

## ISCG Meeting

Date: 18 April 2024 • Time: 10h00-12h30 • Venue: UNHCR Conference Room  
• Participants: RRP Sectors & Working Groups • Language: ENG

Participating Organizations:	<p><u>In-person:</u> UNHCR, UNICEF, Habitat for Humanity, IOM, WHO, NGO Forum “Razem”</p> <p><u>Online:</u> UNHCR Kraków, UNHCR Lublin, Towards Dialogue, PCPM, Save the Children, Halina Nieć Legal Aid Center, WHO, UNICEF</p>
Chaired by:	Filippo Busconi Ricci Oddi, UNHCR
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opening Remarks</li> <li>2. Update on the Special Act</li> <li>3. Situation/mapping of collective sites</li> <li>4. Stocktaking on sector advocacy priorities</li> <li>5. A.O.B</li> </ol>

### *Refugee Coordinator and IA General Update:*

- UNHCR Representative and Refugee Coordinator for Poland Kevin Allen noted that with the political transition, there are new challenges (e.g. the political discourse of the Pact on Migration and Asylum), but also a lot of opportunities to advance (e.g. Min. Duszczyk’s open consultations with 70+ stakeholders, incl. NGOs; ongoing advocacy efforts regarding Roma minority, upcoming meeting with Min. Kotula regarding reproductive rights).
- **Education:** expected changes regarding moving UA children towards compulsory education thanks to joint efforts of UNHCR, WGs, NGOs incl. CEO and Min. Mucha.
- **Health and MHPSS:** meeting with the World Bank, Council of EU, UN agencies and MoH, MHPSS issues gained attention. MoE, MoFLSP and MoI have a role to play.
- **Economic Inclusion:**
  - Round table at the German Embassy and consultations with private sector, there are complementary activities to serve as bridge to companies that hire refugees.
  - IFC established credit checks on both sides of the border, a lot of potential to be gained.
  - Polish government attracted a lot of refugees to work- 1% of GDP of Poland from refugees last year.
  - USD 100mln in loan facilities granted to Santander bank, 30% of that to refugee women, refugees can apply for loans, that is concrete impact.
  - Ongoing challenges: number of women are still underemployed, upskilling/reskilling needed. How can we engage people in the margins that are not part of the economy, incl. residents of collective shelters?
- **Shelter, Housing and Accommodation:**
  - UNHCR and IOM took part in panel discussions at the Housing Forum, regarding e.g. ongoing efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to more than 40k refugees still residing in collective accommodation and get them out of shelters.

- EU social funds 100mln PLN to contribute to social renting agency schemes (Habitat played a pioneering role in passing the legislation). □ Public-private partnership on low-income housing at the global level/ including banks IFC will be coordinating with UNHCR.
- **PSEA:** Mainstreaming training (for police, border guards) and policy work through Interpol, Europol and Frontex. Meeting in Brindisi next week, Poland is on the map.
- **CBI:**
  - UNHCR downscaled with targeted cash, but if there is funding available, there is a need for that tool.
  - UNHCR Representative received a letter from NGO Forum highlighting the importance of RRP in 2025, in terms of resource mobilization and advocacy efforts for local NGOs. There will be a call with RBE to discuss the need and scope of potential RRP in 2025.
  - UNHCR met with 20 embassies/ donors on 17 April 2024. Despite the fact Poland is an EU country, systemic improvements supporting national systems, ongoing advocacy on protection and political engagement required. Poland has recently received first branch of €6 bln in recovery funds from Brussels. Upcoming UNHCR meeting with Min. Pełczyńska from MoDFaRP to understand EU funding streams and how I/NGOs and UN agencies can benefit.
- **AAP:** We need to continue to stay close to refugees and keep them in the center of our response.
- Appointment of Jun Shirato as the new Deputy Representative starting on May 6.
- AI reporting is crucial for ongoing advocacy and funding efforts. To support RRP partners, the reporting was simplified, refresher sessions provided, deadlines extended.
- Upcoming UNHCR NGO Global Consultations on solutions and inclusion, and gender equality in Geneva, June 11-13, register [here](#) by 30.04.
- 55+ funding opportunities were broadly circulated internally/ externally as an ongoing UNHCRC effort to support localization. Regular updates and ad-hoc calls to follow.

#### *Update on the Special Act:*

- Both positive changes and concerns, incl. the extension of temporary permits and safeguards for children, but also issues such as deactivation of PESEL UKR, private hosts using 40+ as business model, and concerns about financial contributions triggering premature returns.
- The extension of the TPD until 2025 - positive changes e.g. inclusion of non-UA children of UA citizens, but also negative e.g. the abolition of certain benefits or challenges with post-TPD solutions.

#### UNHCR

- Measures for the protection of children, incl. mandatory education and increased oversight, and recommendations for ensuring sufficient support for children evacuated from institutions in the foster care system were discussed. Additionally, recommendations for ensuring that safety and protection standards are met and promoting access to social protection schemes for vulnerable individuals were emphasized.
- Discussion on strategies for coordination and advocacy. Alignment with UNICEF on inclusion and national education was highlighted. Efforts include working with relevant authorities to identify gaps and ensure support incl. additional teachers, financial aid, and language assistance. The need for additional consultations and advocacy was emphasized, foreseeing challenges in the implementation. The timeline for the Special Act's publication allows for further inputs until its passage, with a special conference planned for final agreement. Comments from CSs and relevant authorities will be considered, with the latter comments prioritized.

#### *Situation/mapping of collective sites:*

- The discontinuation of funding under 40+ (art. 12, art. 13) has significant implications for collective shelters. Efforts to transition funding to contracts under art. 12 have been met with delays, causing concerns among NGOs. Ongoing intersectoral advocacy efforts with the MoI aim to ensure a fast-track pathway for NGOs running shelters under art. 13, as MoI not aware of the scale, and the need for a clear definition of collective shelters and technical standards to ensure monitoring, oversight mechanisms, and clarity on responsible authorities highlighted, although resistance to specificity within the act exists.
- Concerns raised regarding medical services in collective centers, particularly regarding self-care, ambulatory services, and access to specialists, with vulnerable individuals often left without adequate care or heating. Advocacy focuses on the establishment of new collective sites emphasizing health, education, and integration to promote independence and access to the job market, with an urgent need for transit sites, especially in transit voivodeships, requiring regional coordination to address challenges for new arrivals.
- Joint efforts by IOM and Mapuj Pomoc to establish baseline map of collective sites, expected to be ready in June/July.

#### *Stocktaking on sector advocacy priorities:*

- The meeting highlighted the need for cross-sector collaboration and coordination to ensure a cohesive approach. There was recognition of the importance of joint statements and ad-hoc meetings to align advocacy efforts, particularly in sectors like Shelter and Education. Lessons learned from previous ad-hoc meetings emphasized the importance of transparency and the role of UNHCR as co-chairs of the sectors in framing discussions. [Action point: call for an ad-hoc ISCG meeting to discuss advocacy on migration policy and next steps, tentatively booked in May.](#)
- Updates highlighted the bi-weekly meetings of the Advocacy WG as part of NGO Forum, with a focus on linking these meetings with sectors and influencing policy, particularly the Pact on Migration and Asylum. Concerns were raised about fragmented communication with the government, with no identified focal point having a comprehensive understanding of humanitarian needs. Engagement with authorities in working groups was emphasized to enhance collaboration incl. the new director of the Department for International Affairs and Migration, Paweł Dąbrowski.
- Emphasis on the importance of positive examples of collaboration between Protection and Shelter sectors, acknowledging the inevitability of last-minute changes and the need for all stakeholders to stay updated on sector activities. Co-leads were highlighted as crucial for ensuring participation in sector meetings and coordination. The importance of keeping minutes of sector meetings updated on the ODP to meet donor expectations was highlighted. Timely feedback on the MSNA questionnaire was requested, with the new deadline being 24th of April.

#### *Integration Strategy*

- NGO Forum highlighted a recent meeting with MoFSP regarding the integration centers, open call announced as part of AMIF. Marshals are required to have at least one NGO partner to run the centers, with each voivodeship having different schedules and approaches. Discussions on integration within the migration policy group, led by the MoI and governmental entities. NGOs are advocating for expert involvement in the group and are proposing changes to ensure recognition of integration as a two-way process and support for the hosting community. The proposed 10 integration points will form the basis for assumptions, with further elaboration needed within the migration strategy. *A.O.B:*
- Next ISCG meeting: 13<sup>th</sup> June, to be confirmed