees is higher for reasons partially explored in Table 2, as Poles perceive Ukrainians to be more culturally proximate and associate Russian aggression more with the war in Ukraine than the conflict in Syria.

As part of the conjoint experiment, after each forced choice, respondents were also asked to score how willing they were to host each refugee profile. Furthermore, after the first round of each conjoint experiment, respondents were asked to indicate their willingness to help each refugee type by donating food or clothes, or money.⁴² These questions allow for a more direct comparison between the conjoint experiment and the observational analyses reported in Table 3, because hosting refugees, which is the focus of the conjoint experiment, is an especially costly form of assistance. In Appendix H.4, we show that helping behaviors in the conjoint experiment are explained by the same variables as in the earlier observational analyses. Dispositional empathy has the largest magnitude across all covariates in explaining a respondent's willingness to help, with a one-unit increase on the four-point empathy scale being associated with a large and significant increase in the willingness to host a refugee in one's home (37 percentage points), donate food or clothes (37 percentage points), or donate money (49 percentage points). As in earlier analyses, those concerned about the impact of refugees on the economy are less likely to assist. Across outcomes, we find that vulnerable refugee profiles – notably, single mothers and poor cleaners – are most likely to be helped, and that there is a large Muslim penalty.⁴³

6 Conclusion

We set out to explore which characteristics of citizens in host communities predict greater willingness to assist refugees and how refugee characteristics influence this decision, with a focus on the role of dispositional empathy – a relatively stable trait shaped through experiences and social interactions. We studied the reception of refugees from the Global North (Ukrainians) and Global South (Syrians) in a large face-to-face survey in Poland; a country that thus far has received

⁴² These questions were asked on a scale from 1 "Strongly disagree" to 5 "Strongly agree". Willingness to host or donate indicates those who answered 4-5 ("Agree" or "Strongly agree") on this scale.

⁴³ It bears noting that Ukrainian refugees are assisted at a higher level by 5-15 percentage points due to factors not included in our models; the discrepancy in assistance levels rises as one moves from less (donations of food or clothing) to more burdensome types of assistance (hosting).

little attention from refugee-focused scholars despite coming under unique pressure to accept both groups.

We found that *dispositional empathy* is a key correlate of refugee assistance: those with higher empathy levels are more likely to have assisted refugees in the past, to want to help them in the future, to agree to host refugees in their homes, to donate to refugee-oriented charities, and to support policies that allow more refugees to enter. In contrast, a survey experiment designed to activate *situational empathy* by drawing parallels between the historical suffering of Poles and present-day experiences of Syrians and Ukrainians, failed to increase assistance. This suggests that situational empathy is context-specific and difficult to manipulate when the memory of historical suffering is already salient (see also Wayne, Damann, and Fachter 2023).

In a conjoint experiment where we vary refugee profiles, we found that refugees in greater humanitarian need – single mothers and poorer, low-skilled refugees – were more likely to receive help than single men and wealthier, high-skilled individuals. This finding confirms that refugee assistance is driven by a different set of factors than attitudes toward economic migrants, where sociotropic concerns about the economy play a greater a role (Abdelaaty and Steele 2022). We also found that respondents with higher levels of dispositional empathy were more responsiveness to refugees' humanitarian needs. The conjoint experiment also uncovered a large anti-Muslim bias and a smaller racial bias and, importantly, showed that hosts have stable preferences when it comes to their willingness to help refugees. Nevertheless, after controlling for all the characteristics of respondents and hypothetical refugee profiles, Ukrainians were still more likely to receive help than Syrians by five to fifteen percentage points.

Dispositional empathy has only recently received attention in political science, despite the discipline's long-standing interest in prosocial behavior. Recent work has suggested its relevance in explaining individual differences in support for welfare programs (Arceneaux 2017; Feldman et al. 2020; Brophy and Mullinix 2024), foreign aid (Bayram and Holmes 2020), and even political ideology (Morris 2020). That dispositional empathy matters for refugee assistance, particularly for hosting decisions, has been hypothesized and shown in the context of the developing world (Peisakhin, Stoop, and Windt 2024), and we extend this finding to refugee reception in a middle-income Eastern European country and across a wider range of helping behaviors. Furthermore, we establish that host country citizens' dispositional empathy is equally important for assistance toward both Global South and Global North refugees, which vary in the extent to which they share traits with potential hosts, and predicts responsiveness to refugees' humanitarian needs but not ascriptive characteristics.

An important question for future research, then, is how to cultivate dispositional empathy. Our findings on the strength of intergenerational exposure to violence, suggest one possibility: social interactions with individuals who experienced adversity. These need not be family members; engaging with strangers in need can generate small but significant increases in dispositional empathy (Beltran 2023). Repeated activation of situational empathy through perspective-taking could also potentially strengthen dispositional empathy over time, provided it is sustained for a long enough period and incorporates a diverse range of targets. Such interventions may be particularly effective in childhood and adolescence, when neural systems are most malleable.

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Appendix for:

Explaining Refugee Assistance: Evidence on Syrian and Ukrainian Refugees in Poland

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12 October 2024

The order of appendix sections follows the order in which the references appear in the manuscript.

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A. Deviations from the Pre-Analysis Plan

This study was pre-registered in Open Science Foundation's EGAP registry prior to data collection: [redacted for anonymity], and we follow the pre-analysis plan closely.

In the study, we present results for all pre-registered hypotheses although ordered differently. All hypotheses in the manuscript are pre-registered. The exception is the second part of H4: that respondents with higher dispositional empathy will be more sensitive to refugees that are in need. We thank reviewers for this suggestion.

For some hypotheses, we pre-registered different variables to measure the same independent variable. For example, we put forward multiple variables to measure a household's financial situation: income level, economic situation, residence ownership, and number of rooms. In the manuscript, we report the results for only one variable to avoid issues of multi-collinearity. However, we verified that the results remain similar when using the other pre-registered variables.

Furthermore, in the analyses, we also include a variable for egocentric concern over jobs, and the respondent's age and gender. We deem both to be important theoretically and empirically. The results do not change when these variables are excluded.

When writing the pre-analysis plan, we were not yet fully aware of the literature on different types of empathy, although the survey experiment was already designed to tap into situational empathy specifically. In fleshing out the paper's theoretical contribution it became clear that the distinction between dispositional and situational empathy should be stressed, and we did that in the paper.

B. Sampling Strategy

The study builds on a large survey that is representative of the population in Poland. The fieldwork was implemented by a leading public opinion firm in Poland, DANAE. They undertook the following steps for sample selection.

Step 1. Sample distribution across provinces: There are 16 provinces in Poland, they are all selected. Data from the Central Statistical Office were used to assign respondents to provinces proportional to the share of the population that lives there.

Step 2. Selection of strata: Four categories of strata were created: 1) towns over 200,000 inhabitants, 2) towns between 50 and 200,000 inhabitants, 3) towns up to 50,000 inhabitants, 4) rural areas. All of Poland's 18 towns over 200,000 inhabitants were automatically selected. Within each province, one stratum from each of the remaining three categories was randomly drawn, proportional to population size. Respondents assigned to a province were divided across the selected strata proportional to the number of addresses in each stratum.

Step 3. Selection of municipalities: In each of the selected strata, a list of census areas (Primary Sampling Units) was created. From this list, PSUs were randomly selected proportional to population size. The number of selected PSUs depends on the number of respondents assigned to a stratum. Within each PSU, ten addresses were randomly selected in the next step. Hence, if a stratum was assigned 40 respondents, 4 PSUs were selected.

Step 4. Selection of dwellings and respondents: Respondents needed to adhere to gender and age quota. These were set based on the population distribution in each province and across the four types of strata defined above. Within each PSU, a starting address was randomly selected. Interviewers arrived at this pre-set address. If there was a respondent that fits the gender and age quota, (s)he was interviewed. If there were multiple eligible respondents, one was randomly selected. If there was no eligible respondent, the interviewer moved to the next door on the right. After each successful interview, the interviewer moved to the third door on the right. In each PSU we targeted to conduct ten interviews. In total we targeted 2,500 respondents. **Table A1** and **Table A2** show the distribution of respondents across gender and age categories, by province and type of strata.

After data collection, DANAE relied on Random Iterative Method (RIM) weighting to correct for sampling biases, aligning the sample with population benchmarks for gender and age. In the article, we present results from unweighted regressions, as we are mostly interested in estimating causal relationships. Following Solon, Haider, and Wooldridge's (2015) advice, we also present results with weighted regressions in Appendix J and show that results remain qualitatively unchanged.

		Wor	nen		$\begin{tabular}{ c c c c c } \hline & & & & & & & & & & & & & & & & & & $		Men				Total
Province	18-29	30-44	45-64	65+	18-29	30-44	45-64	65+			
Dolnośląskie	13	29	31	28	14	27	29	19	190		
Kujawsko-pomorskie	10	21	23	18	12	20	22	13	140		
Lubelskie	10	17	22	20	11	18	20	12	130		
Lubuskie	5	10	12	10	5	10	11	7	70		
Lódzkie	12	23	29	27	12	25	26	15	170		
Małopolskie	17	30	35	27	18	32	31	19	210		
Mazowieckie	25	53	56	51	28	53	53	32	350		
Opolskie	4	8	11	8	6	7	9	7	60		
Podkarpackie	10	21	23	21	11	22	21	11	140		
Podlaskie	5	12	13	9	7	11	14	7	80		
Pomorskie	12	22	24	21	12	22	24	13	150		
Sląskie	19	42	49	37	22	41	47	31	290		
Swiętokrzyskie	5	12	12	12	7	13	12	8	80		
Warminsko-Mazurskie	7	12	16	12	7	12	15	8	90		
Wielkopolskie	17	35	37	33	17	36	34	21	230		
Zachodniopomorskie	10	16	20	17	11	16	19	11	120		
Total	188	363	413	351	200	365	387	234	2500		

Table A1. Sample by Province, Gender, and Age

Notes: Distribution of respondents across gender and age categories.

Table A2.	Sample	by S	Settlement '	Type,	Gender,	and	Age
		· · · ·					

	Women				Men				Total
Stratum	18-29	30-44	45-64	65+	18-29	30-44	45-64	65+	
Town over 200,000	28	77	80	79	30	71	69	46	480
Town 50-200,000	26	59	75	66	31	57	64	42	420
Town up to 50,000	41	81	103	94	47	89	94	61	610
Rural area	86	146	161	112	92	148	160	85	990
Total	181	363	419	351	200	365	387	234	2500

Notes: Distribution of respondents across gender and strata.

C. Results with Sampling Weights

After data collection, the survey company DANAE relied on RIM (Random Iterative Method) weighting to correct for sampling biases, aligning the sample with the relevant population benchmarks for gender and age (see Appendix B). Throughout the paper we present results based on unweighted regressions, as we are mostly interested in estimating causal relationships. Following the advice of Solon, Haider, and Wooldridge (2015), this appendix section additionally presents estimates for the main analyses when relying on weighted least squares, weighting observations to make the sample nationally representative. **Table A3** to **Error! Reference source not found.** replicate the analyses presented in Tables 3, 4, 5 and Figure 1, respectively, but weight observations. The findings remain qualitatively unchanged.

		Ukr	ainian Refug	ee			Sy	rian Refugee		
	Past assistance	Future assistance	Donate	Support entry	Assistance index	Past assistance	Future assistance	Donate	Support entry	Assistance index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Dispositional empathy	0.169***	0.231***	0.073*	0.115***	0.251***	0.046	0.280***	0.116***	0.169***	0.302***
	(0.033)	(0.029)	(0.043)	(0.033)	(0.029)	(0.035)	(0.032)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.036)
Sociotropic concern economy	-0.150***	-0.260***	-0.219***	-0.354***	-0.352***	-0.071**	-0.202***	-0.152***	-0.173***	-0.259***
	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.037)	(0.037)
Egocentric concern job	-0.025	-0.040	-0.050	0.014	-0.014	0.030	-0.035	0.003	-0.088**	-0.030
	(0.031)	(0.027)	(0.033)	(0.030)	(0.025)	(0.037)	(0.031)	(0.034)	(0.037)	(0.031)
Cultural similarity Ukraine	0.137***	0.086***	0.076^{*}	0.081**	0.138***					
	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.039)	(0.033)	(0.028)					
Cultural similarity Syria						0.164***	0.056	0.175***	0.198***	0.158***
						(0.051)	(0.041)	(0.043)	(0.040)	(0.040)
Anxiety over Russia	0.078^{**}	0.086^{**}	0.110***	0.011	0.085^{***}	-0.000	0.065^{*}	-0.013	-0.068*	-0.016
	(0.034)	(0.033)	(0.040)	(0.029)	(0.025)	(0.041)	(0.035)	(0.036)	(0.037)	(0.033)
Respondent is female	0.003	-0.017	-0.043*	-0.028	-0.041**	-0.016	-0.018	-0.016	0.012	-0.010
	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.019)	(0.025)	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.023)	(0.024)
Respondent's age	-0.104***	-0.062**	-0.052^{*}	-0.049**	-0.082***	-0.019	-0.076***	-0.039	-0.067**	-0.074**
	(0.027)	(0.025)	(0.029)	(0.024)	(0.025)	(0.032)	(0.028)	(0.024)	(0.028)	(0.029)
Respondent's wealth	0.014	0.114***	0.082^{**}	0.149***	0.159***	0.126**	-0.018	0.074^{***}	-0.039	0.048
	(0.038)	(0.025)	(0.033)	(0.031)	(0.025)	(0.052)	(0.039)	(0.028)	(0.034)	(0.039)
Resp. has higher education	0.077^{***}	0.016	0.011	-0.034	0.009	0.003	0.017	-0.014	0.043	0.027
	(0.025)	(0.021)	(0.027)	(0.025)	(0.019)	(0.026)	(0.027)	(0.025)	(0.027)	(0.025)
Respondent is Catholic	-0.029	0.045^{*}	-0.007	0.021	0.010	0.011	0.009	0.008	-0.092***	-0.020
	(0.029)	(0.023)	(0.034)	(0.028)	(0.023)	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.034)	(0.032)	(0.028)
Fam. died or displaced in WW2	0.048	0.053**	0.049	0.077^{**}	0.102^{***}	0.091**	0.056^{*}	0.013	-0.014	0.089^{***}
	(0.030)	(0.025)	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.025)	(0.042)	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.034)
Observations	1,993	1,927	1,883	1,885	1,702	1,856	1,756	1,776	1,715	1,510
R^2	0 141	0 2 3 4	0.105	0.231	0 368	0.065	0.159	0.084	0 1 4 3	0 248

Table A3. Replicating Table 3, with Sampling Weights

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; Standard errors are clustered at the level of the municipality. Outcome variables and covariates are standardized. Estimates are obtained from a weighted least squares regression. RIM weighting was used to adjust the sample data based on the relevant population benchmarks for gender and age.

		Ukrainiaı	ı refugees			Syrian refugees			
	Future assistance	Donate	Support entry	Assistance index	Future assistance	Donate	Support entry	Assistance index	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
Suffering Syrians	-0.053	3.175	-0.025	-0.105	-0.026	-21.045**	-0.015	-0.066	
	(0.034)	(16.372)	(0.039)	(0.092)	(0.039)	(9.189)	(0.038)	(0.090)	
Suffering Ukrainians	-0.034	8.071	-0.011	-0.068	-0.029	-10.191	-0.037	-0.109	
-	(0.030)	(14.544)	(0.036)	(0.080)	(0.036)	(8.263)	(0.032)	(0.078)	
Suffering Syrians + shared experience	-0.063*	14.990	-0.023	-0.061	0.005	1.776	-0.037	-0.061	
	(0.035)	(14.996)	(0.037)	(0.094)	(0.040)	(9.396)	(0.036)	(0.090)	
Suffering Ukrainians + shared experience	-0.029	9.453	0.034	-0.053	-0.010	-7.588	-0.001	0.001	
	(0.027)	(14.845)	(0.035)	(0.081)	(0.037)	(10.593)	(0.036)	(0.085)	
Observations	2,329	2,284	2,226	1,965	2,237	2,284	2,116	1,812	
R^2	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.001	0.002	

Table A4. Replicating Table 4, with Sampling Weights

Notes: *** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1; Standard errors are clustered at municipality level. Estimates are obtained from a weighted least squares regression. RIM weighting was used to adjust the sample data based on the relevant population benchmarks for gender and age.

Table A5. Replicating Table 5, with Sampling Weights

	Dispositional	Dispositional	Dispositional
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Family member died in WW2	0.077**		
	(0.034)		
Family displaced in WW2		0.087^{**}	
		(0.035)	
Family member died or displaced in WW2			0.123***
			(0.035)
Respondent is female	0.229***	0.231***	0.228***
	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.020)
Respondent's age	-0.008	-0.001	-0.016
	(0.025)	(0.023)	(0.024)
Respondent's economic condition	0.059	0.061*	0.067^{*}
	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.036)
Respondent has higher education	0.053**	0.053*	0.055**
	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.027)
Respondent is Catholic	-0.029	-0.026	-0.028
	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.039)
Observations	2,178	2,203	2,373
R^2	0.073	0.075	0.082

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; Standard errors are clustered at municipality level. Outcome variables and covariates are standardized. Estimates are obtained from a weighted least squares regression. RIM weighting was used to adjust the sample data based on the relevant population benchmarks for gender and age.

	All refugee	Ukrainian	Syrian	High	Low	All
	profiles	refugee	refugee	dispositional empathy	Dispositional empathy	respondents (interaction)
Figure 1's panel:	(a) and (b)	(a)	(a)	(b)	(b)	NA
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Family status: single young mother with child	0.288***	0.276***	0.302***	0.317***	0.259***	0.190***
	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.025)
Economic: poor, cleaner	0.067***	0.071***	0.063***	0.084^{***}	0.050***	0.029
-	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.021)
Suffering: refugee, relatives killed	0.041***	0.059***	0.022^{*}	0.035***	0.047^{***}	0.041**
	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.020)
Religion: Muslim	-0.212***	-0.227***	-0.197***	-0.208***	-0.217***	-0.235***
	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.024)
Skin tone: dark skin, black hair, black eyes	-0.054***	-0.059***	-0.050***	-0.044***	-0.065***	-0.092***
	(0.008)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.020)
Dispositional empathy						-0.067***
						(0.016)
Family status: single young mother with child * Disp.						0.065^{***}
						(0.015)
Economic: poor, cleaner * Disp. empathy						0.025^{*}
						(0.013)
Suffering: refugee, relatives killed * Disp. empathy						-0.000
						(0.012)
Religion: Muslim * Disp. empathy						0.015
						(0.015)
Skin tone: dark skin, black hair, black eyes * Disp. empathy						0.025^{**}
						(0.013)
Suffering Syrians	-0.006	-0.006	-0.007	-0.003	-0.008	-0.006
	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.004)
Suffering Ukrainians	-0.001	0.002	-0.004	0.003	-0.005	-0.001
	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.004)
Suffering Syrians + shared experience	-0.004	-0.011*	0.003	-0.008	0.001	-0.003
	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.005)
Suffering Ukrainians + shared experience	-0.001	0.004	-0.007	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001
	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.004)
Observations	19178	9992	9186	9578	9586	19164
R^2	0.137	0.139	0.136	0.151	0.125	0.139

Table A6. Replicating Figure 1 in Tabular Format, with Sampling Weights

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Standard errors are clustered at respondent level. Table also control for assignment to treatment in the survey experiment. Estimates are obtained from a weighted least squares regression. RIM weighting was used to adjust the sample data based on the relevant population benchmarks for gender and age. Columns 5 and 6 make use of a binary empathy variable (above or below the median dispositional empathy score).

D. Variable Descriptions

Table A7. Variable Descriptions

Variable	Description	Q
Demographic information		
Respondent is female	Binary. Interviewer records respondent's gender without asking. One if female.	Q1
Respondent's age	Continuous. Age is calculated from the question: "In what year were you born?".	Q2
Refugee helping behavior:	S	
Previous assistance to	Binary Since February 2022, did you or your household members have a chance to assist Elkrainian refugees in any way?	016
Ukrainian refugees	Bindy. Since i conduty 2022, and you of your nousehold memory have a chance to assist oxidiman refugees in any way.	QIU
Previous assistance to	Binary. In the past 7 years, did you or your household members have a chance to assist Syrian refugees in any way?	06
Syrian refugees	Binary. In the past / years, and you of your household memory have a chance to assist Synan relagees in any way.	Q 0
Future assistance to	Binary. Imagine that tomorrow you meet a recently arrived Ukrainian refugee family. This family fled from Kharkiv, bombed by	031
Ukrainian refugees	Russian jets earlier this year. Would you be willing to assist them?	QJI
Future assistance Syrian	Binary. Imagine that tomorrow you meet a recently arrived Syrian refugee family. This family fled from the Syrian province of Idlib,	027
refugees	bombed by Russian jets earlier this year. Would you be willing to assist them?	Q27

Support entry Ukrainian refugees into Poland	Binary. Some say that the government should start limiting the entry of Ukrainian refugees into Poland. Others say that as many Ukrainians as want to migrate should be allowed to enter. Response options: 0) Government should start limiting the entry of Ukrainian refugees, 1) As many Ukrainians as want to migrate should be allowed to enter. One if response equals 1.	Q34
Support entry Syrian refugees into Poland	Binary. The Polish government has been reluctant to admit Syrian refugees into the country in 2016. Do you support or oppose this government decision to keep Syrian refugees out? Response options 1) Support, 0) Oppose. One if response equals 0.	Q30
Contribution to charity supporting Ukrainian / Syrian refugees	Continuous (0-1000). To thank you for participating in the survey we would like to donate 1,000 Zloty to a charity or charities of your choice. From all completed surveys, we will select 10 at random in a lottery and will make the donations as instructed. You can allocate the entire 1,000 to a single charity or split this amount in any way you like across the charities below. The total must add up to 1,000. Which charities would you like to donate to and how much? Response options (order was randomized): 1) Large Polish charity helping Ukrainian refugees, 2) Large Polish charity helping Syrian refugees, 3) Large Polish charity helping to preserve the environment in Poland, 4) Large Polish charity helping homeless animals in Poland, 5) Large Polish charity working to improve Polish healthcare. For Ukrainian refugees one if response equals 1, For Syrian refugees, one if response equals 2.	Q58
Explanatory variables		
Dispositional empathy	Continuous (0-3). How well do the following statements describe you? 1) I often feel sorry for people who are less fortunate than me, 2) I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel, 3) I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision, 4) When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them, 5) I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective, 6) Being in a tense emotional situation scares me, 7) When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while. Response options: 0) Does not describe me well, 1) Only describes me a little, 2) Describes me well, 3) Describes me very well. Mean score across the 7 statements.	Q56
Sociotropic concern economy	Binary. Some people say that refugees that come into the country are making it more difficult for Poles to find jobs. Others say that migrants take the jobs that Poles are unwilling to do and are not a threat in this way. What is your opinion? Response options: 1) Migrants are making it more difficult for Poles to find jobs, 0) Migrants do jobs that Poles are unwilling to take and migrants are not an economic threat. One if response equals 1.	Q51
Egocentric concern job	Binary. How concerned are you that you personally or a close relative (spouse, parent, or child) might lose their job in the next 6 months? Response options: 1) very unconcerned, 2) quite unconcerned, 3) quite concerned, 4) very concerned. One if response equals 3 or 4.	Q50
Cultural similarity Ukraine / Syria	Continuous (1-10). Imagine a 10-step ladder of cultural similarity. Poles are culturally similar to each other and are all on step 10. Nationalities who are completely different from Poles are at the opposite end, on step 1. Which step would you place each of the following groups on in terms of their similarity to Poles? Response to Ukrainians / Syrians.	Q42
Concern over Russia	Continuous (1-4). How concerned are you that Russia might attack Poland as the war in Ukraine continues? 1) Not at all concerned, 2) Not that concerned, 3) A little concerned, 4) Very concerned.	Q43
Respondent's economic condition	Continuous (1-6). How would you describe your household's economic situation over the past six months from the options below? Response options: 1) We do not have enough money for food, 2) We have enough money for food but not for new clothes, 3) We can afford food and clothes, but it would be difficult to buy a new electrical appliance, like a television, 4) We can afford all of the above and have enough money to travel abroad on vacation, 5) We can do all of the above but it would be difficult to buy a new car, 6) We do not experience any financial limitations.	Q66
Respondent has higher education	Binary. What is your education level? Response options: 1) Incomplete primary, 2) Primary or junior high school, 3) Vocational, 4) Secondary vocational, 5) Secondary education, 6) Higher (bachelor's, engineering, master's degree), 7) PhD and higher. One if response equals 6 or 7.	Q63
Respondent is Catholic	Binary. Do you consider yourself as: 1) belonging to the Catholic Church, 2) belonging to another religious community, 3) not belonging to any religious community? One if response equals 1.	Q48
Family member died or displaced in WW2	Binary. Q44: Did any of your family members die, were killed or disappeared in World War II? Q46: Was your family displaced either during World War II or in its aftermath? One if response to any question is yes.	Q44, Q46
Right-wing political ideology	Continuous (1-5). If the parliamentary election took place this Sunday, which political party would you vote for? Respondents could choose between eight parties. We created an ideology ranking based on the responses, going from left- to right-wing parties. 1) includes Agrounia (Michał Kołodziejczak) and Lewica (Włodzimierz Czarzasty, Adrian Zandberg, Robert Biedroń), 2) includes Koalicja Obywatelska (Platforma Obywatelska, Nowoczesna, Zieloni, Inicjatywa Polska), 3) includes Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (Władysław Kosiniak Kamysz) and Polska 2050 (Szymon Hołownia), 4) includes Zjednoczona Prawica (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, Solidarna Polska, Republikanie) and Kukiz 2015 (Paweł Kukiz), 5) includes Konfederacja (Krzysztof Bosak).	Q55

Notes: Variable descriptions. Column "Q" refers to the question number in the survey. All study instruments and data are publicly available on [Redacted for anonymity].

E. Measurement of Dispositional Empathy

Item Selection

To measure dispositional empathy, we rely on the "Interpersonal Reactivity Index" (IRI), a scale widely used in psychology (Davis 1983). The original scale consists of 28 items. It has four subscales, each consisting of seven items, which measure separate components of empathy. The Empathic Concern (EC) scale assesses the tendency to experience feelings of sympathy and concern for unfortunate others; the Perspective Taking (PT) scale measures the tendency to adopt the psychological perspective of others; the Personal Distress (PD) scale measures the tendency to

have feelings of discomfort when witnessing others' negative experiences, and the Fantasy (FS) scale measures the tendency to identify with fictitious characters (Davis 1983).¹

In the psychology literature, two components of empathy are generally distinguished: a cognitive component that involves the capacity to imagine someone else's thoughts and feelings, and an affective component that involves the ability to respond to someone else's thoughts and feelings with appropriate emotion (e.g., Baron-Cohen, 2011; Baron-Cohen and Wheelwright, 2004; Jolliffe and Farrington, 2006). In the IRI scale, the Perspective Taking subscale measures cognitive empathy, while the Empathic Concern and Personal Distress subscales assess affective empathy. Some also consider the Fantasy scale to measure affective empathy, while others argue it picks up a distinct aspect (De Corte et al. 2007; Baron-Cohen and Wheelwright 2004).

Many studies validate and use shorter versions of the IRI scale (see e.g. Lauterbach and Hosser 2007; Ingoglia, Lo Coco, and Albiero 2016). To reduce the survey burden, we rely on a sevenitem scale, consisting of three items from the PT scale to measure the cognitive component, two items from the EC scale to measure the affective component, and one item from the PD and FS scales each. The items were chosen to capture a range of different emotions, while also considering how strongly each item was correlated with the four aspects of empathy in previous studies. Below we provide an overview of the selected items and the subscale they were drawn from.

<u>Perspective Taking</u>: (1) I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision; (2) When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while; (3) I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective; <u>Empathic Concern</u>: (4) I often feel sorry for people who are less fortunate than me; (5) When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them; <u>Personal Distress</u>: (6) Being in a tense emotional situation scares me; <u>Fantasy</u>: (7) I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel.

Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent these statements applied to them using a fourpoint Likert scale: 0) Does not describe me well; 1) Only describes me a little; 2) Describes me well; 3) Describes me very well. Higher item scores are associated with higher levels of empathy. In the analysis, we use the simple mean of the seven items as our measure of dispositional empathy, with higher scores indicating higher levels of empathy.

Internal Validity and Consistency

Our short version of the IRI scale is not intended to accurately measure the four dimensions of dispositional empathy, but rather as a single-dimension measure of respondents' inherent levels of empathy. Conducting an exploratory factor analysis, we indeed find that all seven items strongly load on the same factor, implying they are getting at a similar underlying concept. Figure A1 shows the screen plot, indicating that the first factor has an eigenvalue of 3.99, while Table A8 shows the separate item factor loadings (which are all ≥ 0.71). In addition, we find a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.87, indicating internal consistency for our seven-item empathy scale. Furthermore, as many studies tend to find that women score higher on empathy than men, one method of evaluating the

¹ Perspective-taking subscale in IRI, which measures inherent ability to empathize, is not to be confused with perspective-taking exercises, which activate situational empathy.

validity of the empathy scale is checking whether such gender differences exist (see e.g., Jolliffe and Farrington 2006; De Corte et al. 2007). Table A5, which shows the mean scores for male and female respondents for our empathy scale and each of the separate items, confirms that this is indeed the case.



Figure A1. Screen Plot of Eigenvalues after Factor Analysis

Table A8. Item Factor Loadings

Item	Factor loading
I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.	0.77
When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while.	0.74
I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.	0.78
I often feel sorry for people who are less fortunate than me.	0.78
When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them.	0.78
Being in a tense emotional situation scares me.	0.72
I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel.	0.71

Notes: This table shows how each of the empathy items loads on the first factor retained after an exploratory factor analysis.

Table A9. Gender Differences in Dispositional Empathy

	Men		Women		Difference
	Ν	mean	Ν	mean	
Mean empathy score	1,175	1.25	1,306	1.57	-0.322***
I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.	1,164	1.40	1,293	1.64	-0.242***
When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while.	1,147	1.13	1,275	1.43	-0.297***
I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their	1,154	1.39	1,272	1.63	-0.234***
I often feel sorry for people who are less fortunate than me.	1,152	1.34	1,287	1.66	-0.323***
When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them.	1,155	1.36	1,280	1.67	-0.311***
Being in a tense emotional situation scares me.	1,143	1.18	1,284	1.54	-0.360***
I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel.	1,138	0.96	1,288	1.47	-0.511***

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Based on pairwise t-tests (two-sided).

F. Survey Experiment Text and Illustrations

Respondents were assigned randomly to the control condition, and one of four treatments. **Table A10** presents the text and illustrations for each treatment in the survey experiment.

Treatment	Illustration	Text
Control	None	None
Syrian Suffering	Syrian civilians fleeing Aleppo after Russian attack in 2016.	Russia's military intervention in Syria resulted in great suffering for millions of civilians. Cities were encircled and bombed to ruins; thus millions of families were displaced. In a matter of minutes many Syrians lost everything and saw their loved ones die. Numerous civilians were subjected to torture or disappeared without a trace. Some managed to flee and are now seeking refuge in Poland and other European countries.
Ukranian Suffering	Ukrainians civilians fleeing Kyiv after Russian attack in 2022.	Russia's military intervention in Ukraine resulted in great suffering for millions of civilians. Cities were encircled and bombed to ruins; thus millions of families were displaced. In a matter of minutes many Ukrainians lost everything and saw their loved ones die. Numerous civilians were subjected to torture or disappeared without a trace. Some managed to flee and are now seeking refuge in Poland and other European countries.
Syrian suffering + shared experience	<image/> <image/> <image/>	Russia's military intervention in Syria resulted in great suffering for millions of civilians. Cities were encircled and bombed to ruins; thus millions of families were displaced. In a matter of minutes many Syrians lost everything and saw their loved ones die. Numerous civilians were subjected to torture or disappeared without a trace. Some managed to flee and are now seeking refuge in Poland and other European countries. Poles, like few other people in Europe, know what it's like to be at war with Russia and to flee from violence. Not that long ago, Polish families had experienced the same fear, the same shock, the same emotions as Syrians are living through. In 1939, the invasion by Nazi Germany from the west and the Soviet Union from the east displaced millions of Polish civilians. Polish cities were razed to the ground. Nearly everyone saw a family member die. After the war, many more Polish families lost their homes after the country's eastern borderlands were annexed by the Soviet Union. Poles have first-hand experience with forced migration and military aggression that Syrians are living through

Table A10. Treatment Text and Illustrations



G. Balance

As expected from randomization, Table A11 shows that there is balance across covariates collected before the survey experiment.

		(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		(6)
		Control		Syrian		Ukrainian		Syrian		Ukranian		F-test for
				suffering		suffering		suffering +		suffering +		across all
								shared		shared		grouns
								experience		experience		Broups
	2.1	Mean	ŊŢ	Mean		Mean		Mean		Mean	N	F-statistic
	N	(SE)	N 401	(SE)	N	(SE)	N 102	(SE)	N 100	(SE)	N	(p-value)
Dispositional empathy	507	1.467	491	1.410	502	1.408	483	1.368	498	1.442	2,481	1.766
	457	(0.039)	150	(0.041)	144	(0.038)	4.4.1	(0.041)	161	(0.037)	2 204	(0.136)
Sociotropic concern econ.	457	0.381	456	0.408	466	0.412	441	0.392	464	0.388	2,284	0.336
		(0.029)		(0.029)		(0.029)		(0.030)		(0.029)		(0.854)
Egocentric concern job	491	0.438	479	0.436	488	0.453	468	0.476	490	0.424	2,416	0.799
		(0.028)		(0.028)		(0.030)		(0.032)		(0.029)		(0.527)
Cultural similarity Ukr.	468	6.188	445	6.479	464	6.151	440	6.266	456	6.410	2,273	1.462
		(0.180)		(0.160)		(0.164)		(0.153)		(0.178)		(0.214)
Cultural similarity Syr.	428	2.935	412	2.859	435	2.936	410	3.100	432	3.030	2,117	0.834
		(0.176)		(0.151)		(0.156)		(0.150)		(0.181)		(0.505)
Concern Russia	501	3.078	486	3.080	496	3.069	475	3.040	494	3.002	2,452	1.015
		(0.042)		(0.050)		(0.047)		(0.043)		(0.040)		(0.400)
Respondent is female	509	0.528	497	0.537	507	0.531	485	0.520	502	0.512	2,500	0.220
-		(0.021)		(0.020)		(0.022)		(0.021)		(0.019)		(0.927)
Respondent's age	509	49.104	497	48.042	507	48.631	485	49.893	502	47.793	2,500	1.398
		(0.661)		(0.657)		(0.689)		(0.717)		(0.634)	,	(0.236)
Resp. econ. condition	493	3.469	471	3.384	482	3.440	462	3.364	488	3.355	2.396	1.222
1		(0.063)		(0.060)		(0.057)		(0.053)		(0.055)	,	(0.302)
Resp. higher education	505	0.186	496	0.171	505	0.188	484	0.163	502	0.191	2.492	0.437
		(0.017)		(0.018)		(0.020)		(0.018)		(0.019)	_,	(0.782)
Resp. is Catholic	509	0.780	497	0.732	507	0.781	485	0 784	502	0.775	2 500	1 160
r	200	(0.021)	.,,	(0.023)	201	(0.023)		(0.023)	202	(0.022)	_,2 00	(0.329)
Family member died or displaced in WW2	509	0.403	497	0.390	507	0.339	485	0.371	502	0.380	2 500	1 280
	507	(0,020)	177	(0.027)	507	(0.02()	105	(0.027)	502	(0.00()	2,500	(0.070)

 Table A11. Covariate Balance across Survey Experiment Treatments

Notes: Covariate balance survey experiment. Columns 1-5 show the group mean and standard error of the group mean for each variable. Column 6 presents results of F-tests for joint significance across all groups for each variable.

H. Conjoint Experiment

H.1 Selection of Attributes

In selecting attributes for the conjoint experiment, we studied the discourse about Syrian and Ukrainian refugees in Poland and the EU and prioritized theoretical and substantive considerations. In addition to frequent references to religion (Muslims vs. Christians), demographics (women and children vs. single young men), and shared history of Russian aggression, the media often highlighted the refugees' race. For Syrians and Ukrainians alike, blond and blue-eyed individuals became the focus of attention. The BBC published a story about a 16-year-old Syrian boy with blond hair and green eyes fleeing Aleppo for Norway, who claimed he was aided by his lighter features that made him appear European.² Media references to Ukrainian refugees often included references to their blue eyes and blond hair as an indicator of Europeanness.³ For this reason, we opted to include information about refugees' physical appearance among conjoint attributes (white skin, blond hair, blue eyes vs. dark skin, black hair, black eyes). While Syrians with white skin, blue eyes, and blond hair exist,⁴ as do dark-skinned Ukrainians, such individuals are extremely rare, and thus refugee profiles with these traits might appear less plausible. For us, the benefits of including such profiles to isolate the effect of refugees' race on helping behavior outweigh the possible methodological costs. Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto (2014) argue that atypical combinations of attributes do not threaten internal validity and are unlikely to affect respondents' attention or interest in the survey. Bansak and Jenke (2023) argue that the impact of "odd" attribute combinations in a conjoint "is minimal and is unlikely to meaningfully affect the first-order inferences."

Some attributes in the conjoint experiment were bundled: we combined gender and parenthood (single young mother with a child vs. single young man) and wealth and skill level (well-off programmer vs. poor cleaner). We had substantive and theoretical reasons for doing so. First, as noted above, the arguments about Syrians and Ukrainians in Poland frequently bundled gender, age, and/or parenthood together: Syrians are portrayed as single young men without families, which is used to question their refugee status, while Ukrainian refugees are portrayed as overwhelmingly women and children and thus in need of assistance. Second, the bundling of skill level and economic status is common in the real world, as people assume that programmers are well-off while cleaners are poor. Because a wealthy cleaner or a poor programmer is an implausible profile, combining these specific attributes can be thought of as a restriction on the randomization distribution. To understand how such combinations work in our survey, we included follow-up questions about each profile's perceived humanitarian need, contribution to crime, and impact on the job market. We present results in Table A17 in Section I.3. We find that young mothers are perceived as in greater need and less likely to increase crime, and poor cleaners are perceived as in greater need and more likely to take Polish jobs (i.e., less beneficial for the economy), but in both cases the coefficients are much larger for perceived need than for contribution to crime and unemployment, respectively.

² "From Syria to Norway as an unaccompanied child." *The BBC Newshour*, December 28, 2015.

³ Bayomi, Moustafa. "They are 'civilized' and 'look like us': the racist coverage of Ukraine." *The Guardian*. Opinion. March 2, 2022.

⁴ Genomic analyses demonstrate that Syrians are "genetically closer to neighboring human populations, (Jordanians, Lebanese, and Turks), and to Europeans in the north of the Mediterranean", where lighter features such as pale skin, blond hair, and blue eyes are not uncommon than they are to populations in the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa (Ikhtiar et. al. 2018).

H.2 Results Conjoint Experiment in Tabular Format

Table A12 replicates Figure 1 and controls for treatment assignment in the survey experiment on situational empathy that preceded the conjoint experiment.

Table A12.	Conjoint E	xperiment	– Full Rest	ılts		
	All refugee	Ukrainian	Syrian	High	Low	All
	profiles	refugee	refugee	dispositional	Dispositional	respondents
				empathy	empathy	(interaction)
Figure 1's panel:	(a) and (b)	(a)	(a)	(b)	(b)	NA
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Family status: single young mother with child	0.291***	0.279^{***}	0.304***	0.315***	0.267***	0.201***
	(0.009)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.023)
Economic: poor, cleaner	0.062***	0.065***	0.060^{***}	0.083***	0.042***	0.018
	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.019)
Suffering: refugee, relatives killed	0.045***	0.055***	0.033***	0.041***	0.048***	0.045**
	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.018)
Religion: Muslim	-0.210***	-0.224***	-0.196***	-0.202***	-0.218***	-0.240***
	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.021)
Skin tone: dark skin, black hair, black eyes	-0.050***	-0.056***	-0.044***	-0.048***	-0.053***	-0.071***
	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.019)
Dispositional empathy						-0.064***
						(0.014)
Family status: single young mother with child * Disp.						0.060
						(0.014)
Economic: poor, cleaner * Disp. empathy						0.030
						(0.012)
Suffering: refugee, relatives killed * Disp. empathy						-0.000
						(0.011)
Religion: Muslim * Disp. empathy						0.020
						(0.013)
Skin tone: dark skin, black nair, black eyes * Disp. empathy						0.014
Q. Charles Quaisan	0.007*	0.000	0.007	0.005	0.000	(0.012)
Suffering Syrians	-0.007	-0.008	-0.006	-0.005	-0.008	-0.00/
C. C. min - Illusiniana	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.004)
Suffering Okrainians	-0.004	-0.004	-0.003	-0.004	-0.003	-0.003
Suffering Seriens Laborad experience	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.004)
Suffering Synans + shared experience	-0.000	-0.011	-0.001	-0.012	-0.001	-0.000
Suffering Illerainiana Laborad superiones	(0.004)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.004)
Sumering Okramians + shared experience	-0.004	-0.002	-0.008	-0.008	-0.001	-0.003
Observations	10.179	0.000	0.196	0.578	0.596	10.164
	0 137	9,992 0.138	9,100	9,378	9,300	0 130
A	V I 1/	V I 10	VI 1 1/	1 197	V 17.7	11 1 17

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Standard errors are clustered at the level of the respondent and presented in parentheses. Columns 5 and 6 make use of a binary empathy variable (above or below the median dispositional empathy score).

H.3 Evaluation of Refugee Profiles

After the first round of each conjoint experiment, we asked respondents to indicate to what extent they agreed that each of the evaluated refugee profiles was "in great need", "will increase crime or terrorism," and "will take our jobs and benefits". Answer options ranged from 1) strongly disagree to 5) strongly agree. We created a variable that indicates profiles for which respondents (strongly) agreed with these statements. Table A13 shows the marginal contribution of each attribute towards respondents' perceptions.

This refugee profile is considered:	In great need	Will increase crime	Will take our jobs
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Family status: single young mother with child	0.081***	-0.062***	-0.019*
	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.010)
Economic: poor, cleaner	0.103***	0.010	0.017^{*}
	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.010)
Suffering: refugee, relatives killed	0.020^{*}	-0.004	0.002
	(0.010)	(0.008)	(0.009)
Religion: Muslim	-0.028***	0.045***	0.018^{*}
	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.010)
Physical appearance: dark skin, black hair, black eyes	0.013	0.016*	-0.007
	(0.010)	(0.008)	(0.009)
Observations	9,585	9,316	9,422
R^2	0.019	0.009	0.001

Table A13. Evaluation of Refugee Profiles

Notes: *** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1. Standard errors are clustered at the level of the respondent and presented between brackets.

H.4 Other Types of Helping Behaviors

In the conjoint experiment, in addition to the forced choice, we also asked respondents to rate their willingness to host the different evaluated refugee profiles and, after the first round of each conjoint experiment, enquired how much they would be willing to help each profile in other ways through donation of food/clothes or money. The following two tables explore the determinants of these different helping outcomes. For ease of comparison with Table 3, **Table A14** presents results with standardized coefficients. **Table A15** presents results without standardizing coefficients.

1 abit A14. Conjoint – Other Hei	Jing Outcomes,	Would donate food	Would donate
	Willing to host	or clothes	money
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Respondent characteristics			
Dispositional empathy	0.285***	0.214***	0.252^{***}
1 1 5	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)
Sociotropic concern economy	-0.209***	-0.150***	-0.165***
, r , r , r , r , r , r , r , r , r , r	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Egocentric concern economy	-0.086***	-0.083***	-0.175***
	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.018)
Concern Russia	-0.048**	0.079***	-0.000
	(0.020)	(0.07)	(0.019)
Respondent is female	-0.013	-0.012	-0.029
Respondent is remate	(0.017)	(0.012)	(0.02)
Respondent's age	0.060***	0.111***	0.031
Respondent's age	-0.009	-0.111	(0.031)
Degnondant's according condition	(0.018)	(0.020)	(0.019)
Respondent's economic condition	0.072	0.003	0.092
Demonstructure bishess of section	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.018)
Respondent has higher education	-0.042	0.025	0.004
	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.019)
Respondent is Catholic	0.037	0.045	-0.032
	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.018)
Family member died or displaced in WW2	-0.026	0.058***	0.012
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)
Refugee profile attributes			
Ukrainian	0.091***	0.023***	0.059^{***}
	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.007)
Single young mother with child	0.094^{***}	0.053***	0.068^{***}
	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.010)
Poor, cleaner	0.009	0.065***	0.055^{***}
	(0.006)	(0.010)	(0.011)
Refugee, relatives killed	0.004	0.019*	-0.011
e ,	(0.006)	(0.010)	(0.010)
Muslim	-0.072***	-0.023**	-0.038***
	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.010)
Dark skin black hair black eves	-0.004	-0.002	0.014
	(0.006)	(0, 010)	(0.010)
Treatment in survey experiment	(0.000)	(0.010)	(0.010)
Suffering Syrians	0.005	0.013	-0.015
Suffering Systems	(0.003)	(0.013)	(0.012)
Suffering Ukrainians	-0.008	-0.005	(0.022)
Suffering Oktainialis	(0.000)	(0.003)	(0.02)
Suffering Surjans + shared experience	0.021)	0.022)	(0.022)
Suffering Synans + shared experience	0.015	0.038	(0.010)
Suffering Illusinians I should amonian	(0.020)	(0.021)	(0.022)
Suffering Ukrainians + snared experience	0.009	-0.019	-0.005
	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.022)
Observations	24,270	8,422	8,386
R^2	0.179	0.125	0.153

Table A14. Conjoint – Other Helping Outcomes, Coefficients Standardized

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; Standard errors are clustered at the level of the respondent and presented between brackets. Coefficients are standardized. The willingness to donate food/clothes or money was only measured after the first repetition of each conjoint.

	Willing to host	Would donate food or clothes	Would donate money
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Respondent characteristics			
Dispositional empathy	0.365***	0.374***	0.489^{***}
· · · ·	(0.026)	(0.034)	(0.039)
Sociotropic concern economy	-0.355***	-0.347***	-0.424***
	(0.030)	(0.044)	(0.048)
Egocentric concern economy	-0.143***	-0.189***	-0.441***
	(0.029)	(0.042)	(0.045)
Concern Russia	-0.051**	0.116***	-0.001
	(0.022)	(0.031)	(0.032)
Respondent is female	-0.021	-0.027	-0.073
-	(0.029)	(0.040)	(0.046)
Respondent's age	-0.003***	-0.007***	-0.002
* -	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Respondent's economic condition	0.060***	0.003	0.117***
*	(0.015)	(0.020)	(0.023)
Respondent has higher education	-0.090**	0.073	0.012
x 0	(0.039)	(0.050)	(0.062)
Respondent is Catholic	0.074**	0.121**	-0.096*
*	(0.036)	(0.052)	(0.054)
Family member died or displaced in WW2	-0.045	0.136***	0.030
	(0.030)	(0.042)	(0.048)
Refugee profile attributes			· /
Ûkrainian	0.150***	0.052^{***}	0.147^{***}
	(0.010)	(0.017)	(0.018)
Single young mother with child	0.155***	0.119***	0.171***
	(0.012)	(0.023)	(0.025)
Poor, cleaner	0.015	0.146***	0.138***
	(0.010)	(0.024)	(0.027)
Refugee, relatives killed	0.007	0.042*	-0.027
	(0.010)	(0.024)	(0.025)
Muslim	-0.120***	-0.053**	-0.096***
	(0.011)	(0.023)	(0.026)
Dark skin, black hair, black eyes	-0.007	-0.005	0.036
	(0.009)	(0.023)	(0.025)
Treatment in survey experiment			
Suffering Syrians	0.010	0.038	-0.048
	(0.043)	(0.060)	(0.069)
Suffering Ukrainians	-0.016	-0.014	-0.083
-	(0.043)	(0.061)	(0.069)
Suffering Syrians + shared experience	0.031	0.107*	0.032
- · · ·	(0.043)	(0.060)	(0.069)
Suffering Ukrainians + shared experience	0.019	-0.055	-0.016
- *	(0.043)	(0.059)	(0.068)
Observations	24,270	8,422	8,386
\mathbf{P}^2	0 170	0 125	0 152

Table A15. Conjoint – Other Helping Outcomes, Coefficients Not Standardized

Observations24,2/08,4228,386 R^2 0.1790.1250.153Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; Standard errors are clustered at the level of the respondent and
presented between brackets. The willingness to donate food/clothes or money was only measured after the
first repetition of each conjoint.

I. Correlates of Refugee Assistance

I.1 Results without Standardizing

In Table 3 in the main manuscript, we present results for standardized outcome variables and covariates to facilitate the comparison of effect sizes across different explanatory variables. Table A16 replicates Table 3 but presents estimated coefficients when the variables are not standardized.

	Ukrainian Refugee					Svrian Refugee					
	Past	Future	Denete	Support	Assistan	Past	Future	Devet	Support	Assistance	
	assistance	assistance	Donate	entry	ce index	assistance	assistance	Donate	entry	index	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	
Dispositional empathy	0.144***	0.152***	27.746**	0.108***	0.541***	0.016	0.203***	25.931***	0.129***	0.523***	
	(0.024)	(0.020)	(12.858)	(0.022)	(0.060)	(0.015)	(0.024)	(7.411)	(0.025)	(0.065)	
Sociotropic concern economy	-0.139***	-0.236***	-90.547***	-0.358***	-0.969***	-0.039**	-0.213***	-43.740***	-0.169***	-0.634***	
	(0.029)	(0.029)	(13.962)	(0.030)	(0.084)	(0.018)	(0.035)	(9.458)	(0.034)	(0.088)	
Egocentric concern job	-0.026	-0.042*	-22.371*	0.013	-0.056	0.023	-0.046	-1.338	-0.084**	-0.084	
	(0.029)	(0.023)	(12.996)	(0.028)	(0.067)	(0.020)	(0.030)	(9.509)	(0.033)	(0.070)	
Cultural similarity Ukraine	0.030***	0.018^{***}	6.560^{**}	0.016^{**}	0.079^{***}						
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(3.036)	(0.006)	(0.015)						
Cultural similarity Syria						0.017^{***}	0.011	9.746***	0.040^{***}	0.075^{***}	
						(0.006)	(0.008)	(2.505)	(0.008)	(0.020)	
Concern Russia	0.062^{***}	0.056***	27.539**	0.000	0.152***	0.006	0.054^{**}	-5.310	-0.048**	-0.020	
	(0.021)	(0.019)	(10.608)	(0.018)	(0.045)	(0.014)	(0.023)	(6.635)	(0.022)	(0.049)	
Respondent is female	0.001	-0.009	- 17.198*	-0.025	-0.112**	-0.012	-0.013	-7.387	0.017	-0.008	
	(0.021)	(0.016)	(9.225)	(0.020)	(0.048)	(0.013)	(0.021)	(6.241)	(0.020)	(0.053)	
Respondent's age	-0.003***	-0.002***	-0.540*	-0.001	-0.005***	-0.001	-0.003***	-0.287	-0.002***	-0.006***	
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.326)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.203)	(0.001)	(0.002)	
Resp. economic condition	-0.004	0.057^{***}	16.243**	0.077^{***}	0.209^{***}	0.027^{*}	0.003	12.216***	-0.022	0.066	
	(0.019)	(0.011)	(6.657)	(0.015)	(0.037)	(0.014)	(0.020)	(3.743)	(0.017)	(0.046)	
Resp. has higher education	0.097^{***}	0.011	5.234	-0.043	0.031	0.003	0.015	-8.110	0.047	0.058	
	(0.031)	(0.023)	(14.147)	(0.031)	(0.064)	(0.019)	(0.033)	(9.059)	(0.033)	(0.073)	
Respondent is Catholic	-0.027	0.054**	0.716	0.007	0.027	0.010	0.024	-1.388	-0.099***	-0.047	
	(0.033)	(0.024)	(14.976)	(0.032)	(0.075)	(0.019)	(0.032)	(11.448)	(0.036)	(0.078)	
Family member died or displaced in WW2	0.039	0.054**	21.431*	0.083***	0.296***	0.047^{**}	0.047	7.193	-0.020	0.171**	
	(0.028)	(0.022)	(11.894)	(0.027)	(0.066)	(0.023)	(0.031)	(9.110)	(0.031)	(0.078)	
Observations	1,993	1,927	1,883	1,885	1,702	1,856	1,756	1,776	1,715	1,510	
R^2	0.138	0.231	0.102	0.230	0.357	0.048	0.159	0.083	0.137	0.234	

Table A16. Results without Standardizing the Variables (Replication of Table 3)

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Standard errors are clustered at the level of the municipality. Outcome variables and covariates are not standardized.

I.2 Controlling for Survey Experiment Treatment Condition

		Uk	rainian Refu	gee			S	Syrian Refugee		
	Past	Future	Donata	Support	Assistance	Past	Future	Donata	Support	Assistance
	assistance	assistance	Donate	entry	index	assistance	assistance	Donate	entry	index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Dispositional empathy	0.187***	0.224***	0.089**	0.141***	0.261***	0.037	0.268***	0.122***	0.173***	0.292***
	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.040)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.037)	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.036)
Sociotropic concern economy	-0.135***	-0.261***	-0.214***	-0.350***	-0.350***	-0.069**	-0.210***	-0.152***	-0.171***	-0.265***
	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.033)	(0.035)	(0.033)	(0.035)	(0.037)
Egocentric concern job	-0.027	-0.048*	-0.055*	0.013	-0.021	0.041	-0.046	-0.006	-0.087**	-0.036
	(0.029)	(0.026)	(0.031)	(0.028)	(0.025)	(0.037)	(0.030)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.030)
Cultural similarity Ukraine	0.147^{***}	0.098^{***}	0.078^{**}	0.077^{**}	0.146***					
	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.036)	(0.030)	(0.027)					
Cultural similarity Syria						0.139***	0.051	0.160^{***}	0.189***	0.146***
						(0.050)	(0.038)	(0.041)	(0.039)	(0.039)
Anxiety over Russia	0.096***	0.097^{***}	0.102^{***}	0.002	0.088^{***}	0.018	0.086^{**}	-0.030	-0.077**	-0.010
-	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.039)	(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.038)	(0.035)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.032)
Respondent is female	0.001	-0.010	-0.042*	-0.025	-0.041**	-0.021	-0.014	-0.026	0.018	-0.004
	(0.021)	(0.019)	(0.022)	(0.020)	(0.018)	(0.025)	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.023)
Respondent's age	-0.103***	-0.060***	-0.045*	-0.023	-0.065***	-0.040	-0.096***	-0.037	-0.078***	-0.092***
	(0.025)	(0.023)	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.029)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.026)	(0.027)
Respondent's wealth	-0.007	0.128***	Ò.079**	0.154***	0.154***	0.097*	0.010	0.087***	-0.046	0.059
1	(0.037)	(0.024)	(0.031)	(0.030)	(0.027)	(0.051)	(0.040)	(0.026)	(0.034)	(0.039)
Resp. has higher education	0.074***	0.009	0.010	-0.035	0.008	0.002	0.012	-0.021	0.037	0.018
	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.018)	(0.027)	(0.026)	(0.025)	(0.026)	(0.024)
Respondent is Catholic	-0.024	0.050* ^{**}	0.002	0.004	0.007	0.013	0.019	-0.004	-Ò.086* ^{***}	-0.017
	(0.028)	(0.023)	(0.030)	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.029)	(0.027)	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.028)
Family member died or displaced in WW2	0.039	0.060* ^{**}	0.051*	0.082***	0.108***	0.083* ^{**}	0.048	0.026	-0.021	0.073* ^{**}
	(0.027)	(0.024)	(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.041)	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.032)
Suffering Syrians	-0.038	0.013	0.086	0.005	-0.022	-0.058	0.078	-0.029	-0.046	0.022
	(0.063)	(0.064)	(0.084)	(0.067)	(0.066)	(0.075)	(0.078)	(0.071)	(0.072)	(0.076)
Suffering Ukrainians	0.044	0.059	0.069	0.068	0.079	0.011	0.090	-0.006	-0.051	0.066
	(0.063)	(0.061)	(0.069)	(0.064)	(0.062)	(0.067)	(0.070)	(0.064)	(0.065)	(0.068)
Suffering Syrians + shared experience	0.063	0.022	0.149*	0.047	0.089	-0.017	0.206***	0.126*	-0.019	Ò.165**
	(0.066)	(0.070)	(0.078)	(0.066)	(0.070)	(0.083)	(0.076)	(0.071)	(0.073)	(0.076)
Suffering Ukrainians + shared experience	0.016	0.031	0.056	0.097	0.033	0.045	0.119	-0.030	-0.021	0.097
	(0.059)	(0.058)	(0.075)	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.084)	(0.073)	(0.077)	(0.072)	(0.073)
Observations	1,993	1,927	1,883	1,885	1,702	1,856	1,756	1,776	1,715	1,510
R^2	0.139	0.232	0.104	0.232	0.359	0.049	0.163	0.085	0.138	0.238

Table A17. Replicating Table 3, Controlling for Treatment Condition in the Survey Experiment

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; Standard errors are clustered at the level of the municipality. Outcome variables and covariates are standardized.

I.3 Separating Cognitive and Affective Empathy

In our seven-item empathy scale, four items relate to cognitive empathy and three items relate to affective empathy. We create cognitive- and affective empathy scales by taking the mean scores of the respective items. Table A18 presents summary statistics. Table A19 replicates Table 3, separating cognitive and affective empathy. Both affective and cognitive components of empathy are correlated with greater willingness to help.

Table A18. Item	is Related to	Cognitive and	Affective Con	ponents of Em	pathy
				•	•

	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Cognitive empathy	2,479	1.39	0.68	0	3
I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.	2,457	1.52	0.86	0	3
When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while.	2,422	1.28	0.85	0	3
I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.	2,426	1.51	0.82	0	3
I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel.	2,426	1.23	0.95	0	3
Affective empathy	2,479	1.46	0.70	0	3
I often feel sorry for people who are less fortunate than me.	2,439	1.51	0.82	0	3
When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them.	2,435	1.52	0.84	0	3
Being in a tense emotional situation scares me.	2,427	1.37	0.90	0	3

Notes: Summary information for measuring dispositional empathy.

Table A19. Separating Cognitive and Affective Components of Dispositional Empathy

		Ukr	ainian Refug	ee		Svrian Refugee				
	Past	Future	Donata	Support	Assistance	Past	Future	Domoto	Support	Assistance
	assistance	assistance	Donate	entry	index	assistance	assistance	Donate	entry	index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Cognitive disp. empathy	0.113***	0.111***	-0.004	0.093***	0.153***	0.091*	0.131***	0.110^{**}	0.051	0.153***
	(0.039)	(0.036)	(0.043)	(0.035)	(0.039)	(0.048)	(0.041)	(0.055)	(0.037)	(0.040)
Affective disp. empathy	0.084^{**}	0.128***	0.100^{*}	0.057	0.123***	-0.052	0.152***	0.017	0.137***	0.159***
	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.052)	(0.038)	(0.039)	(0.041)	(0.043)	(0.051)	(0.038)	(0.040)
Sociotropic concern economy	-0.136***	-0.261***	-0.215***	-0.350***	-0.351***	-0.069**	-0.211***	-0.154***	-0.172***	-0.267***
	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.033)	(0.035)	(0.033)	(0.035)	(0.037)
Egocentric concern job	-0.025	-0.048*	-0.054*	0.013	-0.021	0.041	-0.046	-0.004	-0.086**	-0.035
	(0.029)	(0.026)	(0.031)	(0.028)	(0.025)	(0.037)	(0.030)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.030)
Cultural similarity Ukraine	0.146***	0.097^{***}	0.077^{**}	0.077^{**}	0.144***					
	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.036)	(0.030)	(0.027)					
Cultural similarity Syria						0.134***	0.055	0.157***	0.193***	0.149***
						(0.048)	(0.039)	(0.041)	(0.038)	(0.040)
Concern Russia	0.098^{***}	0.097^{***}	0.100^{**}	0.002	0.088^{***}	0.019	0.082^{**}	-0.028	-0.080**	-0.014
	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.040)	(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.039)	(0.035)	(0.037)	(0.035)	(0.033)
Respondent is female	0.001	-0.009	-0.044^{*}	-0.025	-0.041**	-0.022	-0.013	-0.027	0.016	-0.004
	(0.021)	(0.019)	(0.022)	(0.020)	(0.018)	(0.025)	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.023)
Respondent's age	-0.101***	-0.060***	-0.042	-0.024	-0.065***	-0.039	-0.096***	-0.033	-0.078***	-0.090****
	(0.026)	(0.023)	(0.026)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.029)	(0.026)	(0.025)	(0.026)	(0.027)
Resp. economic condition	-0.008	0.127***	0.077**	0.152***	0.153***	0.097^{*}	0.006	0.086***	-0.046	0.056
	(0.037)	(0.024)	(0.032)	(0.030)	(0.027)	(0.051)	(0.040)	(0.026)	(0.034)	(0.039)
Resp. has higher education	0.075***	0.009	0.008	-0.033	0.009	0.005	0.011	-0.022	0.036	0.018
	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.018)	(0.027)	(0.026)	(0.025)	(0.026)	(0.024)
Respondent is Catholic	-0.023	0.050**	-0.000	0.006	0.008	0.017	0.019	-0.003	-0.087***	-0.017
	(0.028)	(0.023)	(0.030)	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.029)	(0.027)	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.028)
Fam. died or displaced WW2	0.039	0.060^{**}	0.049^{*}	0.081***	0.107^{***}	0.084^{**}	0.046	0.026	-0.021	0.071**
	(0.027)	(0.024)	(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.041)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.033)
Observations	1,991	1,925	1,881	1,884	1,701	1,854	1,755	1,774	1,714	1,509
R^2	0.138	0.232	0.104	0.230	0.357	0.050	0.159	0.083	0.139	0.235

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; Standard errors are clustered at the level of the municipality. Outcome variables and covariates are not standardized.

I.4 Including Political Ideology

Table A20 replicates Table 3, but additionally controls for respondents' political ideology on a left (1) to right (5) scale, coded based on respondents' vote preferences if the parliamentary election was imminent.

		Ukrainian Refugee					Syrian Refugee					
	Past	Future	Devete	Support	Assistance	Past	Future	, Demote	Support	Assistance		
	assistance	assistance	Donate	entry	index	assistance	assistance	Donate	entry	index		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)		
Dispositional empathy	0.208^{***}	0.205***	0.090^{*}	0.160***	0.266***	0.036	0.248***	0.119***	0.166***	0.280***		
	(0.034)	(0.032)	(0.053)	(0.034)	(0.033)	(0.046)	(0.035)	(0.037)	(0.038)	(0.043)		
Sociotropic concern economy	-0.141***	-0.251***	-0.218***	-0.359***	-0.366***	-0.107***	-0.201***	-0.156***	-0.175***	-0.279***		
	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.037)	(0.040)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.037)	(0.042)		
Egocentric concern job	-0.030	-0.034	-0.062*	0.001	-0.007	0.060	-0.040	-0.004	-0.077**	-0.014		
	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.037)	(0.031)	(0.028)	(0.041)	(0.032)	(0.041)	(0.039)	(0.032)		
Cultural similarity Ukraine	0.144***	0.062^{**}	0.071^{*}	0.084^{**}	0.126***							
	(0.036)	(0.031)	(0.041)	(0.035)	(0.029)							
Cultural similarity Syria						0.171***	0.100^{***}	0.144***	0.190***	0.179***		
						(0.060)	(0.038)	(0.044)	(0.033)	(0.041)		
Concern Russia	0.103***	0.080^{**}	0.132***	-0.023	0.069^{**}	0.008	0.076^{*}	-0.068	-0.083**	-0.021		
	(0.036)	(0.039)	(0.050)	(0.034)	(0.032)	(0.048)	(0.041)	(0.043)	(0.041)	(0.040)		
Respondent is female	0.014	0.008	-0.008	-0.026	-0.011	-0.005	-0.030	-0.022	0.006	-0.016		
-	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.029)	(0.027)	(0.024)	(0.031)	(0.027)	(0.025)	(0.028)	(0.028)		
Respondent's age	-0.089***	-0.059**	-0.041	-0.014	-0.063**	-0.067*	-0.103***	-0.040	-0.077**	-0.091***		
	(0.031)	(0.026)	(0.035)	(0.029)	(0.027)	(0.037)	(0.030)	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.031)		
Resp. economic condition	-0.016	0.132***	0.098^{**}	0.140^{***}	0.156***	0.103	-0.016	0.108^{***}	-0.058	0.068		
	(0.042)	(0.027)	(0.040)	(0.034)	(0.032)	(0.064)	(0.047)	(0.032)	(0.041)	(0.050)		
Resp. has higher education	0.080***	-0.005	0.018	-0.056*	-0.014	0.037	0.027	-0.020	0.037	0.034		
	(0.031)	(0.023)	(0.036)	(0.031)	(0.025)	(0.040)	(0.028)	(0.031)	(0.033)	(0.030)		
Respondent is Catholic	-0.007	0.024	-0.022	-0.003	-0.003	-0.027	-0.008	-0.033	-0.121***	-0.057		
-	(0.036)	(0.027)	(0.047)	(0.033)	(0.031)	(0.039)	(0.031)	(0.047)	(0.038)	(0.036)		
Family member died or displaced in WW2	0.065**	0.065**	0.062^{*}	0.105***	0.145***	0.089*	0.069**	0.052	0.000	0.099***		
	(0.030)	(0.026)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.027)	(0.047)	(0.031)	(0.037)	(0.035)	(0.036)		
Right-wing political ideology	-0.035	-0.024	0.020	0.016	-0.011	0.130***	-0.077**	-0.002	-0.135***	-0.063*		
	(0.035)	(0.030)	(0.038)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.043)	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.036)	(0.036)		
Observations	1,290	1,253	1,241	1,235	1,141	1,231	1,160	1,193	1,148	1,030		
R^2	0.156	0.209	0.101	0.235	0.358	0.081	0.175	0.091	0.183	0.274		

Table A20. Including Political Ideology

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; Standard errors are clustered at the level of the municipality. Outcome variables and covariates are standardized.

I.5 Sensitivity Analysis

We explore the sensitivity of our key finding on the role of dispositional empathy in refugee assistance to unobserved confounding using the *Sensemaker* tool developed by Cinelli, Ferwerda, and Hazlet (2020). We compute the robustness value (RV=0.25) and the proportion of variation in the outcome explained uniquely by the treatment ($R^2_{Y\sim D|X} = 0.08$) for dispositional empathy (see Table A13). The RV indicates that unobserved confounders would have to explain more than 25% of the residual variance in both the refugee assistance index and empathy to reduce the point estimate on empathy to zero. Partial R^2 indicates that an extreme confounder that explains 100% of the residual variance in refugee assistance would need to explain at least 8% of the residual variance in empathy to eliminate its effect. We believe this unlikely, as our regression models already include demographic variables linked to dispositional empathy in existing research.

To benchmark the results from sensitivity analysis, we focus on covariates that are strongly correlated with our treatment (dispositional empathy, see Table 5) and/or outcome (refugee assistance index, see Table 3). The first category includes exposure to WWII violence, gender, and education, combined into one benchmark for presentation purposes and as a more conservative approach; the second category also includes sociotropic concern about the economy as well as exposure to WWII violence. We present bounds on confounders as strong as these at the bottom of Table A13. Note that for each benchmark, $R^2_{Y-Z|D,X}$ and $R^2_{D-Z|X}$ are both below the robustness values for dispositional empathy, i.e. confounders as strong as these benchmarks are insufficient to explain away our results. Furthermore, the bound on $R^2_{D-Z|X}$ is below the partial R^2 of dispositional empathy ($R^2_{Y-D|X}$). That is, even an extreme confounder that explains all residual variation in the outcome would not change our conclusions about empathy.

Figure A2 presents the results graphically: the coefficient on dispositional empathy would remain positive and statistically significant even in the presence of a confounder up to three times as strong as the grouped benchmark or as sociotropic concern about the economy.

	0	Outcome: Refugee Assistance Index (Ukrainians)										
Treatment	Estimate	Standard error	t-value	$R^2_{Y \sim D X}$	RV	$RV_{a=0.05}$						
Dispositional empathy	0.260	0.022	11.854	0.077	0.250	0.213						
[†] df=1690. Bound 1: Z as strong as the combination of WWII violence, female, and education: $R^{2}_{Y \sim Z D,X} = 0.036$, $R^{2}_{D \sim Z X} = 0.073$. Bound 2: Z as strong as sociotropic economy concern: $R^{2}_{Y \sim Z D,X} = 0.186$, $R^{2}_{D \sim Z X} = 0.021$.												
	Outcome: Refugee Assistance Index (Syrians)											
Treatment	Estimate	Standard error	t-value	$R^2_{Y \sim D X}$	RV	$RV_{a=0.05}$						
Dispositional empathy	0.291	0.026	11.024	0.075	0.247	0.208						
† df=1498. Bound 1: Z as structure $R^2_{D\sim Z X}=0.075$. Bound 2: Z as	† df=1498. Bound 1: Z as strong as the combination of WWII violence, female, and education: $R^2_{Y \sim Z D,X} = 0.017$, $R^2_{D \sim Z X} = 0.075$ Bound 2: Z as strong as sociotropic economy concern: $R^2_{Y \sim Z D,X} = 0.084$ $R^2_{D \sim Z X} = 0.014$											

Table A21.	Sensitivity	to unobserved	confounders*
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Figure A2. Sensitivity contour plots for the point estimate on dispositional empathy.

Notes: This figure uses the index of refugee assistance – based on the four different forms of helping behavior – as an outcome. Our benchmarks are (1) exposure to WWII violence, gender, and education, combined into one benchmark and strongly associated with dispositional empathy (Table 5) and (2) sociotropic concern about the economy, the variable that predicts outcome and has the largest coefficient in Table 3. We show the bounds on the partial R^2 for a confounder one, two, or three times as strong as each benchmark.

J. Survey Experiment Heterogeneity

The following tables replicate Table 5, looking at heterogeneity by past family suffering in WW2 and respondents' levels of empathy, respectively.

		Ukrainia	n refugees		Syrian refugees					
	Future assistance	Donate	Support entry	Assistance index	Future assistance	Donate	Support entry	Assistance index		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)		
Suffering Syrians	-0.016	-2.833	-0.067	-0.101	-0.024	-19.697*	-0.034	-0.061		
	(0.043)	(17.567)	(0.044)	(0.113)	(0.046)	(11.037)	(0.048)	(0.111)		
Suffering Ukrainians	0.012	27.660^{*}	0.043	0.153	-0.016	4.144	-0.039	-0.051		
	(0.039)	(16.109)	(0.046)	(0.108)	(0.042)	(10.849)	(0.040)	(0.096)		
Suff. Syr. + shared exp.	0.004	26.656	-0.022	0.088	0.049	19.544	-0.038	0.068		
	(0.042)	(17.953)	(0.042)	(0.108)	(0.047)	(13.786)	(0.045)	(0.108)		
Suff. Ukr. + shared exp.	-0.011	1.284	0.035	0.030	0.005	-6.286	0.026	0.111		
	(0.038)	(17.200)	(0.046)	(0.114)	(0.045)	(12.487)	(0.045)	(0.104)		
Fam. lost or displaced in WW2	0.129***	39.305**	0.098^{*}	0.445^{***}	0.048	14.909	-0.046	0.166		
	(0.044)	(18.178)	(0.054)	(0.123)	(0.057)	(15.622)	(0.054)	(0.125)		
Suffering Syrians * WW2	-0.008	25.725	0.116^{*}	0.087	0.040	8.753	0.063	0.039		
	(0.057)	(26.177)	(0.067)	(0.153)	(0.071)	(17.763)	(0.076)	(0.176)		
Suffering Ukrainians * WW2	-0.044	-51.956*	-0.106	-0.378**	0.058	-22.832	0.018	-0.000		
	(0.058)	(26.783)	(0.070)	(0.164)	(0.074)	(17.698)	(0.068)	(0.157)		
Suff. Syr. + shared exp. * WW2	-0.079	-25.403	0.031	-0.171	-0.028	-38.146*	0.048	-0.082		
	(0.062)	(29.333)	(0.064)	(0.157)	(0.072)	(20.810)	(0.070)	(0.163)		
Suff. Ukr. + shared exp. * WW2	-0.012	19.571	0.003	-0.101	0.037	-4.522	-0.021	-0.081		
	(0.054)	(25.510)	(0.071)	(0.161)	(0.070)	(20.271)	(0.067)	(0.158)		
Observations	2,329	2,284	2,226	1,965	2,237	2,284	2,116	1,812		
R^2	0.014	0.011	0.017	0.029	0.007	0.006	0.003	0.007		

Table A22. Heterogeneity by Family Suffering in WW2

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; Standard errors are clustered at the level of the municipality and presented between brackets.

Table A23. Heterogeneity by Levels of Dispositional Empathy

		Ukrainia	n refugees			Syrian	refugees	
	Future assistance	Donate	Support entry	Assistance index	Future assistance	Donate	Support entry	Assistance index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Suffering Syrians	0.052	13.886	-0.008	0.084	0.079	5.742	0.090	0.247
	(0.078)	(33.484)	(0.076)	(0.197)	(0.083)	(20.709)	(0.083)	(0.194)
Suffering Ukrainians	0.057	35.871	0.078	0.221	0.078	3.486	0.089	0.136
	(0.079)	(30.451)	(0.081)	(0.193)	(0.080)	(21.117)	(0.077)	(0.177)
Suff. Syr. + shared exp.	0.018	-12.504	-0.072	0.062	0.089	10.785	0.063	0.169
	(0.081)	(27.609)	(0.076)	(0.209)	(0.084)	(25.045)	(0.081)	(0.203)
Suff. Ukr. + shared exp.	0.043	46.264	0.051	0.144	0.139*	9.358	-0.003	0.198
	(0.076)	(36.059)	(0.082)	(0.207)	(0.082)	(24.511)	(0.083)	(0.188)
Dispositional empathy	0.209***	48.963**	0.178^{***}	0.582***	0.247***	39.728**	0.161***	0.648^{***}
	(0.031)	(13.817)	(0.039)	(0.089)	(0.038)	(11.805)	(0.043)	(0.091)
Suffering Syrians * Disp. empathy	-0.038	-3.235	-0.005	-0.079	-0.048	-13.565	-0.063	-0.171
	(0.045)	(22.052)	(0.047)	(0.113)	(0.054)	(13.704)	(0.050)	(0.116)
Suffering Ukrainians * Disp. Empathy	-0.037	-19.689	-0.046	-0.130	-0.039	-3.741	-0.078	-0.098
	(0.046)	(19.147)	(0.049)	(0.110)	(0.051)	(13.279)	(0.049)	(0.108)
Suff. Syr. + shared exp. * Disp. empathy	-0.019	23.862	0.055	-0.003	-0.020	-1.850	-0.045	-0.052
	(0.046)	(20.346)	(0.046)	(0.120)	(0.051)	(17.237)	(0.050)	(0.129)
Suff. Ukr. + shared exp. * Disp. empathy	-0.034	-25.301	-0.007	-0.098	-0.074	-11.667	0.017	-0.069
	(0.044)	(22.296)	(0.051)	(0.120)	(0.055)	(15.857)	(0.051)	(0.122)
Observations	2,317	2,267	2,216	1,957	2,226	2,267	2,107	1,805
R^2	0.071	0.021	0.055	0.092	0.075	0.026	0.032	0.112

Notes: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1; Standard errors are clustered at the level of the municipality and presented between brackets.

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