

## Małopolska Coordination Group Meeting

Meeting Minutes – 15 December 2022

<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; CLEAR Global; DRC; Fundacja Instytut Polska-Ukraina; Fundacja Jedność; Fundacja Kocham Debniki; Fundacja Understanding; IOM; Małopolski Fundusz Ekonomii Społecznej; OWiM; Project Hope; Salam Lab; UA in Krakow; UNHCR; UNICEF; VOICE Amplified; ZHP Chorągiew Krakowska
<b>Agenda:</b>	<p>Introduction from the co-chairs and update on the points decided on the last Coordination meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Updates from the refugee community and UA-led organizations</li><li>2) Updates from the Voivodeship</li><li>3) RRP update (UNHCR)</li><li>4) National protection sector update (UNHCR, sector lead)</li><li>5) Clear Global program presentation</li><li>6) AOB</li></ol>
<b>AGENDA POINT</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>
<b>Introduction and update on points from last meeting</b>	<p>Participants were welcomed to the ninth Małopolska Coordination Group meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• UNHCR provided updates about recent activities. On December 4 and 5 UNHCR and partners held a Christmas market featuring crafts made by Ukrainian refugee women. On December 8 UNHCR and partners hosted a job fair for refugees and Polish citizens. UNHCR thanked those organizations which contributed to or attended the events. UNHCR also shared that Cash for Protection activities remain ongoing. Finally, UNHCR shared that UNHCR had recently opened a community center in Krakow and that activities would start taking place soon. The Center is meant to be a space for the community. As such, organizations are also welcome to use the space to host activities for refugees and members of the host community, including activities related to integration and economic inclusion.</li></ul>

<p><b>Agenda point 1</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundation Institute Poland Ukraine highlighted that an upcoming challenge is remote education for children. The Foundation noted that 80% of Ukrainian children in Poland remain outside of the Polish education system. Many of these children are listed as learning online through the Ukrainian system. However, many online classes do not take place because of electricity cuts in Ukraine. As a result, children are often left home alone without anything to do while parents go to work. For this reason, the Foundation thinks that group remote learning spaces for children in Krakow could be a beneficial project. These spaces would allow children to interact with their peers. In Warsaw up to 48 such centers already exist, and some will likely be launched soon in Rzeszow. If any organizations are considering these kind of initiatives in the future, the Foundation is interested in getting involved.</li> <li>• Debniki Foundation shared that they had available a small room with 6 tables that was not always in use and could be made available.</li> <li>• A participant shared that she is a teacher of Ukrainian culture and literature. She has 8 students who have shared that due to blackouts they no longer have online lessons. Rather, they only receive homework tasks.</li> <li>• Foundation Institute Poland Ukraine noted that some participants were present in the first three Coordination meetings when education was discussed. Initially, it had been a requirement for Ukrainian children to attend Polish schools. This regulation was then changed, partially due to a lack of space in Polish schools, and the decision was taken to allow Ukrainian children to study remotely. Of course, nothing can be done about electricity cuts, but perhaps more spaces for children to gather could be created.</li> <li>• UNHCR noted that in November, Ukrainian authorities released a letter stating that children should integrate into the educational systems of the countries of asylum. UNHCR further noted the understanding that this request may differ from the situation on the ground.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Agenda point 2</b></p>	<p>The Representative of the Voivode noted that much had happened since previous updates were provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Representative provided updates about the Voivodeship’s activities and accommodation database. The situation is more stable than it was previously and the database contains more than 9,500 places. The Voivodeship is also signing new contracts with hotels. At the same time, planning for a potential new wave of refugees is ongoing. This planning includes the preparation of tents and also additional collective places. However, at the current moment there are no urgent topics to be discussed in this regard. Data from the beginning of December indicates that cross border movement has not changed much and daily crossings into Poland remain almost equal to daily crossings into Ukraine. The Voivodeship has also just signed</li> </ul>

additional contracts with NGOs and now has 29 contracts signed with 19 different organizations. These contracts involve a range of initiatives. The main initiative is the distribution of parcels at the railway station. Different courses have also been organized, including language course and those for children. In addition, the Representative shared that until 21 December organizations can still apply for grants from the Marshall's Office of the Voivodeship for the year 2022. The Representative further noted that perhaps representatives of the Education Inspectorate Office could be invited to future meetings.

- Following requests from participants at previous meetings for more information, the Representative discussed potential amendments to the Special Act on Ukrainians Refugees. The Representative highlighted that the changes to the Act were still in draft form. As such, the first reading had just taken place and the changes were not yet binding. The first amendment refers to the legal status of Ukrainians staying in Poland. Under the proposed changes, it will become mandatory for Ukrainians to apply for a PESEL number within 30 days of crossing the border, otherwise their stays will be considered illegal. This measure would allow authorities to understand the actual number of Ukrainian refugees present in the country. Currently, according to PESEL registration data, there are 140,000 refugees in Małopolska. However, this does not accurately reflect the situation. A second amendment referred to refugees in collective shelters being responsible for contributing financially to their maintenance from 1 March. This regulation would not apply to new arrivals.
- IOM asked if the Voivodeship could explain the difference between 40+ and 70+ payments for Polish citizens housing refugees. IOM further asked if the requirement for refugees to contribute financially for their stays were localized to the region or whether it was countrywide?
- The Representative highlighted that the Special Act – and thus all of its provisions – is a national document created by the central government, and is applicable countrywide. The 40+ payments, of 40 PLN/day for each person hosted, are for private individuals hosting refugees. The 70+ payments are for shelters and other collective buildings.
- VOICE Amplified asked how long after the first reading it would take to receive information on whether the amendments had been accepted or not?
- The Representative replied that she did not have this information.
- A participant asked what consequences would be for those individuals who did not register for PESEL numbers within the 30 day window. The participant further asked if there would be a backup measure for individuals who are unable to contribute financially to their maintenance, especially during the winter months.
- The Representative noted that individuals without PESEL numbers will not be able to access public services. Related to financial contributions, exceptions to the requirement will exist for certain categories of people such as the elderly,

	<p>individuals with disabilities, and others. In regards to the winter, the regulation would come into force from March, largely after the conclusion of the winter season.</p>
<b>Agenda point 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNHCR provided an update about the Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP). The 2023 RRP will be launched at the end of January. The objectives will be as follows: Ensure refugees’ access to protection status and rights on a non-discriminatory basis; Pave the way toward solutions and expand access to social and economic opportunities to facilitate inclusion through a whole-of-society approach and in line with the Global Compact on Refugees, recognizing the critical role played by national and local actors, including NGOs and RLOs; Ensure that refugees with specific needs continue to have access to targeted support and assistance, while also engaging with and strengthening community-level protective mechanisms; Advance social cohesion between refugee and host communities through targeted interventions.</li> </ul>
<b>Agenda point 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UNHCR Sector Lead provided an update about the National Protection Sector. The Sector has made available recommendations on the application of the Temporary Protection Directive in Poland. The recommendations were created after consultations with a broad range of protection partners and feedback from refugees from Ukraine. The document containing the full list of recommendations is available at the following <a href="#">link</a>.</li> <li>• UNICEF asked how the recommendations have fed into the governmental discussions on amendments to the Temporary Protection Directive. Have the recommendations been raised and taken into account?</li> <li>• The Sector Lead highlighted that the first step was to share and discuss the recommendations with the Ministry of Interior. Of course, not all of the recommendations have been taken into account. However, they have been shared.</li> </ul>
<b>Agenda point 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLEAR Global – formerly Translators without Borders – provided information about the organization’s programs. This includes assistance, training, and resources for effective humanitarian communication.</li> </ul>
<b>AOB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IOM provided information about a recently opened Integration Center in Krakow, at Sienkiewicza 4 street. IOM is opening 7 such centers throughout Poland. The Center in Krakow will be run jointly with the Małopolski Social and Economic Fund. Services will include Polish and English language classes and career counselling. Childcare will also be available while parents are attending activities. The center will be open each day from 9.00 – 17.00 and activities will take place until 20.00</li> </ul>

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<b>ACTION POINTS SUMMARY</b>				
<b>No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Status (as of )</b>
1.				
2				