

# Abstract

This article explores how Ukrainian refugee adolescents in Poland maintain friendship formation, with a particular focus on ethnic belonging and peer preferences. Drawing on qualitative interviews with 30 adolescents conducted in Warsaw in 2024–2025, the study identifies five patterns of peer relations: (1) **exclusive ethnic homophily**, where adolescents form friendships only within their ethnic group; (2) **spatial ethnic homophily**, where peer networks vary across school and non-school contexts; (3) **ethnic heterophily**, when adolescents maintain meaningful relationships with peers of other ethnicity; (4) **post-ethnic friendships**, where ethnicity is less important than shared interests and values; and (5) **relational exclusion**, where youth experience persistent social isolation and fail to form new connections after displacement. The findings show the dynamic, context-dependent nature of adolescent friendship-making in migratory settings and underscore how peer networks both reflect and shape broader processes of integration, belonging, and identity. This study contributes to scholarship on peer relations of refugee adolescents and social networks by offering a typology of friendship formations and presenting the causal mechanisms of ethnic friendship preferences of Ukrainian adolescents in Poland.