

**Małopolska Coordination Group Meeting**  
Meeting Minutes – 22 February 2024

<b>Meeting subject:</b>	Małopolska Coordination Group Meeting
<b>Time &amp; location:</b>	9 am – UNHCR Krakow Sub-Office
<b>Chaired by:</b>	UNHCR
<b>Minutes prepared by:</b>	UNHCR
<b>Participants:</b>	Wojewodzki Urząd Pracy w Krakowie; Centrum Pomocy prawnej im. Haliny Niec; Fundacja Instytut Polska-Ukraina; Fundacja Kocham Debniki; Fundacja Understanding; IB Poland; IOM; RSO Harangos; Save the Children; Stowarzyszenie Jududoro; UAinKrakow; UNHCR; UNICEF; Voice Amplified; ZHP
<b>Agenda:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction from the co-chairs</li> <li>• Updates from UKR and refugee-led organizations</li> <li>• Presentation on the Refugee Response Plan (RRP) and reporting in Activity Info (UNHCR)</li> <li>• Updates on the situation of Roma refugees (Harangos)</li> <li>• AOB</li> </ul>
<b>AGENDA POINT</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>
<b>Introduction and update on points from last meeting</b>	<p>Participants were welcomed to the 29th Małopolska Coordination Group (MCG) meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNHCR introduced the meeting agenda points: the 2024 RRP and reporting in ActivityInfo, and the situation of Roma refugees. On the former, UNHCR noted the importance of service mapping in accountability and coordination. This is towards the goal of making sure resources are used effectively and the biggest number of refugees receive assistance. On the latter,</li> </ul>

	<p>UNHCR noted that Roma refugees are not accessing assistance to the same extent as other refugees from Ukraine. There is room to discuss how all actors can coordinate to improve the humanitarian approach.</p>
<p><b>Agenda point 1</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundation Institute Poland-Ukraine shared that the Ukrainian community in Krakow is planning a march on 24 February to commemorate the second anniversary of the full-scale war in Ukraine. Participants are invited to attend.</li> <li>• Jedność Foundation shared that the organization continues to work providing psychosocial and educational support to teenagers from Ukraine and third county nationals. Jedność has recently received funding for a development project for multicultural theater performances with students. Participants are invited to attend.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Agenda point 2</b></p>	<p>UNHCR shared information about the 2024 Refugee Response Plan (RRP), reporting in ActivityInfo, and an upcoming partnership with the Mapuj Pomoc platform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The launch of the Poland Chapter of the 2024 RRP took place in Warsaw on 15 February. It is important to note that the RRP is an advocacy document and not a funding mechanism. In 2024 it encompasses 4 strategic objectives – protection and legal status, specific needs and vulnerabilities of refugees, social cohesion among refugees and host communities, and economic inclusion of refugees. All information about the 2024 RRP in Poland has been compiled into one document. The total amount of the 2024 appeal for the Poland Chapter amounts to 377 million USD. Population figures total 1.1 million refugees. The document also includes the list of RRP partners. There are 103 partners to the Poland Chapter of the 2024 RRP, over 80 of which are national and local organizations. Being an RRP partner comes with the commitment to periodic reporting, which is done in ActivityInfo. Reporting is crucial as it demonstrates accountability to donors, and allows for appeals for additional funding.</li> <li>• ActivityInfo is a tool used by international organizations and NGOs in over 70 countries. It is an important part of both service and project mapping, with updates that can be viewed in real time. In 2024, reporting will take place every quarter. Every quarter a technical training will also be available for focal points from partner organizations. Non RRP partners may also report in ActivityInfo.</li> <li>• In 2024 UNHCR has also signed an agreement for service mapping with To Proste Foundation, which runs the MapujPomoc website. MapujPomoc is an existing website established following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine in 2022, in which partners can provide information about their activities in a map format. To avoid issues of duplication in service mapping, UNHCR has chosen to work with MapujPomoc as it is a platform already in existence and popular among Polish actors.</li> </ul>

- In response to a question from Foundation Institute Poland Ukraine on the verification of information on the website, UNHCR clarified that each organization will be responsible for creating an account and updating its activities. The information added will remain on the website for a maximum period of 6 months, after which it will have to be updated, to avoid the presentation of outdated information.

### Agenda point 3

Two Roma Associations, Harangos and Judadoro led a discussion on working with Roma communities and Roma refugees:

- Harangos shared that the biggest concentrations of Roma refugees in Malopolska are in Koninki, in Rabka Zdroj, in Brzesko, and in Nowy Sącz. From among these, Koninki is the largest concentration of Roma refugees in one shelter. However, this is not an ideal solution as ghettos can be created. However, on the other hand it must be considered what would happen to these refugees if they were not allowed to live in the locations in which they are currently living. Relocation for Roma refugees is difficult. Past experience has shown it can be difficult to find accommodation for even one family for one night due to discrimination.
- Judadoro Association confirmed the points made by Harangos, and further shared that in situations as the one above, the foundations pay for accommodation from their own funds. Furthermore, Koninki is a small location. There are not many job opportunities and it is difficult to implement job support programs there.
- IOM noted that the organization is in the process of implementing MHPSS, language, and employment support in 5 shelters. The Voivodship has indicated that Koninki is one of the collective accommodation sites where this support is most needed.
- Judadoro responded that this is a beneficial idea. However, there is also a need for additional cultural assistants who understand Roma culture. The Association is currently helping about 350 Roma refugees.
- Harangos further noted that the situation in Koninki is a specific one. No children from the collective accommodation are attending Polish schools and in previous visits it was clear that none of the children are attending schooling at all. Roma refugee families also have doubts regarding discrimination from the host community. For this reason parents are afraid to send children to schools. However, problems regarding education are also multifaceted. Previous to the outbreak of the war, children were not attending school during the pandemic. At the same time, education is not a priority for Roma communities. This is especially true for girls who are often prepared to be married early. Therefore, work on increasing access to education must also encompass working to change the outlook of parents. In regard to work, there are no opportunities in Koninki. The only possible solution are internships, which will allow employers to gain trust in Roma refugees. Harangos maintains a list of employers which employ Roma. If any organization knows of any such employers, they are invited to get in contact, as Harangos also knows many Roma who are eager to work.

- UNHCR noted that the Roma community has a very strong identity. When planning activities, it needs to be considered that Roma refugees should not be treated separately. Rather that they should be included into activities provided for other. The overall humanitarian response must also be sustainable. In this regard, ongoing dedicated programs for Roma refugees may not be sustainable and Roma refugees should be integrated into the larger humanitarian response. Roma organizations are key in this process as they already have the trust of the Roma community. Another ongoing risk is the continuation of the situation that existed before the war began in Ukraine. Roma living in Ukraine were treated separately. This fed into one type of discrimination, and contributed to protection risks, such as lack of access to education or other services for children
- Foundation Institute Poland Ukraine noted that it could be explicitly stated in information targeted refugees that services are open to all refugees, and specifically noting also Roma refugee communities. However, there is also a question of how to best reach Roma refugees with information about the services available to them. Are there specific websites or media that Roma communities use?
- Harangos responded that written social media or brochures may be difficult. Many Roma cannot read or write. Information has to be translated into Romani. Therefore organizations working with Roma are the ones that must translate.

Due to a lack of time to continue dedicating to the agenda point, it was decided to explore organizing a dedicated session on engaging with the Roma community. UNHCR will communicate the date of the session.

**AOB**

- VOICE Amplified shared a presentation including key findings of the recently conducted gender based violence (GBV) service mapping. VOICE also introduced a new website – [czytoprzemoc.org](http://czytoprzemoc.org) – which assists users in being able to identify GBV and shared interactive stickers with QR codes to the website with participants for distribution.
- The Voivodship Labor Office in Krakow shared that the Małopolskie Voivodship continues plans to open an integration center for foreigners (Centrum Integracji Cudzoziemcow). A location has not yet been determined. However, the Labor Office is responsible for providing support throughout the entirety of Małopolska. Established information points for foreigners already exists in Krakow, Nowy Sacz and Oswiecim.
- UNHCR thanked The Labor Office and highlighted the need to support all refugees, regardless their nationality.
- Save the Children announced the upcoming launch of a cash for rent program. The program will target refugees living in collective shelters who cannot afford rent. It will target about 100 households in Małopolskie Voivodship.

- UNICEF and ZHP shared that a joint Spilno Hub will be opened in Krakow in mid-March. This is a center where refugees can be referred for help and support, including MHPSS, and assistance with access to education and legal counselling. The Spilno hub will serve not only refugees, but also migrants and members of the host community.

ACTION POINTS SUMMARY				
No.	Action	Responsible	Deadline	Status (as of )
1.	Organize a dedicated session on working with Roma communities	UNHCR/Harangos/Judadoro		New
2.	Disseminate information about ActivityInfo technical sessions	UNHCR	27 February	New