

## POLAND PROTECTION SECTOR MEETING

Meeting Minutes – 20 March 2025

<b>Meeting subject:</b>	Monthly Protection Sector Meeting
<b>Time &amp; location:</b>	2pm (hybrid meeting)
<b>Chaired by:</b>	UNHCR, HNLAC
<b>Minutes prepared by:</b>	UNHCR
<b>Participants:</b>	HNLAC, UNHCR, IOM, Save the Children, SIP, HFHR, Care International, Vela Foundation, YWAM Poland, Plan International, WHO, R2P, PAH, UNICEF, JRS, Towards Dialogue Foundation (44 pers.)
<b>Agenda:</b>	<p><b>Agenda</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Opening remarks</li><li>2. Update on legal developments</li><li>3. Finalization of TORs for 2025 - document can be accessed <a href="#">here</a></li><li>4. Presentation of e-learning in Psychological First Aid for Children - Polish Red Cross</li><li>5. Presentation of border movement in 2024 - UNHCR Field Office Lublin</li><li>6. Updates from GBV, Child Protection, Counter-Trafficking</li><li>7. AOB</li></ol>
<b>AGENDA POINT</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>
<b>Agenda point 1</b>	<p>UNHCR welcomed participants to the second Protection Sector meeting in 2025 and thanked for support in the preparation of Protection Sector materials for RRP launch as well as for support during the RRP launch on 20 February 2025 (Protection desk).</p> <p>Participants were reminded to share their “2025 Protection Sector list/contacts of members” with the Protection Sector here: <a href="mailto:polwaptsector@unhcr.org">polwaptsector@unhcr.org</a></p>

	The Protection Sector plans to organize one protection refresher training (4 hours) in May for all RRP partners. A refresher will be given on protection, coordination, GBV, CP and TIP.
<b>Agenda point 2</b>	<p>Legal updates focused on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Statistics on International Protection (IP) in 2024</b> – 17.000 persons lodged application for IP in 2024 and the Office for Foreigners (OFF) issued decisions for 12.000 people. Top 5 countries of origin are: Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Somalia and Eritrea. 7.000 persons were granted international protection while negative decisions were received by 1.600 persons and 3.400 persons had their IP procedure discontinued.</li> <li>• <b>Amendments to the Law on Granting Protection</b> – the changes in the law introducing the concept of ‘instrumentalization of migration’ and suspension of the right to apply for international protection; the law was adopted by Parliament (Sejm voted in favor of the law on 21 Feb and Senate on 13 March); the bill was submitted to the President for signature and signed on 26 March. In order to introduce the law, Council of Ministers must issue a regulation that will define the area of application of the restriction and the timeframe (no longer than 60 days; with a possibility of extension). The act provides the list of certain vulnerable groups that are exempted from these provisions.</li> <li>• <b>Increase of applications in Terespol Border Crossing</b> – since the beginning of 2025 at the Terespol Border Crossing (road crossing) 256 applications for IP were accepted. In the whole 2024, applications for IP were accepted from 594 people.</li> <li>• <b>IP proceedings concerning Ukrainian citizens</b> – Communication from OFF provided that there has been an increase in the number of applications for IP lodged by Ukrainian citizens in 2024 that caused backlog and prolonged the expected deadlines on the procedure to 15 months.</li> <li>• Considering the <b>shift in dynamics and migration trends</b>, NGOs assisting refugees in Poland receive a significant number of inquires from refugees from Ukraine about the possibility of changing legal regimes and other options of legalizing their stay in a long term in Poland as they fear to be sent back to their country. Therefore, it was emphasized that one needs to be conscious about the way and type of information provided to refugees. <i>Note: the presentation on legal updates was uploaded on the Operational Data Portal<sup>1</sup> (ODP) <a href="#">here</a></i></li> </ul>
<b>Agenda point 3</b>	The TORs for the Protection Sector (2025) were finalized, screened and explained. Any final feedback was welcomed until COB 20 March. <i>Note: The TORs were uploaded on the ODP: <a href="#">here</a></i>

<sup>1</sup> <https://data.unhcr.org/en/working-group/309?sv=54&geo=10781>

<b>Agenda point 4</b>	<p>Presentation of e-learning in Psychological First Aid (PFA) for Children - Polish Red Cross (PCK)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The presentation included a brief overview of PFA's definition, purpose, principles and target groups. PCK delivers two types of training in person – Basic Training in Psychological First Aid (Basic PFA) and Training in Psychological First Aid for Children (PFA for Children) for which operational and contact details were provided (available in Protection Sector meeting on 20 March 2025 Polish Red Cross presentation published on ODP). There is also an online training on Psychological First Aid for Children available through International Federation of Red Cross. In person and online trainings are available in Polish and Ukrainian languages. <i>Note: The presentation of e-learning in PFA for Children was uploaded on the ODP <a href="#">here</a></i></li> </ul>
<b>Agenda point 5</b>	<p>Presentation of border movements in 2024 - UNHCR Field Office Lublin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNHCR Lublin conducted regular border monitoring missions to each of the 10 Border Crossing Points with Ukraine in Lubelskie and Podkarpackie voivodeships. In 2024, 62 missions were completed. An overview of the border crossing movements (arrival and departures) and protection monitoring data was presented.</li> </ul>
<b>Agenda point 6</b>	<p>Updates from Gender Based Violence (GBV), Child Protection (CP), Counter-Trafficking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>GBV sub sector working group</b> – currently there are structure changes in co-chair of the working group due to International Rescue Committee departure from Poland; challenges due to budget cuts for partners were underlined; the group has been conducting revision of SOPs and activities.</li> <li>• <b>CP sub sector working group</b> – CP initiated separate meetings in 2025, recently 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting took place, participants are welcomed to join; currently the group has been revising TORs and discussing on the topics and activities to be done this year.</li> </ul>
<b>Agenda point 7</b>	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection Sector Co-leads proposed to have separate discussions, if needed, with participants/ organizations on issues related to funding.</li> <li>• Since the Law of 12 March 2022 on Assistance to Citizen of Ukraine in connection with the Armed Conflict in the territory of Ukraine will be amended and the provision of a special 3-years residence permit (so called PESEL CUKR) has not been activated yet, joint advocacy efforts on that matter to the government were suggested.</li> <li>• Participants were encouraged to share the agenda items for next Protection Sector meeting in advance.</li> </ul>

