



**Małopolska Coordination Group Meeting**  
Meeting Minutes – 07 September 2023

<b>Meeting subject:</b>	Małopolska Coordination Group Meeting
<b>Time &amp; location:</b>	9 am – UNHCR Krakow Sub-Office
<b>Chaired by:</b>	UNHCR; Open Krakow Coalition
<b>Minutes prepared by:</b>	UNHCR
<b>Participants:</b>	Małopolski Urząd Wojewódzki; Wojewódzki Urząd Pracy; Centrum Pomocy przy PPPL; Fundacja Kocham Dębniki; Fundacja Widowisk Masowych; Halina Niec Legal Aid Center; IB Polska/Multicultural Center; IOM; Project Hope; Salam Lab; Szpital Babinskiego; UNHCR; VOICE Amplified; Wolno Nam; ZHP/Blue Dot;
<b>Agenda:</b>	<p>Introduction and updates from the co-chairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction from the co-chairs</li> <li>- Updates from Ukrainian and refugee led organizations</li> <li>- Updates from the Voivodship Office</li> <li>- Presentation on the public mental healthcare system in Poland (Babinskiego Hospital)</li> <li>- Presentation on public MHPSS services for refugees from Ukraine (Pedagogical Counseling Center nr. 2)</li> <li>- Presentation on UNICEF MHPSS initiatives</li> <li>- Expanding network and communities of support to address MHPSS – sharing of best practice</li> <li>- AOB</li> </ul>
<b>Introduction and update on points from last meeting</b>	Participants were welcomed to the 23rd Małopolska Coordination Group Meeting

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNHCR introduced the Foundation of Mass Performance (Fundacja Widowisk Masowych) as the new meeting co-chair representing the Open Krakow Coalition. The Foundation of Mass Performance will hold this position for the upcoming three months, in accordance with the rotating co-chairing agreement. UNHCR duly thanked Zustricz for undertaking co-chairing duties from May to August 2023.</li> <li>• UNHCR provided several updates related to inter-agency coordination. Following the meeting a draft of the meeting Terms of Reference (ToRs) in English and in Polish will be circulated for partners review and feedback. A survey link to collect feedback about the meeting cycle will also be sent. UNHCR also reminded participants that an email had been sent about expressing interest for the 2024 Refugee Response Plan (RRP), and that registration remains open for an RPP planning workshop in Warsaw on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> September. Additional links for a contingency planning and a shelter support matrix had also been sent, and participants were encouraged to input their interventions.</li> </ul>
<b>Agenda point 1</b>	No updates were provided under the given agenda point.
<b>Agenda point 2</b>	<p>The Representative of the Voivode provided updates about the situation in Małopolska:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Voivodship Office reported an increased focus on work activation programs carried out in the field. Representatives from the Voivodship have visited 14 collective shelters in Małopolska to assess the current situation and refugees' ability to be self-sufficient. These visits took place in smaller locations, including Raba Wyżna, Rabka, Oświęcim, and Mszana Dolna. In general the results of these visits were not encouraging. It was highlighted that only a small number of people in shelters are working. The Voivodship office is also working with the Polish Red Cross (PCK) and with UNHCR on pilot projects related to work activation in collective shelters. More information on their impact will be available in the coming months.</li> <li>• The number of beds in the Voivodship's database has decreased slightly since figures were last shared. There are currently 19,000 places in the database, of which 11,000 are taken and 8,000 are free. In line with past updates, the lowest availability of places is in Krakow, while there are more places available in smaller towns and villages.</li> <li>• Since the beginning of the refugee influx, 157,000 PESEL numbers with UKR status have been given out in Małopolska. 802 legal entities have received funding for housing refugees, and 97,600 individuals have benefited from accommodation and meals made possible by state funding channeled through the Voivodship.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Representative encouraged NGOs working directly with refugees to support their integration into Polish society, including through assisting them in finding their own accommodation, sending their children to school, accessing psychosocial support and undertaking employment. The Representative noted that each organization in the room has various projects and areas of expertise and each offers something different. All together these initiatives can have positive effects.</li> <li>• In response to a question, the Representative shared that children have access to schools and are able to enroll. However, past experience has shown that they often resign within several months. The situation with preschools and nurseries may be different.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Agenda point 3</b></p>	<p>Pedagogical Psychological Counseling Center nr. 2 in Krakow shared information about services currently provided to refugees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are eight public specialist and pedagogical psychological counselling centers in Krakow Urban Municipality. In cooperation with UNICEF Sun Centers (Słoneczne Przestrzenie Wsparcia) were opened in these eight locations. The Sun Centers are spaces in which both Polish and Ukrainian children can meet with psychologists, educators, and speech therapists. From 1 September 2023 only four of these Sun Centers remain, including the one run by Counseling Center nr. 2. Referrals are not necessary. It is sufficient to call the phone number listed on the dedicated website, at which Ukrainian language support is also available.</li> <li>• The Sun Centers employ Ukrainian specialists. It was noted that in the first months of the refugee influx, Ukrainian parents mainly came to Counseling Center nr. 2 to obtain certificates of disability so children could access specialized education and services. Following the employment of Ukrainian specialists, parents also felt comfortable enough to begin coming to the Center for psychological advice and services.</li> <li>• Counseling Center nr. 2 works directly with schools through a modality in which Ukrainian specialists are sent to provide individual and group consultations. In this way, children are also able to receive referrals to specialists. This initiative has received positive feedback from school directors, and there are in increasing number of schools interested in taking part. However, the capacity of this initiative is limited by the number of specialists hired. Currently there are 4 full time positions, and funding has been received from the Municipality for an additional half time position.</li> <li>• Due to the refugee influx, Counseling Center nr. 2 has also begun expanding the services offered. For adults, there are meetings with career advisors and meetings organized jointly with the Grodzki Labor Office. Assistance is also available for the specialists employed by the Center, including support with nostrification of diplomas, Polish language classes, and clinical supervision.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Agenda point 4</b></p>	<p>The Babinski Clinical Hospital shared a presentation about services available in the public system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ukrainians with UKR status can access all public psychiatric and psychological health services for free on the same terms as Polish citizens. The Babinski Clinical Hospital offers inpatient treatment in general psychiatric wards, as well as outpatient treatment in mental health clinics. In situations requiring immediate medical attention, individuals should report directly to the hospital emergency room.</li> <li>• After 24 February 2022, the Babinski Hospital opened a new clinic for refugees from Ukraine, staffed by Ukrainian speaking doctors. So far, the clinic has provided help to 110 adults, most of whom use the clinic for ongoing consultations. An additional 59 Ukrainian citizens have been treated in inpatient facilities. The clinic also employs Ukrainian speaking registration staff. The registration phone number is 608 690 281.</li> <li>• Ongoing challenges include: the lack of specialists for children and youth, consultations on psychological opinions to reach a decision on the degree of a given disability, and stigma. In regard to the latter, the topic of psychiatric help is still stigmatized in Ukraine and often situations deteriorate before someone seeks the support of a psychologist or psychiatrist.</li> <li>• In response to a question about capacity, the Babinski Hospital shared that it regularly provides services to Ukrainian refugees from other parts of Małopolska Voivodship, because language barriers exist in other parts of the region. Newcomers also continue to arrive. The Hospital is trying to absorb as much of the needs as possible.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Agenda point 5</b></p>	<p>UNICEF briefed participants on ongoing MHPSS initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To date, UNICEF has reached 662,000 children and caregivers through its MHPSS activities in Poland, including at Blue Dots, Spilno Hubs, and partnerships with the 12 largest Polish Municipalities. Responding to a query, UNICEF clarified that implementation modalities rely first on working with municipalities which then select local partners for the implementation of programs. Current partnerships end in December 2023 with new priorities for 2024 including child protection and countering violence at school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Agenda point 6</b></p>	<p>Participants shared good practices of community-networks and self-help groups supporting positive mental health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VOICE Amplified noted that there have been two interventions which have proven particularly effective. The first are art therapy classes. These are a PSS activity that encourages refugees to open up to psychosocial support while avoiding the</li> </ul>

	<p>perceived stigma that can be a barrier to accessing MHPSS services. The second is the provision of childcare activities, especially in the afternoons and weekends.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IOM shared information with participants about the recently published Manual on Community Based MHPSS in Emergencies. The Manual is available <a href="#">online</a> in English, Polish and Ukrainian A toolbox with CBP and MHPSS tools was also made available to partners. IOM further shared that the MHPSS team is available to carry out trainings on community based MHPSS.</li> </ul>
AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zustricz shared that for the past year the foundation has been running a psychological support center on Krolewska street. Assistance is provided In English, Polish and Ukrainian to refugees from Ukraine, as well as to refugees and migrants from other countries. The center offers individual consultations and a helpline. Psychologists also make visits to collective shelters and to other organizations serving refugees and clinical supervision for psychologists is also available. The center will remain open until the end of October and Zustricz is currently looking for additional funding.</li> <li>IOM shared that a new center will be opening soon in Krakow.</li> <li>Wolno Nam shared that they continue to run a preschool for children ages 3-6 at Piłsudskiego 13 street. This is also open to the public.</li> </ul>

ACTION POINTS SUMMARY				
No.	Action	Responsible	Deadline	Status (as of )
1.	UNHCR and IOM will explore options to organize a training on MHPSS and CBP in Krakow by end of September.	UNHCR and IOM	30 September	Pending
2				