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The Coverage and Reception of  
the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict



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# REPRESENTATIONS OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE IN POLISH NEWS MEDIA: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY

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# Methodology



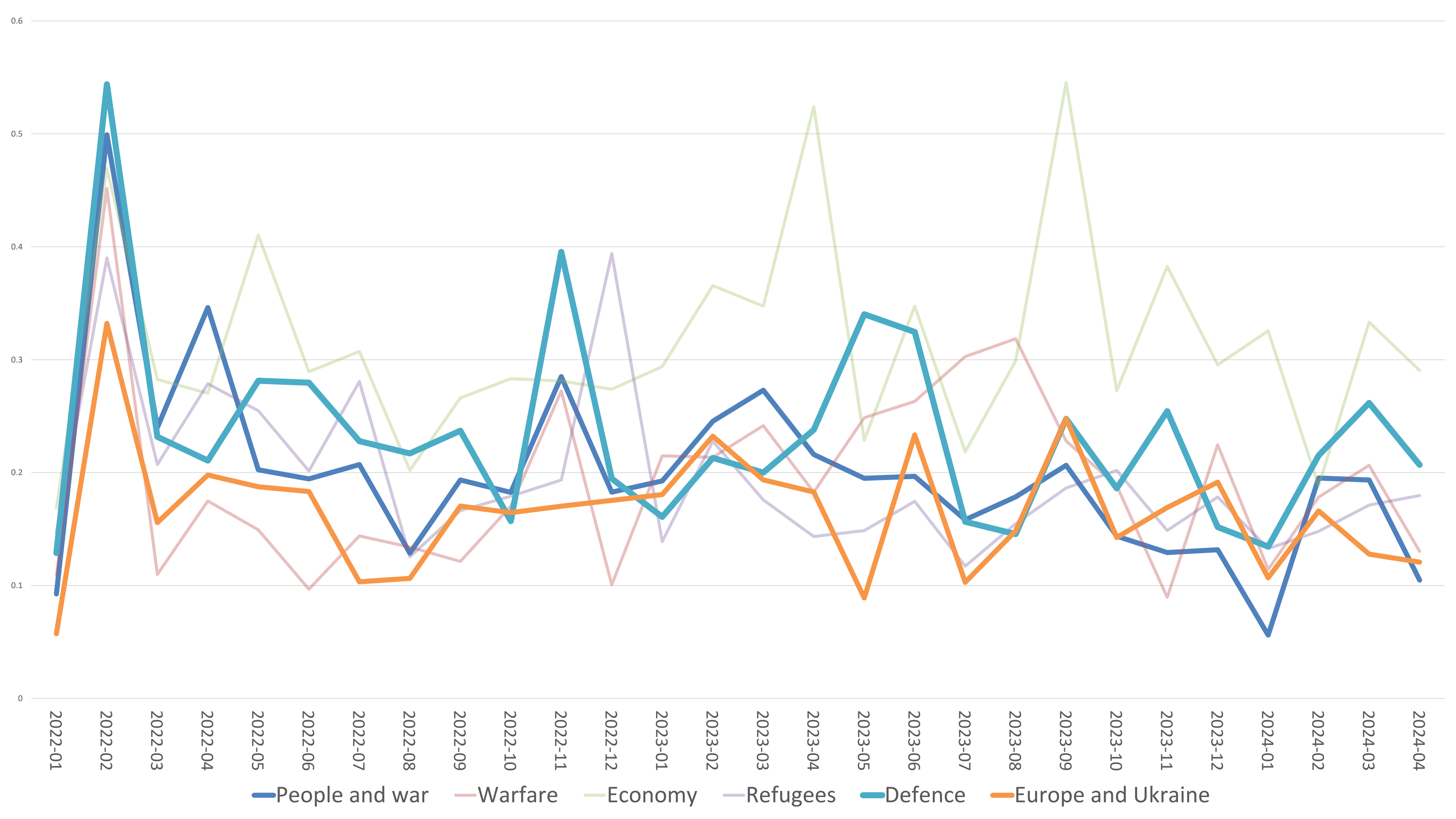
- Topic modelling of the CORECON Polish News Corpus (1.3 million tokens);
- The follow-up of the topic modelling is based on Schweinberger (2021);
- Diachronic analysis is done for the phrase “W UKRAINIE” and “NA UKRAINIE” [in Ukraine vs. on Ukraine].

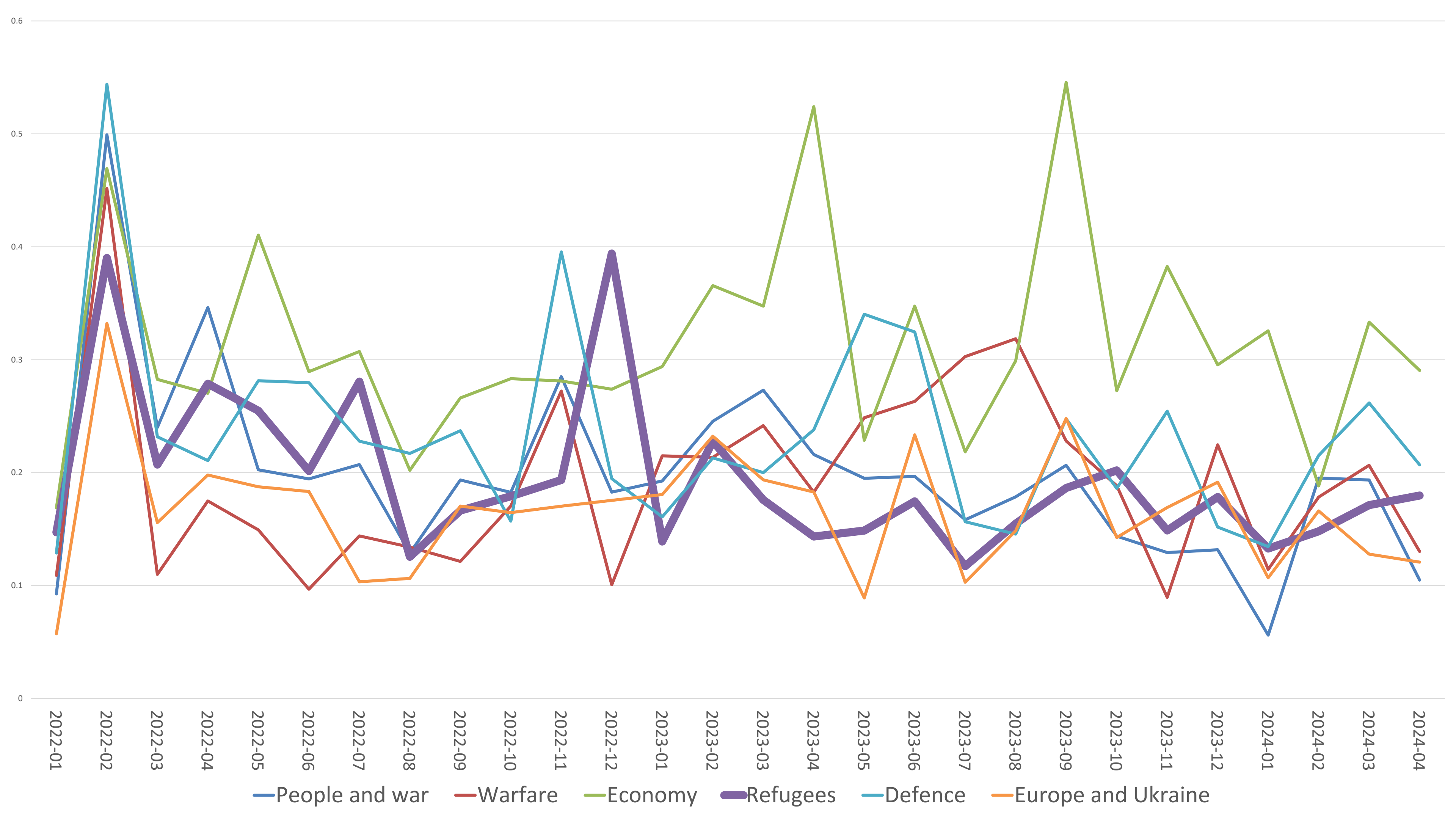
# Topic modelling

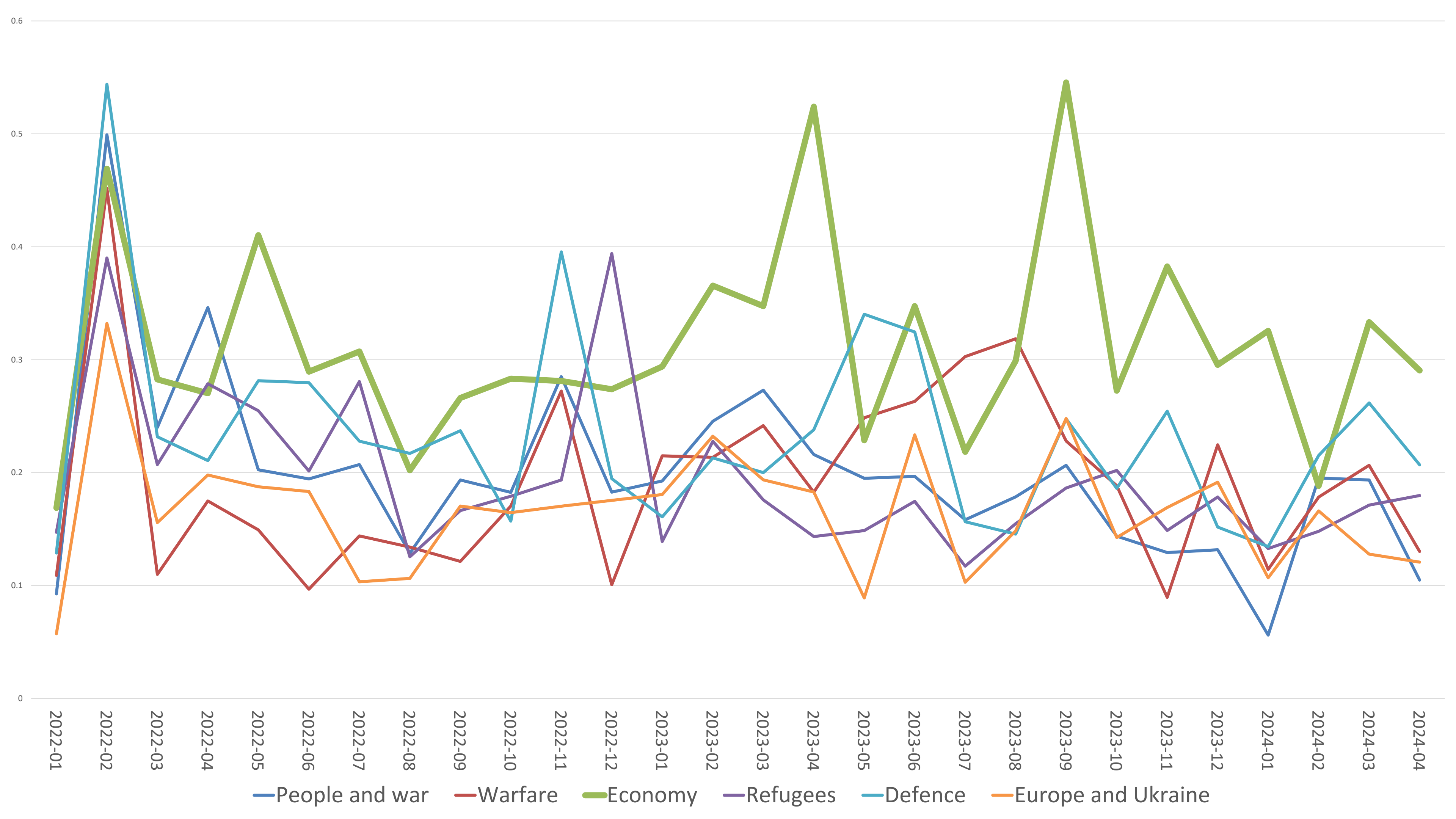


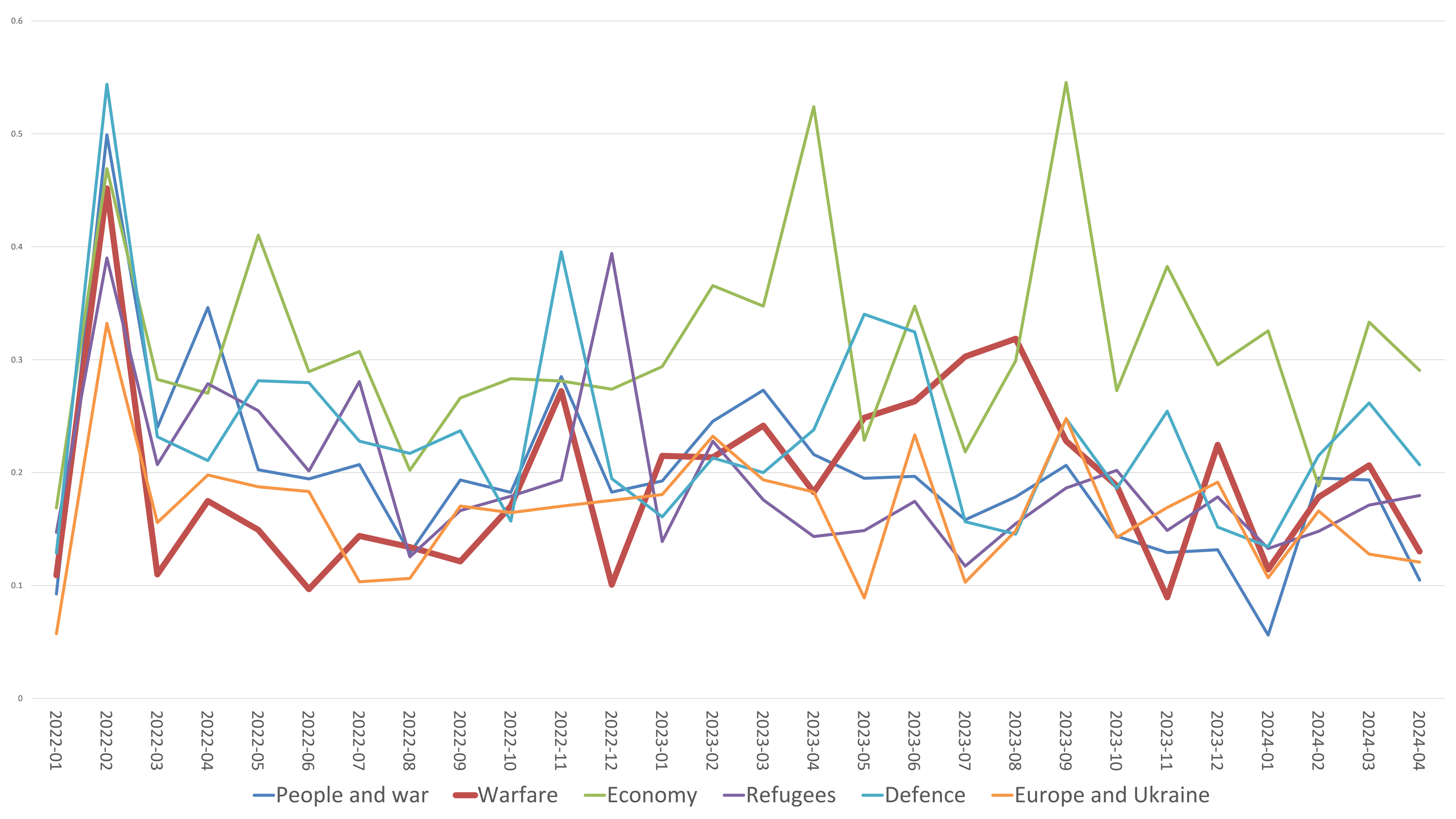
- I used LDA (Latent Dirichlet Allocation) method (see Bednarek, 2024) to examine the Polish corpus (**all data you will see have been translated for clarity**);
- I cleared each topic for duplicates, only keeping the topic-exclusive words (top 10 most relevant words for each topic are shown in the next slide); this removed the words such as “Ukraine” and “Russia”;
- I labelled the topics manually.

People and war	Warfare	Economy	Refugees	Defence	Europe and Ukraine
human	Power	company	aid	president	country
Soldier	tank	market	refugee	Kiyv	Poland
year	missile	grain	person	oblast	West
Ukrainian	army	EU	work	state	NATO
day	front	economy	citizen	city	Europe
time	drone	export	child	defence	politics
baby	combat	product	support	chief	situation
life	loss	price	case	rule	world
woman	brigade	reconstruction	number	target	security
family	military	growth	man	territory	Germany

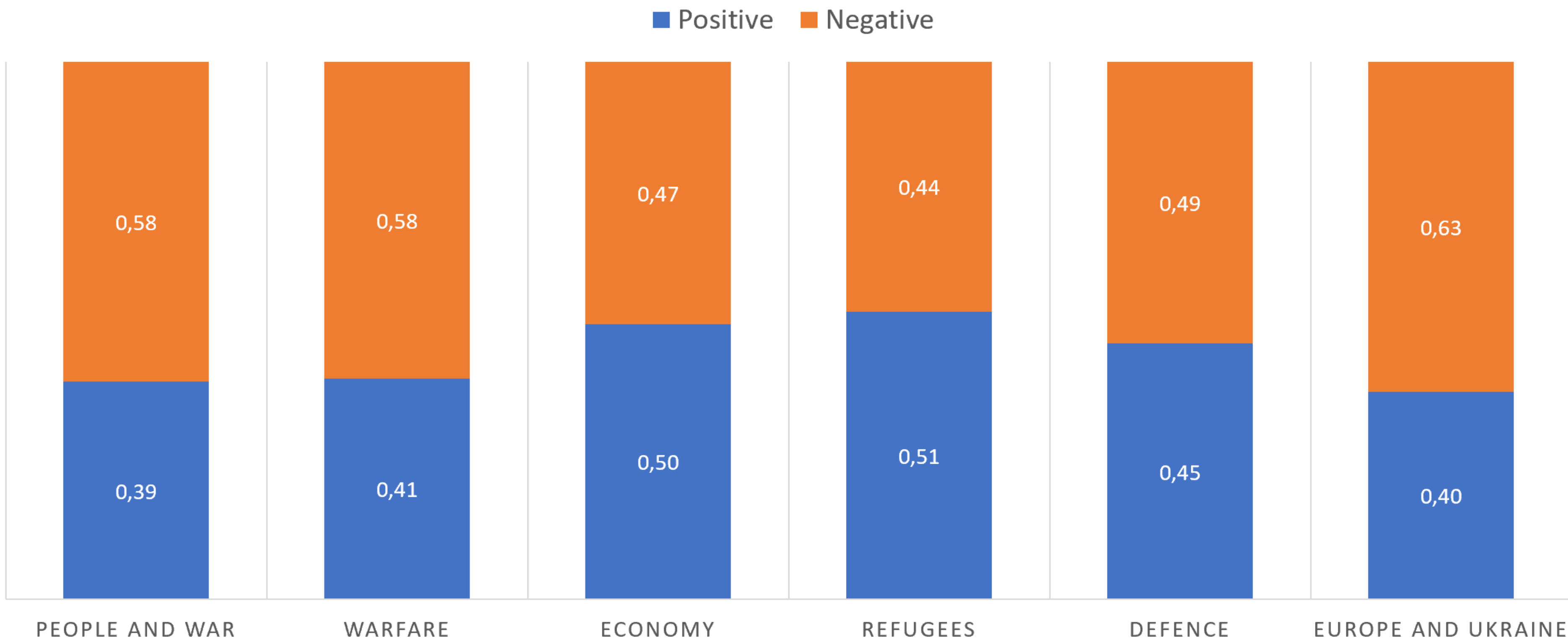








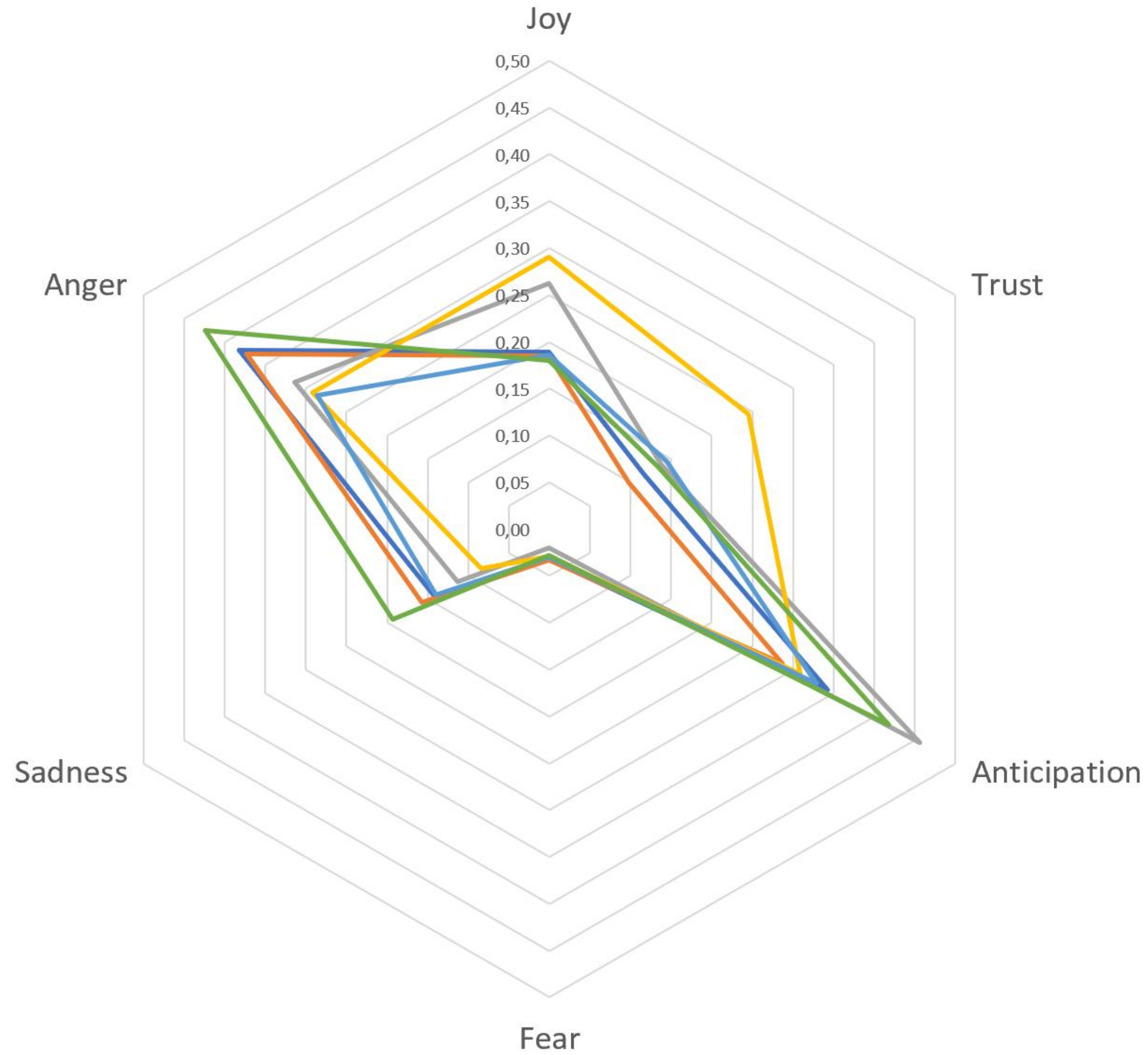
# Topic-based sentiment analysis with Distilbert (for SENTENCES containing words from specific topics)



# **Sentiment passages (refugees – negative)**

- 1) At this moment, the organisations that provide help to Ukrainians in Poland are struggling to continue operations.
- 2) All people who have experienced war, regardless of their role in it, require psychological aid. There simply aren't enough qualified staff who could help those affected by war trauma.
- 3) We must remember that the value of property lost by the citizens in the regions, small towns and villages may exceed that of lost apartments, claims a member of the central bank management board.

— People and war — Warfare — Economy — Refugees — Defence — Europe and Ukraine



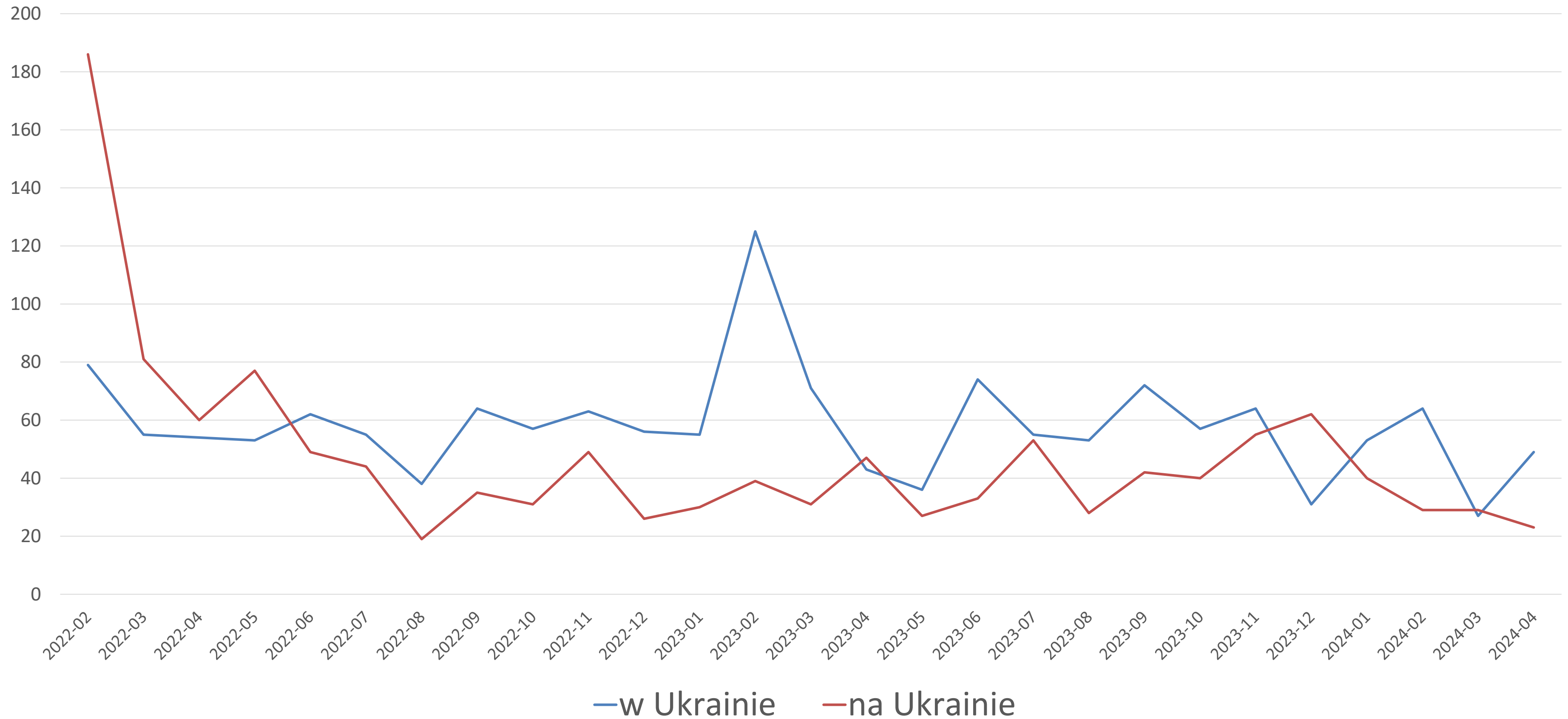
# **Sentiment passages (refugees; trust)**

- 1) Ukrainians will receive aid in terms of childcare, commuting, flexible working hours and accommodation.
- 2) We send supplies, convoys with humanitarian aid deep into the regions of Ukraine that are in need the most, dangerous ones, where it is difficult to receive aid.
- 3) What's more, the efforts to support the war-ravaged Ukraine and its citizens are ongoing and will continue.

# **Sentiment passages (Europe and Ukraine; anticipation)**

- 1) China will soon become the biggest economy in the world, while Putin's Russia is in economic shambles.
- 2) Russia alongside the inflation, chaos, disappointment and humiliation has begun to resemble Germany after the first world war.

# Expressions over time: “W UKRAINIE” [in] vs. “NA UKRAINIE” [on]




# Frequencies of NA/W UKRAINIE



**Before the 2022 war**, the expression “na Ukrainie” was used meaningfully more often than its alternative “w Ukrainie”: pITenTen2019 news corpus indicates the occurrence of “w Ukrainie” **6.6 times for every 100** uses of the expression “na Ukrainie”.

Our corpus collected for the 2022-2024 period showcases a radical change in this regard: “w Ukrainie” occurs **150 times for every 100 uses** of “na Ukrainie”.



# Final remarks



- Six overarching topics emerge, focusing on people, warfare, economy, defence and international matters, constituting an axis for the narratives created about Ukraine.
- Economy and refugee topics see a lot of positive sentiment and the discourses about refugees remain mostly clear of truly negative content or commitments. This confirms the discoveries of other researchers (Georgiou & Troszyński, 2023; Martikainen & Sakki, 2024) regarding the depiction of Ukrainian refugees in contrast to other refugee groups
- The refugees are framed as recipients of care and aid, rather than active agents deciding their own fate;
- The “Economy” topic contains a marked amount of anticipation and joy, which indicates pragmatism of the reports; the prospects of reconstruction and rebuilding of Ukraine are expected to benefit Poland in the future, while the refugee situation is being shown as beneficial to the job market.
- With anti-Ukrainian discourses on the rise in Poland (Tymińska et al., 2023; Lipińska & Jemielniak 2025), the way in which media present the issues related to the war and refugees becomes of paramount importance. Small gestures, such as the symbolic use of the less natural “w Ukrainie” instead of “na Ukrainie” by the press, promote linguistic mindfulness and emphasise that Ukrainians are “us”, rather than “them”.

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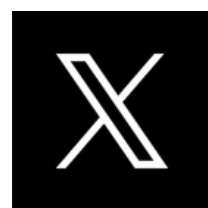
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