FUNDACJA W STRONĘ DIALOGU

fundacjawstronedialogu.pl

Roma refugees from Ukraine in Poland face heightened vulnerabilities due to ethnic discrimination, compounded by refugee status and disabilities; evidence suggests around 15,000–20,000 Roma among ~970,000 Ukrainian refugees, with 5% overall having disabilities.

Recent amendments to Poland's Special Act (September 2025) extend legal stay and benefits until March 2026 but introduce employment requirements for most social aids, with exceptions for persons with disabilities and caregivers—potentially aiding Roma families but risking exclusion due to barriers like discrimination.

Main challenges include limited medical access, language barriers, and fear of bias; needs center on specialist care, equipment, and integration support, as only a few assessed Roma have Polish disability certificates.

FUNDACJA W STRONĘ DIALOGU

Assessed Roma Families with Disabilities

- Total: 10 children + 15 adults across 4 locations (Okuninka, Krasnystaw, Poręba Wielka–Koninki, Soczewka).Children: Issues like heart problems, asthma, vision loss, post-accident damage, multiple surgeries; only ~4 have Polish medical certificates. Adults: Diabetes, mobility issues; few confirmed disabilities in Poland. Limited access: Only 2 children used lab services; 1 child + 1 adult need mobility equipment (e.g., special shoes).

FUNDACJA W STRONĘ DIALOGU

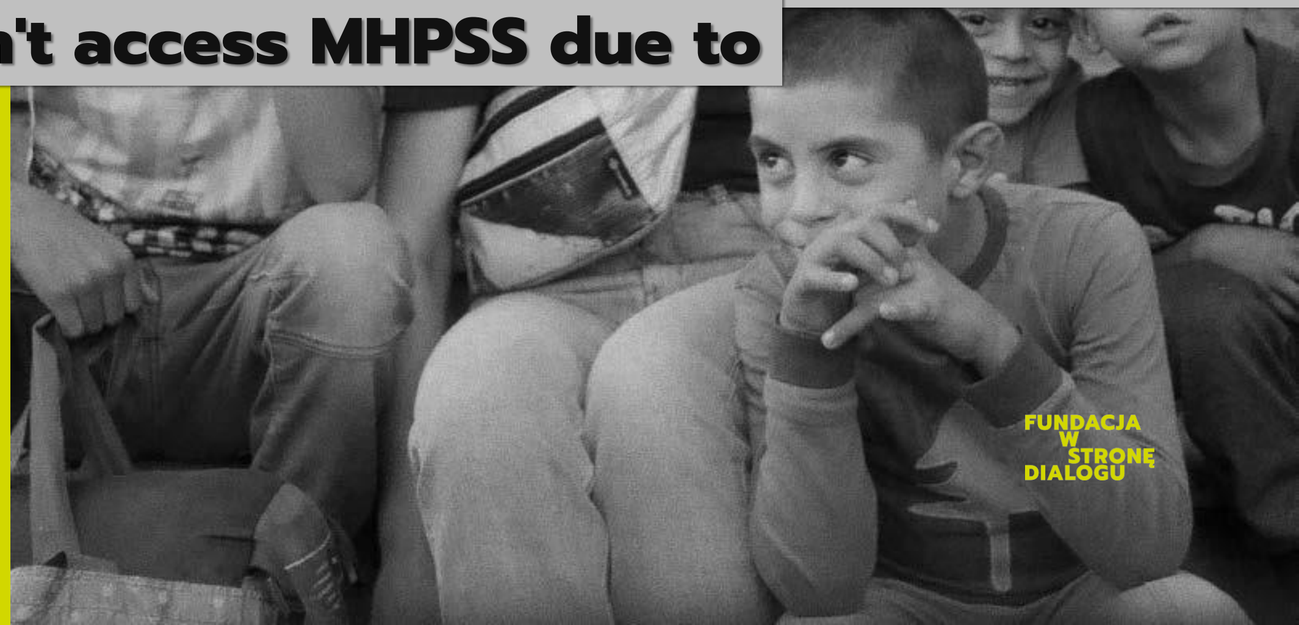
Disabilities Among Roma Adults

Common: Chronic illnesses (diabetes), mobility limitations, unconfirmed disabilities. Needs: Regular monitoring, meds, equipment; 48% of households face employment barriers, including due to illness and other factors .Challenges: Ukrainian certificates not recognized; require Polish evaluation with translated docs (free process).Broader context: 10% face healthcare barriers; high costs, queues, and language issues.

FUNDACJA W STRONĘ DIALOGU

Key Challenges

Medical: No family doctors, long waits, language/fear of ethnic bias, transport/financial hurdles; 93% insured but access gaps. Discrimination: Anti-Roma sentiment in housing, schools, jobs; segregation in shelters; 39% report negative attitudes. Integration: Remote locations, bullying in education, low-wage/informal work. Mental Health: 40% households affected due to the post-war situation; 51% can't access MHPSS due to stigma/awareness.



Legal Framework for Disabilities

- No automatic recognition of Ukrainian certificates; apply to Disability Evaluation Board (free, needs translated docs).
- Benefits: Care allowance for disabled children's caregivers; social assistance (permanent/temporary); 500+ for independent living inability.
- Education: Compulsory; obtain special needs cert from the counseling center for disabled children.
- Applies to Roma: Admin hurdles compounded by mistrust/discrimination.

FUNDACJA W STRONĘ DIALOGU

September 2025 Amendments to Special Act

- Extension: Legal stay/residence permits to March 4, 2026 (final); benefits conditional on employment (half min. wage ~PLN 2,333 gross).
- Exceptions: Disabled persons, caregivers, pensioners exempt from work requirement; 800+ benefit for disabled children without work condition.
- Accommodation: Until Oct 31, 2025 open; then restricted to vulnerable (e.g., disabled children/caregivers in collective centers).

FUNDACJA W STRONĘ DIALOGU

Priority Needs

- Medical: Specialists, diagnostics, mobility aids, translators; funds for meds/travel.
- Financial/Integration: Streamlined benefits, urban housing, vocational training.
- Education: Inclusive programs, language suport, including for disabled Roma.
- Mental Health: Culturally sensitive MHPSS, destigmatization.

FUNDACJA W STRONĘ DIALOGU

Demographics and Disabilities in Assessed Roma GroupsFrom the provided document

Assessments of Roma families in four Polish locations reveal 10 children and 15 adults with disabilities:Okuninka: 4 children (e.g., post-surgeries); 5 adults (some awaiting confirmation of disability in Poland).
Krasnystaw: 1 child (heart issues needing constant care); 5 adults.
Poręba Wielka–Koninki: 3 children (asthma, vascular problems from accident); 2 adults (diabetes).
Soczewka: 2 children (vision impairment); 3 adults (one awaiting confirmation). Only a handful have Polish disability certificates, and just two children accessed laboratory services.

Needs include mobility equipment (e.g., special shoes for one child and one adult) and ongoing specialist care, aligning with broader UNHCR data where 5% of refugees have disabilities, often chronic conditions exacerbated by war trauma. Among Roma, disabilities may stem from pre-war marginalization, including limited healthcare access in Ukraine, now worsened by displacement.

Thank you!

Olena Vaidalovych
olena@fundacjawstronedialogu.pl

www.fundacjawstronedialogu.pl

FUNDACJA W STRONĘ DIALOGU