



Małopolska Coordination Group Meeting
Meeting Minutes – 11 May 2023

Meeting subject:	Małopolska Intersector Coordination Meeting
Time & location:	9 am – UNHCR Krakow Sub-Office
Chaired by:	UNHCR; Open Krakow Coalition
Minutes prepared by:	UNHCR
Participants:	Departament Rozwoju Regionu Urzędu Marszałkowskiego Województwa Małopolskiego, Małopolski Fundusz Ekonomii Społecznej, Wydział Polityki Społecznej i Zdrowia UMK , Fundacja Kalina Kraków (Zupa dla Ukrainy), Fundacja Understanding, Halina Nieć Legal Aid Center, Faros Elpidas, Fundacja Dobro Zawsze Wraca, Project HOPE, Wolno Nam, OWiM, Caspar, Cracow University of Economics, All Hands and Hearts, Blue Dot (ZHP Chorągiew Krakowska), Save the Children, IOM, Fundacja Instytut Polska-Ukraina
Agenda:	Introduction from the co-chairs and update on the points decided on the last Coordination meeting. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Updates from the Małopolskie Marshall's Office (integration plan)2) Updates from refugee and Ukrainian-led organizations3) World Refugee Day preparations (UNHCR)4) AOB
AGENDA POINT	DISCUSSION
Introduction and update on points from last meeting	Participants were welcomed to the 18th Małopolska Coordination Group Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNHCR announced that beginning from the next Inter Sector Coordination Meeting, Zustricz Foundation will be a co-chair of the meetings, in accordance with the rotational co-chairing system.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in the agenda of the meeting were announced. A presentation about the updates from the Voivodship Office (concerning accommodation) will be given at one of the subsequent meetings. Updates from the Małopolskie Marshall's Office (concerning the integration plan) will take first place in the agenda due to time limitations of the presenters.
<p>Agenda point 1</p>	<p>Małopolskie Marshall's Office (Departament Rozwoju Regionu Urzędu Marszałkowskiego Województwa Małopolskiego) gave a presentation on the integration plan of foreigners in Małopolskie entitled "Małopolska otwarta".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Małopolska Marshall's Office has worked out a strategy to develop a regional integration plan for Małopolskie, including accommodation, employment, education, and other critical areas concerning the integration of foreigners, including refugees, in Małopolska between 2023 and 2029. So far, 6 diagnostic workshops took place, aimed at evaluating the needs of foreigners and host populations, as well as at the mapping of available resources and services. • 2 more strategic workshops are planned, with the same list of participants, to develop a document which will be treated as public policy for integration of foreigners into the local community in Małopolska. The local stakeholders have been included in the workshops and will be invited to apply for the short- and long-term projects planned as part of the Marshall's Office integration plan (entitled "Małopolska otwarta"). Updates about the "Małopolska otwarta" (Open Małopolska) project can be found at the dedicated website: https://www.malopolska.pl/malopolska-otwarta/wydarzenia • The Marshall's Office took a participatory approach to the creation of the public policy document aimed at foreigners. The Office is leading in the strategic activity and planning concerning foreigners, while the Voivodeship carries out its duties related to reception and immediate support of refugees and other foreigners coming to Poland. The workshops are a part of the participatory approach of the strategy development, aimed at prioritizing partnership and cooperation. Among the stakeholders invited to participate in the development of the public policy are area experts, including prof. Konrad Pędzwiatr from Cracow University of Economics. • Data collection in preparation of the project involved collecting primary and secondary data. For secondary data, available reports, including those prepared by UNHCR, were used. For primary data, information from 5 cities around Kraków have been gathered, including Krzeszowice, Skawina, Wieliczka, Niepołomice, and Myślenice. • The data indicates that since 2014, the number of applications for legalization of residence has been steadily increasing. In 2014, 6128 applications were submitted to the Malopolska Regional Office, and in 2022 - 42,658 (8.3% of all applications in the country). At the end of 2022, nearly 77,000 people were staying in Małopolska on the basis of a residence card, including: 57.2% from Ukraine; 6.5% from Belarus; 4.1% from Georgia; 3.1% from India and 2.8% from Russia. As of 2022, 143.8 thousand Ukrainian citizens who entered Poland due to the war had applied for PESEL in Małopolska.

- Almost half of the refugees (48.6%) live in Krakow and Krakow and Wieliczka counties. The second region of concentration (13.8%) is the nowosadecki, nowotarski and tatrzański powiats. As of the end of 2022, there were about 72,400 Ukrainians in private housing, regardless of the form of settlement or degree of relationship to the owners or main tenants, in the Malopolskie Voivodeship.
- In Malopolska institutions, the share of foreign students in the total number of Malopolska students increased from 1.7% in 2021 to 4.6% in 2022. The majority (96%) of foreign students in Malopolska's schools and kindergartens are citizens of non-EU European countries. In particular, they are from post-Soviet countries, mainly Ukraine, Belarus and Russia, as well as Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. In recent years, the number of work permits for foreigners in Poland has been increasing (2020 +4%; 2021 +8%) until 2022, when it declined (-39%). Changes in the number of permits in 2022 were mainly due to the simplification of the procedure for employing foreigners on the basis of the employer's statement of entrustment of work. It allows citizens of 5 countries: Ukraine and Armenia, Belarus, Georgia and Moldova to perform work in Poland for 24 months without the need to obtain a work permit. In 2021, the share of work permits for Ukrainians reached 65% among working foreigners in Poland. Family benefits paid in 2022 to Ukrainian citizens residing in Małopolska amounted to 67.1 thousand benefits in the total amount of PLN 7.85 million.
- In March 2023, Malopolska Regional Development Observatory conducted an online survey in which 58% of public and non-public educational establishments in Malopolska participated (1,725 out of 2,965 establishments). The questions concerned the following issues: how the educational process for foreign students is organized, challenges related to the learning process and ensuring emotional well-being, cooperation of schools with other entities, and needs diagnosed by schools in this area. The results of the questionnaire pointed to problems related to the language barrier, the trauma of war and migration experienced by the children, which impinges on their motivation to learn, the lack of specialists who know the Ukrainian language, especially in the field of psychology and subject teachers.
- The percentage of people supporting the reception of refugees in Poland dropped from 94% in March 2022 to 78% in January 2023. The reports concerning the attitude of Polish communities in and around Kraków are compiled on regular basis and are publicly available at the Marshall's Office's website: <https://www.malopolska.pl/publikacje>
- A diagnostic workshop conducted in April 2023 in five key areas (education, social relations, health promotion and protection, labor market and housing, social assistance, and other public benefits) moderated by cooperating experts. Some of the challenges identified during the diagnostic workshop included the following:
 - Deficiencies in preparing the entire system to work with foreign male and female students.
 - Inadequate knowledge of the Polish language.
 - The practice of hiring foreigners below their qualifications.

- Low competence or lack thereof among employers in managing nationally diverse workforces, especially in micro, small and medium-sized companies.
 - Distrust and prejudice among employers toward foreigners (temporariness, lack of faith in the sense of investing in training).
 - Significant barriers to the provision of health services for economic migrants and refugees arise from cultural and linguistic conditions or are of a universal nature due to limited system resources in Poland.
 - The area of health care and health promotion is separated from other public policies, and there are no elements linking health policy to education or the labor market.
 - Insufficient information about the social benefit system and various forms of support for foreigners.
 - Problems with funding long-term projects and activities to increase/facilitate access to social services for foreigners.
- The next stage of the project will be 2 strategic workshops (5 key areas grouped into 2 blocks) in the second half of May 2023. The list of participants is closed and includes the stakeholders who participated in previous stages of the project. The purpose of the strategic workshops will be to formulate, based on the results of the diagnostic workshops, the goals and directions of action and recommendations for solutions, along with an indication of the entities for which each recommendation is dedicated. The goals for the workshops will be:
 - to develop a document of a public policy standard;
 - with a horizon coinciding with that outlined in the region's development strategy, i.e. until 2030;
 - presenting directions for action, understood as the main areas of concentration of activities of various entities in the field of integration of foreigners, and recommendations for solutions, understood as types of activities or types of projects with an indication of the entities for which individual recommendations are dedicated.
 - UNHCR inquired if the report concerning the situation of schools and the education sector in Malopolska is publicly accessible. The Marshall's Office informed that the report may be obtained by contacting the Regional Development Department (sekretariat.rr@umwm.malopolska.pl) by interested partners.
 - UNHCR inquired when the activities to support mothers and children, including increased access to childcare, will commence in Malopolska. The Marshall's Office responded that the activities would start on short- and long-term projects and initiatives as soon as possible, likely in 2024 following a call for implementation. Prof. Konrad Pędzwiatr added that the strategy would focus on areas outside the main urban area of Kraków.

Agenda point 2

Updates from refugee and Ukrainian-led organizations:

- UNHCR shared that the cash program would be extended until end of 2023 at minimum and invited partners to refer families for funding. Partners interested in being trained on how to enroll refugees and refugee families in the program are kindly asked to contact Maria Pamuła (pamula@unhcr.org).
- Following the Inter Agency Coordination presentation delivered by UNHCR during the previous meeting, UNHCR shared that the first report for the period of January-March 2023 is available online.
- The meeting participants inquired about information on the living conditions of refugees staying in the collective shelter in Nowa Huta, especially those who were moved from a closed shelter in Kapelanka. Faros Elpidas shared that they attempted to visit the collective shelter in Nowa Huta and offered to conduct activities in the shelter, however, the coordinators of the facility said they were not interested in the offer. The refugees living in the shelter reported to Faros Elpidas an announcement of a plan to install security cameras in the facility, but the information has not been confirmed. UNHCR shared that a meeting between UNHCR and other stakeholder in the Inter Agency Forum took place, with an agreement that the government would conduct an assessment of collective shelters, but the final overview is not yet available.
- Wolno Nam shared that in their two shelters with total capacity of ca 300, only 2 people were not exempted from accommodation fee payment, as they were able to earn a sum close to a minimum wage. Wolno Nam observed that most persons in the collective shelters are refugees who belong to vulnerable groups.
- Wolno Nam currently have free spots in their long-term collective shelter and invited other partners to refer the refugees in need of accommodation. Refugees in need of accommodation may be referred to a long-term accommodation at Piłsudskiego (where the refugees staying over 2 weeks are asked to volunteer 7 hours of work to the maintenance of the shelter) or a short-term shelter in Bonarka (up to 7 days, no separate rooms).
- All Hands and Hearts shared that they are open to performing renovations of shelters, rooms, apartments, kitchens, and bathrooms in places where services or accommodation to refugees is offered.
- Foundation Mission-U announced that they are planning to publish a book in Ukrainian, written by poets and journalists from Ukraine living in their collective shelter in Kraków. A connection was made with Wolno Nam, who offered to assist with the publishing process.

Agenda point 3	<p>UNHCR updated the meeting participants on the World Refugee Day preparations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities connected to the European Olympics are planned. The Refugee Team will compete in the Olympics, and may be available for another activity for refugees (to be confirmed). • The World Refugee Day will be in June 20, 2023 and the activities and initiatives related to the WRD may take place both before and after this date, in addition to June 20 itself. Partners who would like to coordinate their WRD activities with UNHCR or among the meeting participants, are asked to reach out to Vanessa Moya at moya@unhcr.org • A visit of UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Alfonso Herrera, one of the most renowned actors in Latin America, took place in Ukraine and Poland recently. The Ambassador met with children in several locations. The report from his visit may be accessed at https://www.unhcr.org/news/alfonso-herrera-unhcr-goodwill-ambassador-calls-solidarity-those-affected-full-scale-invasion
AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners confirmed their interest in attending a workshop about community engagement and accountability that will be offered by CLEAR Global and CDAC Network as part of the AAP WG working plan. The workshop will take place on Friday, May 19, 2023, 14:00-16:00. • Additionally, partners were invited to participate in the Sexual and Reproductive Health trainings for humanitarians and refugees planned by the GBV unit. The links for registration will be sent out to the meeting participants in a separate message following the meeting.

ACTION POINTS SUMMARY				
No.	Action	Responsible	Deadline	Status (as of)
1.				
2				