

How to Think About the Ukrainian Refugee Crisis, in Maps and Charts

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In the weeks since Russia invaded Ukraine, almost three million of the country's 44 million residents have left the country.

The rate of the Ukrainian exodus is unprecedented in recent history. Europe's response to the crisis has been similarly remarkable — both in its immediate generosity as well as [in contrast](#) to how poorly many European countries have treated refugees from Africa and the Middle East.

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The Syrian refugee crisis shows how quickly public sympathy can wane. In 2015, newspapers published a photo of Alan Kurdi, a 2-year-old Syrian boy who drowned while his family was trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea to escape the country's civil war. Widespread outrage led to a hundredfold increase the following week in the [number of donations](#) to a Red Cross fund for Syria.

Within two months, however, donations had dropped back down to a trickle. Even when people are confronted with powerful, graphic images, their attention dissipates after a few weeks, said Paul Slovic, a psychology professor at the University of Oregon who has studied the “psychic numbing” that can occur after tragedies.

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