

**UKRAINE REFUGEE EMERGENCY
 REGIONAL PROTECTION WORKING GROUP (RPWG) MEETING
 Meeting Minutes**

Time & location:	16 December 2022 15:00-16:30, online
Agenda:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation of the report on the situation of Roma refugees from Ukraine in Poland 2. Statelessness in the context of the Ukraine emergency 3. Updates from the Anti-Trafficking Task Force
AGENDA POINT	DISCUSSION
1. Presentation of the report on the situation of Roma refugees from Ukraine in Poland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The report covered the period from March to May 2022 - Before the war, there were an estimated 400,000 to 500,000 Roma people living in Ukraine - Since the start of the war, according to the European Commission, an estimated 100,000 Roma people fled Ukraine; an estimated 50,000 to 70,000 are believed to have entered Poland. Prior to the start of the war, an estimated 20,000 Roma people were living in Poland - Roma people have been facing discrimination since the 15th century. As a result, there is a deep-rooted mistrust of authorities among Roma refugees - They faced increased difficulty to cross the border, including due to lack of documentation; 10 to 20% of Roma people in Ukraine are stateless, often undocumented. - There is a wide perception that Roma refugees are distinct from other Ukrainian refugees and were often not provided support. The provision of support was largely left to organizations that are specifically working on issues related to Roma people - They faced difficulty accessing services, including accommodation. Some were offered accommodation, for instance, in corridors to make room for other refugees. Other refugees also do not want to live in the same accommodation with Roma refugees - It is often erroneously believed that Roma people enter Poland to collect benefits and leave. There is a need for increased advocacy to change these types of negative beliefs - People who were providing support to Roma refugees also experienced violence - The report provides key recommendations to address the barriers experienced by Roma refugees. The recommendations could also apply to other countries as the challenges faced by Roma refugees are largely the same. - If you need further information, please contact Malgorzata Kolaczek at biuro@fundacjawstronedialogu.pl

<p>2. Statelessness in the context of the Ukraine emergency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the end of 2021, there were an estimated 35,000 stateless persons in Ukraine. However, only 6,000 stateless persons were registered - There is a general lack of data on stateless persons; stateless determination procedure was operationalized in Ukraine in 2021. As of 30 November 2022, only 602 people were recognized as stateless and were issued documentation - In the Ukraine context, stateless people often include those living in non-government-controlled areas, Roma people and former USSR nationals who are unable to confirm their Ukrainian nationality following independence. There are also people at risk of statelessness, including refugees and migrants whose status was not regularized in Ukraine prior to the conflict. <p>Key challenges stateless persons face</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased risk of detention or forcible return due to lack of documentation - Inability to access services due to lack of documentation - The EU Council’s decision triggering the application of the Temporary Protection Directive includes stateless persons but only those who had residency in Ukraine before 24 February 2022. As many stateless persons are undocumented, they are unable to access the rights and protection guaranteed under the Directive <p>Key advocacy areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unhindered access to territory, including for those without documentation - Increased and early identification of stateless persons - Increased access to information and services in languages understood by many stateless persons in Ukraine i.e., Ukrainian, Russian and Romani - Improved access to birth registration including through promoting the adoption of simplified procedures - Mainstreaming statelessness, including through capacity building
<p>3. Updates from the Anti-Trafficking Task Force</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The TF has decided to meet monthly; the next meeting will be held in January (date to be confirmed) - Using the data collection tool, only limited data has been collected so far, mostly due to the breakdown of institutions, rising insecurity etc., The consultant working on this will follow up with individual members to identify and address reporting gaps - There is a concern that human trafficking cases might increase as the support provided by authorities as well as humanitarian actors declines - The TF has started tracking media coverage of trafficking cases and trafficking related issues