



Coordination meeting

MINUTES

Date: 23.05.2024 (Thursday)

Time: 11.00 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.

Place: Voivodeship Office in Lublin, column room

The main points of the agenda

Introduction and welcoming participants
Andrzej Maj – Lubelskie Voivodeship Office in Lublin <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The meeting was opened by Deputy Governor of Lublin Andrzej Maj. The speech began with a presentation of the current status of the draft amendment to the Law on Assistance to Ukrainian Citizens in Connection with Armed Conflict on the Territory of Ukraine, which has been approved by the Senate and is awaiting the signature of the President of Poland.• The deputy governor presented the agenda of the meeting, in particular the points directly resulting from the upcoming legal amendments, emphasizing the importance of the various topics.
Marco Procaccini – Head of UNHCR Field Office in Lublin <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marco Procaccini referred to the pending amendment to the law, pointing out a number of positive solutions and highlighting areas for discussion. In his speech, he referred to the previous coordination meeting during which the amendment to the law was discussed in detail.• The transition period of implementing the housing changes will be a challenge, primarily for local authorities, but also for NGOs supporting refugees in collective housing. The Lublin Coordination Group will play a very important role in implementing the legal changes, ensuring that the protection and dignity of refugees is placed at the center. UNHCR is ready to support the Lublin Regional Office, local governments and NGOs in this process.• The amendment also introduces some changes regarding education. We propose that at the next coordination meeting part of the meeting be devoted to education. Taking advantage of the presence of the Board of Education in Lublin, we will ask to present the current status and challenges of enrolling Ukrainian children in the Polish education system.• The situation on the Polish-Ukrainian border is stable. The daily flow in both directions remains at about 7,500 people from UKR to PL and from PL to UKR. 9% of those entering Poland are those declaring entry as evacuation. The profiles of those crossing the border remain unchanged, primarily women and children and the elderly.
Current situation in places of collective accommodation in Lublin province
Kamil Raczyński – UNHCR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The data presented by UNHCR differs minimally from the data that LUW in Lublin will present due to the addition of two places of collective accommodation to the statistics (Refugee House in Lublin and a place of collective accommodation in Wojcieszow).



- Since January 2023, the number of refugees staying in collective accommodation under Article 12, has been steadily decreasing. As of October 2023, the number remains at about 2,800 people. 8.1% of the active UKR PESEL numbers (35,405 people) are staying in places of collective accommodation.
- 102 active sites financed under Article 12 and 2 sites financed from other sources, including 45 sites with 10 or fewer persons. 76% of facilities are micro facilities or small facilities (between 1-30 residents). 13 facilities are specialized to care for people with special needs (319 people).
- Lubelskie Voivodeship has the highest percentage of refugees accommodated in specialized centers - 11.3%, including 3 Nursing Homes, 8 collective accommodation facilities with a significant number of chronically ill, elderly and their caregivers, 1 center for children on the autism spectrum, 1 center for children with specific needs.
- As of July 2022, UNHCR has visited 164 places of collective accommodation for protection monitoring, focus group discussions, participatory assessments, information sessions, financial support program referrals or to provide information on services available in the province.

Renata Rojek – Voivodeship Office of Lubelskie

- It is important to keep in mind the possibilities of various scenarios. The amendment to the Law on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine in Connection with the Armed Conflict on the Territory of Ukraine leaves enough flexibility that in the event of an increased influx of refugees, LUW in Lublin is able to activate an adequate number of places in collective accommodation in a very short time.
- As of 15.05.2024, the number of collective accommodation facilities is 117 (including 8 suspended and 8 unoccupied). Since January 2024, the number of facilities has decreased by 18 (from 135 to 117). The number of available places decreased by 408 (from 4590 to 4182). In the period from 17.04.2024 to 15.05.2024, 53 people left the facilities, while 75 people were admitted.
- 1273 people are staying in private accommodation, the so-called 40+. The largest number resides in Lublin - 440, Świdnik - 92, Biała Podlaska - 68 and Zamość - 42. The amendment envisages extinguishing the benefits related to compensation for the costs of stay and board of war refugees, borne by the owners of private accommodation, which are currently entitled to under Article 13. Those who have so far stayed in so-called private accommodation will be able to live in collective accommodation facilities if they are unable to find suitable housing on their own.
- 93% of people (2,615) living in collective housing (Article 12) are exempt from participation in the cost of assistance. 6% of people (161) participate in the cost of assistance, 1% of people (31) are not subject to participation due to staying in the center for less than 120 days. Of those exempted from participation, 51% (1,329) are minors, 13% (594) are exempted due to hardship (humanitarian reasons), 10% (266) are elderly, 8% (213) have disabilities, 5% (127) are single mothers with 3 or more children, 2% (45) are caring for people with disabilities, 1% (26) are pregnant women and raising children under 12 months old, and 1% (15) are temporary caregivers.



Maria Mazur – Voivodeship Office of Lubelskie

- VO in Lublin is already receiving the first reports of concerns about the closure of collective shelters, as well as questions related to where refugees can request accommodation in the future. In such cases, VO in Lublin, in cooperation with given municipality / gmina, tries to ensure that the persons or family can stay in a particular municipality. The life situation is taken into account, such as attending school in a particular location. If there are additional circumstances, cases are decided on a case-by-case basis.

Presentation of the IOM report "Private Accommodation Needs and Challenges"

Karina Padshakh – IOM

- IOM Poland conducted a study to assess the progress and needs related to the economic and social integration of Ukrainian refugees in Poland. The report provides a detailed overview of the needs and potential vulnerabilities of Ukrainian refugees in Poland who reside outside of collective housing, i.e. those who are hosted in private homes or on their own.
- Respondents hosted by local families (who are not relatives) reported the highest level of unmet needs compared to those living in other types of private and collective housing. 45% of them needed long-term housing, 42% needed access to medical care, and 40% reported needing help finding employment. Those hosted by relatives or friends had the lowest employment rate (27%), while those renting their own housing had the highest (66%). As many as 80% of those hosted by a local family would not be able to afford an expense of PLN 1,000.
- Among those in private accommodation, 62% encountered barriers to accessing medical care. Access to medical care was the second most frequently reported need (42%) among those accommodated with a local family.
- More than 50% of respondents in rental housing are responsible for at least one child, compared to 39% of respondents in collective housing. Only 29% of those hosted by local families (including relatives, friends or non-relatives) reported having children.
- Recommendations: Action design should include strategies to reach and address the needs of refugees staying in private accommodations, particularly those housed with hosts; Additional information, data and research are needed to provide insight into the challenges faced by this group of refugees; There is a need to distinguish between types of private accommodation as part of the analysis, rather than grouping people in rental housing with hosts, as their needs differ significantly.

(Presentation attached)

Aleksandra Węglarz – Habitat for Humanity Poland

- The Step Home Program addresses a number of problems faced by refugees trying to rent an apartment on the private market, including communication with landlords, securing funds for a deposit, and entering into a rental agreement.



- **The program supports people fleeing the war in Ukraine who have difficulty renting an apartment in Poland despite having financial resources, particularly those at risk of social exclusion. The program offers services to increase the availability and ease of renting.**
- To qualify for the program, the following (main) criteria must be met:
 - Documented crossing of the border by the Applicant after February 24, 2022,
 - Current residence in Poland,
 - Willingness to rent for at least 12 months,
 - Minimum household income, depending on the province (from PLN 3000 to 4500). For Lubelskie province, the entry threshold is PLN 4000.
 - One of the target groups particularly vulnerable to housing exclusion.
- Participants in the program are expected to proactively search for housing, including: reviewing listings, communicating with landlords and Habitat Poland, viewing apartments and pursuing a deal.
- Support from Habitat for Humanity includes the following:
 - Remote Real Estate Agent Services
 - Subsidy for Real Estate Agent services
 - Support in signing a lease agreement
 - Insurance for the program participant and homeowner
 - Subsidized security deposit
 - Partial subsidization of the rent
 - Subsidization of additional services, after consultation with a specialist: language courses, vocational training, child care, etc.,
 - Information support and referrals to support institutions.

(Presentation attached)

Cash for Rent program in Lubelskie Voivodeship

Ewelina Bury – Polish Red Cross Lublin Regional Branch

- The Cash for Rent program is implemented in partnership between the Ministry of Interior and Administration, the Polish Red Cross and the Polish Center for International Aid. The project is a 2-year project and is conducted nationwide.
- Criteria:
 - UKR PESEL and accommodation in a place of collective accommodation on the date of entry into the program.
 - In Lublin province, the program aims to support the following number of people:
 - Removal from places of collective accommodation - 398 people
 - Provision of vocational counseling - 265 persons
 - Provision of Polish language instruction - 99 persons
 - Integration courses/workshops- 3000 persons (nationwide indicator)
- Supported housing includes subsidized rent and security deposit for 6 months. The average total value for a family is about PLN 13,000. The amount of subsidy depends on the size and



composition of the household, and the level of subsidy gradually decreases from the 2nd to the 6th month.

- The program assumes optional support in the form of vouchers for housing equipment and the possibility of covering the cost of moving.
- Additional elements of the program include language courses, certified translations, nostrification of documents and competency testing.
- The project includes integration activities, including integration events, workshops related to learning about Polish culture, Polish-Ukrainian clubs.
- Support in moving out of places of collective accommodation includes assistance in finding housing and preparing a rental agreement, encouraging residents of collective accommodation to participate in integration events, support in using public services.
- The Cash for Rent program targets only those staying in places of collective accommodation under Article 12, and does not target those staying in private accommodation under Article 13.

(Presentation attached)

Joint analysis and discussion by LAG members on challenges and opportunities related to the with the potential lack of continuation of Article 13 of the Law on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of that country (40+ program)

- Members of the Lublin Coordination Group held a discussion on the technicalities of the various assistance programs, as well as the differences between them and the advantages of their elements.
- In designing future actions / programming and reflecting on the implementation of the amended law, it is important to take into account the number of 1,273 people who will potentially lose their private housing as of July 1, 2024. In addition, the IOM report shows that 80% of people living in private accommodation (not owned by family members), are unable to provide the financial means to rent housing on the commercial market above PLN 1,000 per month. Given the analysis in the first part of the meeting, the need to find housing solutions in the short term is concerning.

World Refugee Day 2024 Joint calendar of events

Kamil Raczyński – UNHCR

- This year's World Refugee Day focuses on solidarity with refugees - for a world where refugees are welcome. The slogan: "For a world where refugees are welcome."
- In preparation is a joint poster covering about 20 events in Lublin, Zamosc, Janow Lubelski and Biała Podlaska. UNHCR will prepare a package of materials for the organizers of each event, as well as a press release.
- -As of today, the World Refugee Day plans include 4 integration picnics, a panel discussion, a gala, a photo exhibition, and the blue illumination of the Lublin Arena, Litewski Square and the front of the Meeting of Cultures Center in Lublin.

(Presentation attached)



AOB

Karolina Podgórska – UMCS

- The Polish Academy of Sciences, Committee for Migration Research, on behalf of the Ministry of Interior and Administration, is conducting a nationwide study, the results of which are to be used to develop a Migration Strategy for Poland. The work schedule is available on the ministry's website. The process is being supervised by Minister Maciej Duszczuk. One of the tools will be a survey questionnaire aimed at stakeholders working in the area of migration and integration. The survey will be sent to members of the Lublin Coordination Group in the coming weeks.

Action points

- To prepare key messages to refugees on how to implement the legal and organizational changes, and how they can seek accommodation if their existing accommodation is discontinued.
- Create a small working group formed by the Lublin Regional Office in Lublin, key local governments affected by the accommodation changes, and selected NGOs to provide support during the transition period while covering the entry into force of the amended law.

Participants

Name and surname	Organisation / Institution
Karolina Wójcik - Kozłowska	ADRA
Monika Krysa	ADRA
Tetiana Mahushak	AHF Polska
Anna Szadkowska- Ciężka	AHF Polska
Anna Bylicka	The Brotherhood of Mercy of St. Brother Albert
Ks. Marcin Jakubiak	Caritas of the Diocese of Zamość
Ks. Mieczysław Puzewicz	Volunteer Centre in Lublin
Vadym Leontyuk	The Rule of Law Foundation
Cezary Szczurowski	Jan Zamojski Foundation



Regional Refugee Response
for the Ukraine Situation

Iryna Kostecka	Borderland Spiritual Culture Foundation
Marta Brożyna	Lena Grochowska Foundation
Małgorzata Szreniawska	I Know the Law Foundation
Agnieszka Tracz	Homo Faber
Taras Kuzma	Homo Faber
Ewa Rodziewicz	IOM
Karina Padshakh	IOM
Sylwia Brzezińska	KIND Kids in Need of Defense
Zoryana Vavrynychuk	Consulate General of Ukraine in Lublin
Mykhailo Zaskavskyyi	Consulate General of Ukraine in Lublin
Andrzej Maj	Lubelskie Voivodeship Office in Lublin
Aneta Tkaczyk	Lubelskie Voivodeship Office in Lublin
Beata Chodorowska	Lubelskie Voivodeship Office in Lublin
Iwona Chlebicka	Lubelskie Voivodeship Office in Lublin
Piotr Tomczyk	Lubelskie Voivodeship Office in Lublin
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