

Malopolska Coordination Group Meeting

Meeting Minutes – 11 August

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| Meeting subject: | Małopolska Coordination Group Meeting |
| Time & location: | 11 am – Radisson Blu Hotel, Krakow |
| Chaired by: | VOICE Amplified; UNHCR; Krakow Open Coalition |
| Minutes prepared by: | UNHCR |
| Participants: | Urząd Miasta Krakowa Małopolski Urząd Wojewódzki; Biuro Wojewody Małopolskiego CORE Response; Chorągiew Krakowska ZHP Fundacja Instytut Polska-Ukraina; Fundacja Autonomia; Fundacja Kocham Debniki; Fundacja Agape; Fundacja Understanding; Fundacja im. M. Reja; ; Fundacja Mission-U; Fundacja Zustricz Internationaler Bund Polska/ Centrum Wielokulturowe; Misja Słowiańska w Europie; OWiM; Stowarzyszenie Wolontariuszy Pomocni Ukrainie; “4 peron”; UAinKrakow.pl; UNHCR; UNICEF; VOICE Amplified; Zupa Dla Ukrainy Krakow; Zupa na Plantach; |
| Agenda: | <p>Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the proposed Małopolska coordination model. Update on the points decided on the last Coordination meeting. • Introduction from the co-chairs <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Updates from the refugee community and the UA-led organizations 2) Preparedness for winter 3) Education 4) AOB |
| AGENDA POINT | DISCUSSION |
| Introduction of proposed coordination model. Updated on points from last meeting | Participants were welcomed to the first Coordination Group meeting. In an effort to facilitate communication and complementarity among different actors involved in the refugee response, meetings will take place every two weeks, on Thursday’s at 9 am. The structure of each meeting will remain the same, with coordination updates from the co-chairs and dedicated time for refugee-led and UA-led organizations to speak. Meeting will include simultaneous interpretation English-Polish, and Ukrainian translator will be available. |
| Introduction from co-chairs | <p>The meeting co-chairs thanked participants for their attendance and introduced themselves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNHCR shared updates about activities in Krakow. These include a shift in UNHCR cash assistance from multipurpose cash assistance to targeted cash assistance for vulnerable groups. UNHCR is also incorporating a protection by presence approach |

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| | <p>and launching protection monitoring activities. Protection Monitors will work in locations where refugees are present to gather information systematically and regularly, in order to identify protection risks for refugees for the purpose of informing effective responses. This information will be made public so that all partners can understand trends and make decisions based on needs identified in the field. Finally, the UNHCR Blue Dot in Tauron Arena is closed as of 12 August. As a result, UNHCR is looking for a new location in which to establish a community center. This location would also be open to other organizations participating in the refugee response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VOICE Amplified noted that the first meeting of the Task Group on Women, Children and At-Risk Groups Protection took place on 10 August and organizations can express interest of participating at aska@voiceamplified.org. • Open Krakow Coalition noted that a questionnaire had been sent to all 70+ coalition members to better understand their activities and the needs of refugees. 19 members responded, and most highlighted similar needs. The two primary issues identified include education and childcare, and accommodation. Secondary issues mentioned include Polish lessons and need for information about accessing services and where refugees can receive support. Finally, integration – including preventing the appearance of anti-refugee sentiment in Polish society – was also mentioned. |
| <p>Agenda point 1</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation Institute Poland Ukraine presented the responses received from a survey distributed over the Institute’s Telegram channel. The Survey asked Ukrainians in Poland what information they most needed. Responses included: the need for information about social events, information about electronic travel documents -especially for children under 13, and information about residence permits for longer-term stays. Additionally the Institute has observed an increase in reports of discrimination against Ukrainians, which includes people being shouted at and beaten. Finally, the Institute noted that Polish organizations are trying to integrate Russian and Ukrainian children, which may be traumatizing and counterproductive and stressed the importance of informing Ukrainian parents of the character of the activities proposed. • Zustricz Foundation highlighted the need to focus on the question of accommodation. It was noted that many refugees are remaining in collective shelters because they cannot find affordable accommodation or guarantors. Perhaps collective shelters could be opened for 16- and 17-year-olds for whom no systemic solutions exist. The Foundation also has hired 25 Ukrainian speaking psychologists and this number could be increased to 40. However, the psychologists focus on interventions, and long-term psychotherapy is also needed. This is especially true in locations outside of Krakow. For this reason, the use of mobile teams should be considered. • The Municipality of Krakow emphasized that careful notes were being taken of all comments made. At the moment, the biggest challenge identified is transition to a second step – integration. Challenges arise first in terms of temporary accommodation for the coming months. Of the 147 locations identified by the office of the Governor, some may soon stop accepting refugees. A second challenge is places in schools. The Education Department of the Municipality is preparing; |

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| | <p>however, it is difficult to determine the exact need. A final question is that of the labor market. In this sector, the Municipality is planning to launch programs to help individuals overcome soft challenges to labor market participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Municipality of Krakow shared that the Municipality is on the last step of creating an application that will map locations, help points, and organizations helping refugees. The application will be piloted in early September. It can be used to facilitate the delivery of aid. It can also assist in ensuring that aid items reach the necessary communities. • The Office of the Governor of Lesser Poland highlighted that the current moment is a key one, as winter is approaching, and school is starting. In the database of available accommodation that the Governor’s office maintains, reserves exist, and about 17,000 of 28,000 available places are currently occupied. In the Municipality of Krakow, there are 400 free places. In the larger Krakow County, there are 600 free places. These numbers highlight the success the Governor’s office has had in its relocation and education efforts. Furthermore, the Office of the Governor has signed more than 10 cooperation contracts with NGOs and is open to new cooperation. While it is true that some hotels and other guesthouses are no longer accepting refugees, the Governor’s office works diligently to relocate every person who has this need. Additionally, the largest amount of PESEL numbers in Lesser Poland have been registered in Krakow and Nowy Sacz Municipalities. The next largest in the towns of Krynica Zdroj and Skawina. • Mission U thanked meeting participants for their help in the context of the current crisis. The Foundation noted that since 24 February, it has helped 7000 Ukrainians flee Ukraine and also delivered 400 tons of humanitarian aid. |
| <p>Agenda point 2</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNHCR shared that new arrivals are expected in Autumn and Winter. As such, the idea of application to coordinate aid is well received. As are the coordination application in development by the Municipality and the accommodation efforts of the Office of the Governor. Additionally, UNHCR highlighted that a key aspect in preparing for winterization is helping those individuals currently in collective shelter. To this end, UNHCR offers to provide assistance and support in regards to moving out of collective shelters and into their own accommodations, including by supporting job matching and addressing MHPSS and other protection needs. • Soup For Ukraine Krakow highlighted that in regards to winterization, the question of food is a key one. It was noted that throughout the crisis it has been citizens of Krakow providing food to Ukrainians. As such, it must be discussed who will be responsible for emergency food assistance if there is a second wave. Furthermore, there is a need for an increased number of integration events. Ukrainians do not want to get their information from TV or social media, but want to integrate into society. • Zustricz Foundation noted that there needs to be improved communication on open beds in accommodation sites. If this information does exist, it should be shared with Ukrainian organizations and those helping refugees. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Municipality of Krakow noted that difficult conditions in Ukraine in the winter months may result in more refugees crossing the border. Krakow will likely remain a primary destination of migration, as it has been previously. The Municipality of Krakow also noted that each week the Municipality prepares a list of open beds in accommodations to send to the Governor's office. It should be possible to share this list with participants as well. UNHCR – in the Agency's role of supporting regional and municipal authorities - offered help with information management. |
| Agenda Point 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNICEF Shared a presentation about activities in Poland. The Presentation is attached to this minutes for detailed reference. The Municipality of Krakow noted that experience shows multicultural assistants in schools are a key element of the refugee response. They support not only children, but the whole family, in integration and providing information about how to function in Polish society. The M. Rej Association noted the fact that there are not enough spaces and lack of teachers in Polish schools. These have already been ongoing problems in Polish society, made worse by the refugee crisis. There are Polish-speaking Ukrainian teachers who could help. However, the process of transferring credentials is lengthy and difficult. Registration to schools also poses an additional problem, as this often still has to happen in person. It was suggested that a more efficient system should be created. Finally, Ukrainian students should also be encouraged towards other educational options, such as technical schools. The Association further highlighted that cultural assistants are essential for integration, and perhaps the Governor's office can create a facilitated policy for their employment. VOICE Amplified noted the need for an additional Education coordination meeting in between bi-weekly coordination meeting |
| AOB | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VOICE Amplified suggested that with the help of OWiM a small overview of possible scenarios can be prepared for participants. UNHCR suggested that the Agency can look into creating a localized situation portal with information solely about Lesser Poland. |

| ACTION POINTS SUMMARY | | | | |
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| No. | Action | Responsible | Deadline | Status (as of) |
| 1. | Create spreadsheet on how each participant is preparing for winter, and what information participants are lacking. | Co-chairs | 25 August | Completed |

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| 2 | Survey on winter preparedness information needs | Co-chairs | Week of 22 August | Ongoing |
| 3. | Organize a meeting with Education actors. | UNICEF, UNHCR, Reja Foundation | Week of 22 August | Ongoing |
| 4. | Work on how the information of the updates from the local authorities can be circulated among participants. | City of Krakow, UNHCR, VOICE Amplified | Week of 22 August | Ongoing |