Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation

# Coordination meeting

## MINUTES

Date: 15.12.2022 (Thursday)
Time: 11:00 – 14:00
Place: Lubelskie Province Governor's Office in Lublin, column room

### The main points of the agenda

**Introduction and greetings of particapants.**

**Lech Sprawka – The Governor of Lubelskie**

- There has been no visible increase in the influx of refugees into the Lublin region in recent weeks. 547 Ukrainians/women crossed the border into the Lublin region on December 14.
- On the Ukrainian side, despite worsening weather conditions, there is no increase in migration flows to Poland.
- There are currently about 500,000 internally displaced persons in Ukraine, but the Ukrainian government does not expect increased migration in the near future.
- LUW intends to change its accommodation strategy in case of an influx of large numbers of refugees. In terms of preparations, more emphasis will be placed on securing large-scale collective accommodations. LUW has asked district governors to identify large facilities that could accommodate 25,000 refugees.
- LUW emphasizes the need for much better and professional reception of refugees at border crossings, primarily with the participation of partner NGOs.
- LUW will develop a plan for the deployment and work of NGOs at border crossings before the holiday season.
- It was confirmed that the main coordinating entities for refugee assistance in Dorohusk will be Caritas Lublin, in Hrebenne Caritas Zamość, in Zosin and Dołhobyczow the Lublin District Branch of the Polish Red Cross.
- LUW asked to identify needs and topics relevant to NGOs that can be considered and funded by the government administration in 2023.

**Marco Procaccini – Head of Field Office UNHCR in Lublin**

- UNHCR is particularly keen on fostering inclusion and is very glad to see NGOs, municipalities around the table and declare fully participation in coordination platform. This forum may serve more sistematical approach in terms of providing humanitarian assistance, protection services and reception.
- Situation in Ukraine is continuing to be deteriorated in terms of expectations of people who are internally displaced and expectations about cross-border movements.
- We don't observe significant increase of refugees coming to Poland, however we still observe large movements of people.

- Shifting to reception using large facilities for shorter period of time can be considered as positive approach but all of us have to be aware that management of large facilities is often more demanding. Protection standards should and proper preparation should be ensured which UNHCR will be extremely happy to support.
- Despite needs of refugees coming to Poland we also have to keep in mind needs o refugees who are already here, their challenges but also opportunities that they bring to Polish society.
- UNHCR would like to reiterate a call from last coordination meeting that it is an obligations of Polish public institutions that when somebody gets PESEL number have to be assisted. We continue to see that it is something happening. At the same time we also see difficulties in some areas that we should try to solve.

The main highlight of the meeting was the official signing of the declaration of participation in the Lublin Coordination Group (LCG) by each participant. Thus, the LCG was officially established as a coordination platform for the Lubelskie Voivodeship.

**Identification of possible tasks for individual entities in the event of an increased influx of refugees into the Lubelskie Voivodeship.**

**Homo Faber**

- In case of a large influx of refugees, HF will focus on activities conducted in the city of Lublin.
- Once a week, mobile information point activities are carried out on the road, aimed primarily at villages far from major cities. The team is made up of lawyers, psychologists and child care workers.
- In 2023, it is planned to open a large center focusing relief and integration activities in Lublin, which will be available to refugees arriving in the city.
- HF provides volunteers in places of collective accommodation, the number of which can be increased if the need arises. At present there are 150 people, trained and speaking foreign languages.
- HF employs psychologists whose work can be dedicated to newly arrived refugees. A helpline is also run, whose work could be expanded.
- A hotline is being run, which, with the cooperation of the Lublin City Hall, will operate continuously.
- Food (20 kg packages) is being delivered once a week directly to the refugees. HF is after discussions with the donor, who has agreed to increase the number of packages during the winter.

**Regional Center of Social Policy**

- The local government of the Lublin Voivodeship has allocated 5 mln PLN for the "Lubelskie helps Ukraine" program.
- ROPS conducts social and living support, mini psychological support, employment of assistants.
- ROPS plans to purchase blankets and bedsheets for refugees in Lubelskie Voivodeship.
- ROPS is asking for any comments related to the operation of the program to improve it.
- The housing resources located in the resources of the Marshal's Office in Lublin were analyzed. The building in Zamość was selected after the former health clinic, which is currently being

renovated. It is planned to create a temporary support place for Ukrainian citizens. The building is scheduled for completion in October 2023. The building contains 10 apartments, as well as a common area and a common room.

**Wolontariat Center in Lublin**

- The possibility of an increased influx of refugees during the Christmas and New Year period should be considered.
- Wolontariat Center can provide volunteers at the railway station and the bus station in Lublin.
- If the need arises, the Wolontariat Center is also able to send staff and volunteers to work outside Lublin.

**Caritas of Lublin Archdiocese**

- Caritas has a constant presence at the Dorohusk border crossing. There is a heated container and an employee who dispenses food and hygiene items. Currently, only cars are being serviced. If necessary, activities in Dorohusk can be intensified and more staff and volunteers can be involved.
- Caritas has a staff of social workers, lawyers, psychologists and educators who can be deployed as needed for intensified activities.
- Caritas' housing stock includes buildings in Firlej and Dąbrowica that can be used to house refugees.
- Caritas Lublin sends humanitarian aid trucks to Ukraine all the time (230 trucks sent).
- The Caritas office in Lublin can operate for 24 hours. Premises spaces can be adopted for temporary accommodation.
- Caritas prepares and distributes hot meals for the people in need in Lublin. If necessary, the number of meals can be increased, as well as hot meals can be transported to Dorohusk.

**LUW**

- Ukrainian citizens can take advantage of the offer of labor offices on the same terms as Polish citizens.
- ECCC Foundation, which deals with the validation of digital competencies, has launched a tool for validating digital competencies for Ukrainian citizens. A person who passes through the prepared path will receive a certificate, which he or she can use on the Polish labor market.

**The Rule of Law Institute**

- The foundation currently employs about 20 people to provide legal assistance to refugees from both Ukraine and other countries. Dozens of volunteers work with the organization.
- The Institute for the Rule of Law conducts legal support in the form of onsite, remote and offsite.
- In the event of a large influx of refugees, the foundation's activities may be intensified and expanded to new locations.
- The organization has secured funding for activities in 2023. There is no need to use additional funds offered by LUW.

**Lublin Branch of the Polish Red Cross**

- PCK has the full infrastructure and resources to activate and develop humanitarian aid distribution points at the Zosin and Dołhobyczow border crossings in a short period of time.
- The PCK can provide food, hygiene items and clothing that can be distributed at border crossings.
- The organization notes the need to plan and discuss with LUW the procedures and possibilities for rapid activation of the presence at border crossings.
- PCK has a warehouse space in Lublin of about 7,000 square meters, which can be used for storage and distribution activities for humanitarian aid materials.
- An intervention warehouse is maintained, where blankets, mattresses, field beds, sleeping bags, among others, are collected. Resources are replenished on an ongoing basis.
- The PCK has a large bus that can be used to transport refugees, as a complementary measure to the transportation organized by the fire department.

**Lena Grochowska Foundation**

- The organization runs the Refugee House in Lublin, which has 130 beds. Now, the Refugee House has 20 available places to accommodate newly arrived refugees.
- The Foundation operates 6 refugee homes in various locations in Poland. Another refugee house is currently being opened in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship.

**St. Brother Albert Brotherhood of Charity**

- The organization primarily provides refugees with material assistance (clothing, personal hygiene products, hot meals).
- The Brotherhood of Charity of St. Brother Albert runs accommodations that currently house refugees.
- In the event of a large influx of refugees, the organization will focus on activities conducted in the city of Lublin.
- It is possible to increase the number of meals served and the distribution of material assistance.

**PCPM**

PCPM runs a "Cash for work" program to support local governments and NGOs in hiring staff.

- The program can only be activated if there is a large influx of refugees.
- Two-month employment from the time the program is activated. Extension depends on available funds and demand. Priority for provinces near the border with Ukraine - Podkarpackie and Lubelskie.
- Partner institutions bear full responsibility for recruiting future employees and employment procedures.
- Two types of employment:
  Basic workers / former volunteers - PLN 20 net x 8h/day x 22 days per month
- Caregivers (1 in 10 or more core employees) - PLN 25 net x 8h/day x 22 days per month
- No overtime to prevent job burnout. Shift work.
- Contract-agreement for 2 months for a fixed term.
- May be required to wear vests or other visibility items provided by PCPM (private donor requirement)

- 2 options for hiring staff under the program: PCPM provides a grant to cover employment costs, or PCPM hires employees for a partner organization.
- The program is aimed at local governments, county offices, district offices and NGOs.
- Registration to participate in the program: https://forms.gle/tiH457F3dW4oJ2DKA

**UNHCR**

- UNHCR holds humanitarian aid supplies such as hygiene kits and blankets that can be delivered to selected locations as needed.
- The donation of 14,000 humanitarian supplies (including mattresses, sleeping bags and field beds) is currently being finalized and will be deposited in a warehouse run by the Lublin District Branch of the Polish Red Cross as a stockpile that can be activated in the event of an influx of large numbers of refugees.
- In the case of an influx of refugees, UNHCR can provide staff at border crossings and reception points to monitor issues related to protection and access to territory, as well as countering sexual exploitation and GBV.
- Renovation works are currently being carried out to improve the conditions of places of collective shelter in selected locations. The activity will continue in 2023.
- UNHCR suggests considering the following areas related to the preparation of a potential competition for activities commissioned to NGO by LUW: social and economic inclusion of refugees, identification and planning of activities for people with special needs, providing psychosocial support, mobile activities conducted in locations outside of large cities.
- UNHCR asked participants to complete a matrix with emergency actions in case of a potential influx and to indicate availability during the Christmas and New Year's season.

**Assessing the current situation and preparing for a potential influx of refugees from the perspective of border local authorities.**

**Municipality of Lublin**

- UM Lublin cooperates with local NGO's and INGO's on an ongoing basis. A donation point is now being run, as well as places secured for meal preparation and meal distribution as well.
- UM Lublin offers support for the operation of information desks at the rail and bus stations.
- Lublin dysponuje bazą 850 miejsc zakwaterowania zbiorowego.
- The challenge is to provide sustainable financing for the residence of Ukrainian citizens in Lublin, first of all from January 1 in BB and Campanile hotels (about 200 people).
- UM Lublin is suggesting that in the event of an increased influx of refugees to Poland, new collective shelters should be launched. The Secretary of the City of Lublin has applied to the Lublin Voivode for the creation of collective shelter at the Targi Lublin, for instance.
- UM Lublin confirms in the near future to open in cooperation with HF a center - refugee support center (about 1900 square meters).
- At the moment, about 2,300 Ukrainian children are studying in Lublin schools.
- The challenge for the city of Lublin is also to organize and provide temporary accommodation for refugees in places of collective shelter, which will be renovated in the coming weeks.
- The City of Lublin is able to launch additional collective accommodations in schools, provided that the government administration exempts children from a certain educational program.

UM Lublin is able to launch several thousand facilities, but appeals for financial and material support in this regard.

**Municipality of Chełm**

- Within the city of Chełm, there is currently an information and reception point at the railway station, which handles trains from Kiev and Kharkiv.
- The UM operates a reception point on Czarneckiego Street providing short-term stays for refugees.
- UM plans to open a refugee support point in Chełm in the near future in cooperation with UNICEF.
- In the case of a large influx of refugees, the city of Chełm is able to run an additional reception point for about 2,000 thousand people per day, as well as intensify the activities carried out at the railway station.

**Municipality of Tomaszów Lubelski**

- The city operates a reception point in Tomaszów Lubelski. At the height of the situation, the point received between 1,200 and 1,600 refugees per day. At the moment, the point receives an average of a few people a day.
- In the case of a large influx of refugees, the city is able to develop a reception point of up to 800 beds.
- UM Tomaszów Lubelski has all the infrastructure, including beds and bedding, to launch additional accommodations.
- The challenge is integration activities and economic inclusion of people who have decided to stay in Tomaszów Lubelski.

**Municipality of Hrubieszów**

- UM Hrubieszów operates a reception point at HOSiR, which has registered about 80,000 refugees.
- The city of Hrubieszów has a stock of 500 sets of beds and bedding, long-term food and hygiene products.
- In case of a large influx of refugees, UM Hrubieszów is able to intensify relief efforts and increase the number of accommodations within hours.
- The challenge for the city of Hrubieszów is to provide warehouse space and to account for the rental of warehouse space for past activities.

**Providing support to Ukrainian citizens - 2023 perspectives.**

- At the beginning of the armed conflict, LUW started cooperation with NGOs in the Lublin Voivodeship in the form of commissioned tasks to set up victualling points at border crossings. This didn't exclude assistance from other NGO's or private individuals. However, structured support became vital. The commissioned tasks lasted from March to June 2022.
- LUW is asking NGO's to prepare drafts and budgets for potential activities in order to secure enough funds and speed up procedures for mobilizing these funds.

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| - LUW is requesting information on areas and needs for 2023 related to activities undertaken by NGO's, with a focus on locations outside the city of Lublin. |
| **Action points** |
| - Completion by participating LGK entities of a matrix containing emergency actions that can be taken in the event of a large influx of refugees, personnel and material resources:<br>- Completion by participating LAG entities of a table containing information on the availability of organizations during the Christmas and New Year period:<br>- Handover by HF and UNHCR information materials (leaflets and posters) for ROPS in Lublin.<br>- Send information on needs and areas of action for 2023 to Renata Rojek – rrojek@lublin.uw.gov.pl in order to secure adequate funding and prepare for possible commissioned activities. |
| **Participants** |
| **Organization/ institution** |
| Wolontariat Center in Lublin |
| Lena Grochowska Foundation |
| The Rule of Law Institute |
| Lublin Branch of the Polish Red Cross |
| German Red Cross |
| LUW in Lublin |
| PCPM |
| Regional Center for Social Policy in Lublin |
| Association Homo Faber |
| UNHCR |
| Voivodeship Labour Office in Lublin |
| St. Brother Albert Brotherhood of Charity |
| Lublin City Office |
| Tomaszów Lubelski City Office |
| Chełm City Office |
| Foundation ECCC |
| Hrubieszów City Office |
| Reception Point HOSIR in Hrubieszow |