

Podkarpackie Coordination Group (PCG)

Date: 28.08.2024

Time: 12:00-14:00

Place: Podkarpackie Voivodship Office

Discussion Points:

Updated information from the Podkarpackie Voivodship Office	Action Points
At present, there are 14 shelters in Podkarpackie voivodeship that have signed an agreement with the Podkarpackie Voivode.	
Educational issues in the Podkarpackie region	Action Points
<p>The Kuratorium Oświaty gave a presentation entitled "Ukrainian Children in Schools in the Podkarpackie Voivodeship - Challenges and Opportunities."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kuratorium Oświaty - information on system solutions The main points of the draft regulation on the education of Ukrainian students in the 2024/2025 school year - the changes come into effect on September 1, 2024.</p> <p>Educational Obligation:</p> <p>A change in the fulfillment of children and students who are citizens of Ukraine residing in the territory of Poland of the obligation of annual preschool preparation, compulsory schooling and compulsory education. Students receiving distant education in the Ukrainian educational system as of September 1, 2024 will have to fulfill annual preschool preparation, compulsory schooling and compulsory education - the exception being students graduating from the last grade of a Ukrainian school in the 2024/2025 school year who intend to take the Ukrainian matriculation exam. Parents must submit a statement of study and intent to take the matriculation exam to the relevant municipality.</p> <p>I. Admission of children and young people from Ukraine to schools in Poland</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Children and adolescents from Ukraine at the age of compulsory schooling and compulsory education (7-18 years of age) are admitted to public schools and provided with care and education under the conditions applicable to Polish citizens. Admission to schools takes place throughout the school year, and the determination of the class in which education is continued is based on the sum of completed years of schooling abroad. In order to enroll a child in a school, an application must be submitted to the head of the school - the public elementary school in the area of which the child arriving from abroad lives accepts ex officio, other public elementary schools and secondary schools, as spaces are available. Parents of a child who cannot find a school with vacant seats in a particular class can ask the school's governing body (e.g., the education department of a municipality or county) to identify a school with vacant seats. Determination of the class (year of study) is made on the basis of documents issued by the school abroad, and in the absence of such documents, a statement by the parents on the total years of study abroad. Documents do not need to be translated by a sworn translator into Polish. 	<p>UNHCR will support and coordinate the provision of information on systemic solutions through the Podkarpackie Group of Managers of Retreat Centers and missions to individual centers.</p>

6. Parents of a child may apply to the director for admission to a lower class than the sum of completed years of schooling, for example, due to the child's age.
7. Admission of students arriving from abroad is regulated at the statutory level. The legal basis of the student's stay in Poland is not relevant to the possibility of admission to a public school and possible forms of educational support.

II. Supporting the learning of students coming from abroad

Ukrainian children who do not speak Polish to the extent that they can benefit from schooling can:

- a) participate in additional Polish language classes. Classes can be conducted individually or in groups at a minimum of 4 hours per week for a period of 24 months (the change to date was min. 6 hours);
- b) Extending from 24 to 36 months the period during which students can participate in additional free Polish language classes. The solution will apply to students who began attending classes in 2022-2023 and 2023/2024, and will serve to accelerate their mastery of the Polish language and improve the process of adaptation in a peer environment (Article 55b Section 1a of the Act);
- c) pursue education in the form of a preparatory division. The study lasts one year with the possibility of extension to two years. Classes are implemented in groups of up to 15 students at a minimum of 20 to 26 hours per week (depending on the year of study and type of school);
- d) receive an assistance from a person who speaks the language of the country of origin employed as a teacher's aide - a person employed as a teacher's aide does not need to have pedagogical qualifications;
- e) Introducing the position of an intercultural assistant, who will be employed in schools to provide assistance to individuals, help them interact with the school environment, and interact with their parents and the school.
- f) Abolition of the requirement to confirm knowledge of the Polish language with a document, in the case of employment in the position of teacher's aide, and intercultural assistant, of a person who does not have Polish citizenship - a person employed in this position must have knowledge of the Polish language, both spoken and written, to a degree that allows assistance to a student who does not know Polish or knows it at a level insufficient to benefit from education - (Article 57 of the Act);
- g) benefit from additional remedial classes in the subjects of study organized by the authority in charge of the school, but no longer than for a period of 12 months. Decisions on granting a given form of support shall be made by the school director in consultation with the authority in charge of the school;
- h) A diplomatic or consular post of the country of origin or cultural and educational associations of a given nationality may organize at school, in agreement with the head of the elementary school and with the consent of the leading authority, the study of the language and culture of the student's country of origin.
- i) Exemption of students from Ukraine from the obligation to take the Polish language eighth-grade exam in the 2024/2025 school year. The change in the conditions for taking the eighth-grade exam in the 2024/2025 school year, concerning the introduction of the possibility for refugee students from Ukraine not to take this exam from the Polish language, also requires the introduction of episodic provisions specifying how the individual recruitment criteria referred to in Article 134(2)(1) of the Law of December 14, 2016 are converted into points. - Education Law, to secondary schools: general high school, technical high school and industry school of the first degree, for the school year 2025/2026. It was assumed that in their case the Polish language grade listed on the certificate of completion of elementary school will be converted into points;

III. Increase the number of students in kindergarten and school divisions

Voivodeship has been made an effort to increase the number of students in kindergarten and school divisions by a certain number of children from Ukraine: in a kindergarten or kindergarten division in an elementary school by no more than 3 children who are citizens of Ukraine, in a division of grades I-III in an elementary school by no more than 4, 3 or 2 students from Ukraine, respectively, depending on whether the number of students in a division of grades I-III in an elementary school is no more than 25, 26 or 27 students,

IV. Psychological and pedagogical assistance

1. Foreign students may be covered by psychological and pedagogical assistance in connection with the migration experience. Assistance consists in recognizing and meeting individual developmental and educational needs, as well as recognizing individual psychophysical capabilities and environmental factors affecting his functioning.
2. Psychological and pedagogical assistance at school is organized by the school director, and the assistance is provided by teachers, group teachers and specialists performing tasks in the field of psychological and pedagogical assistance at school, in particular, psychologists, pedagogues, speech therapists, vocational counselors and pedagogical therapists.
3. Psychological and pedagogical assistance is organized and provided in cooperation with parents of students, and may be provided in cooperation with other entities, including: psychological and pedagogical counseling centers, teacher training centers, other schools, non-governmental organizations and other institutions and entities acting on behalf of the family, children and youth. The terms of the school's cooperation with the above-mentioned entities are agreed upon by the school director.
4. Psychological and pedagogical assistance can also be extended to parents of students.
5. It will be possible to admit children and students to kindergartens and special schools on the basis of parents' declarations of submission to a public psychological and pedagogical clinic, including a public specialized clinic, of an application for a certificate on the need for special education

Presentation of the main conclusions of the educational workshop organized by the Kuratorium Oświaty, UNHCR and PSAR

The presentation of the workshop was made by a PSAR representative.

Participants

24 people:

- Representatives of the Kuratorium Oświaty
- Employees of the Education Department of the Municipality of Rzeszow,
- Representatives of the Municipality of Rzeszow,
- School Directors,
- Ukrainian students,
- Ukrainian parents.

Workshop objectives:

- **Foster solution-oriented** dialogue on existing and future solutions, tools and programs related to school registration, inclusion and integration of Ukrainian children in schools in Podkarpackie.
- **Identify barriers to integrating Ukrainian children** and youth into the local school system in light of upcoming changes to the Special Law.
- **Develop a report** with recommendations and advocacy messages for key stakeholders.

Identified challenges to integration:

- Social isolation,

Action Points

UNHCR will finalize the report of the educational workshop organized by the Kuratorium Oświaty, UNHCR and PSAR.



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language barrier,• Affected mental health of Ukrainian children and parents, including due to separation from family,• Discrepancies in education program between Ukraine and Poland,• Insufficient number of school places,• Limited access to support resources at school (educational support, translation services, cultural assistance)• Differences in school programs (Polish v. Ukrainian),• Preparatory units for Ukrainian children only,• Lack of extracurricular group activities for Poles and Ukrainians• Discrimination and bullying,• School dropout, <p>Recommendations - information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Provide clear information about the Polish education system online,○ Provide support to refugee parents (informational meetings, support of information exchange between parents),○ Disseminate information about available places for youth conducting extracurricular activities in Rzeszow. <p>Recommendations - Polish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Increase the number of lessons in Polish as a second language in schools,○ Focus Polish teaching on utility, not good grades,○ Provide additional interpreters for refugee parents, <p>Recommendations - work organization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Increase the number of teachers and Ukrainian-speaking facilitators in schools.○ End preparatory units and admit Ukrainian children directly into mixed classes.○ Organize meetings at schools for parents run by NGOs.○ Disseminate information about the benefits of attending Polish schools in person, <p>Recommendations - psychosocial support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Increase and provide easier access to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in schools,○ Provide additional intercultural training and MHPSS activities for Polish and Ukrainian teachers, parents and youth. <p>Recommendations - integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Support the continued study of Ukrainian language, culture and traditions at school.○ Provide additional Ukrainian language lessons in schools and/or organizing such speaking/cultural sharing clubs for children in other local institutions.○ Introduce Ukrainian as a foreign language into the school curriculum.○ Provide parents and children with opportunities to speak out and be heard, including through community meetings and integration activities.	
Refresh	Action Points
<p>National emergency response matrix:</p> <p>I. 129 activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ 65 in Podkarpackie Voivodeship,➢ 64 nationwide, including in the Podkarpackie Voivodeship. <p>II. 11 sectors</p> <p>Potential actions:</p> <p>a) Short-term accommodation:</p>	Coordination of the matrix update - UNHCR

Polish Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity Poland

b) Case management:
IOM, Central Council of Roma in Poland, Caritas in Rzeszów

c) Financial support:
IOM, Save the Children, International Committee for Refugee Assistance, CARE, HIAS Poland, Oxfam

d) Educational support:
Caritas in Rzeszow, PSAR, Germanitas, UNICEF, ADRA Poland, CARE, Central Council of Roma in Poland, IOCC/Eleos, School with Class Foundation, Great Heart for Children Foundation, Information Society Development Foundation.

e) Support for shelters: (tents, generator, fuel):
Folkowisko Foundation, UNICEF, Polish Red Cross

f) Food delivery:
Polish Red Cross, Caritas in Rzeszów, PAH, Folkowisko Foundation, ADRA, IFRC

g) Preventing violence against women:
UNHCR, PSAR, PRO-FIL, Soleterre, ADRA Poland, CARE

h) Distribution of hygiene kits:
Polish Red Cross, Save the Children, Medair, Hope, UNICEF

i) Informing refugees about services and rights:
UNHCR, IOM, IRC, ToProste, Mudita Association, IOCC/ELEOS, ELIL

j) Monitoring and referral of cases:
UNHCR, IOM, Caritas in Rzeszow, Soleterre, PSAR, PRO-FIL, HIAS, IOCC/Eleos, FDDS

k) NFI Distribution:
UNHCR, IOM, PAH, Save the Children, Medair, IFRC

l) Primary Health Care:
UNICEF

m) MHPSS (excluding children):
UNHCR, IOM, PRO FIL, PSAR, Soleterre, Caritas in Rzeszów, ADRA Poland, HIAS

n) Child-friendly (child-specific) psychosocial support:
UNHCR, IOM, PSAR, Caritas in Rzeszów, Folkowisko Foundation, Central Council of Roma in Poland, Soleterre, Great Heart for Children Foundation, Information Society Development Foundation, FDDS, Save the Children.

o) Socio-economic inclusion:
IOM, Caritas in Rzeszów, Central Council of Roma in Poland, Germanitas, ADRA Poland, CARE, IFRC, FRSI

p) Collective rehabilitation and land management:
IOM, Polish Red Cross

q) Providing transportation:
IOM

r) Mobilization or support of volunteers:
IOM, Central Roma Council, ADRA Poland, Polish Red Cross, Folkowisko Foundation, Medair, Soleterre, IOCC/ELEOS

Other activities:

a) Operational coordination at the field level:
UNHCR

b) Legal assistance in applying for a British visa:
Safe Passage International

Good practices in emergency planning from the Lublin voivodeship

Emergency response plans in Lubelskie Voivodeship

Emergency planning workshop

Action Points

UNHCR will contact Save the Children to learn more about the planned emergency planning program in the Podkarpackie voivodeship.

Locations:

Chelm - *September 21, 2022*
Hrubieszow - *September 26, 2022*
Tomaszow Lubelski - *November 16, 2022*

Participants:

- City government represented by the mayor and representatives of all relevant units
- Representatives of the Voivodeship Office
- Border Guard officers
- Fire Department
- Police
- NGOs
- International NGOs
- UN agencies

Agenda - 8 hours

- **Assessing the current situation from the city's perspective**
- **Is the new influx of refugees from Ukraine predictable?** - possible scenarios
- **Review of key actions taken in February-April 2022.** - group work
- **Strategic goals for responding to the next influx**
 - Protection and assistance upon arrival
 - Medium and long-term solutions
 - Coordination
- **When should emergency response be activated?**
 - Triggering factors
 - Average number of arrivals
 - Accommodation capacity -
Transportation
capacity
- **Protection considerations during response**
- **What key actions are needed for an effective and timely response** - discussion on needs, opportunities, available resources and actors

EXPECTED INFLUX DURING THE WINTER PERIOD

Approximately 44% of Ukrainian arrivals crossed the border into Poland through the Dorohusk (14%), Zosin (8%), Dolhobyczow (8%) and Hrebenne (15%) border crossings by July 31. As a result, 44% of those entering from the expected influx of 500-750,000.

Lessons learned - an example from Hrubieszow

What worked in the previous response and can be effective in the future:

- Simplified asylum procedures for border crossing and PESEL registration
- Organization of reception points and ensuring decent conditions at accommodation points
- Cooperation with NGOs
- Effective transfer of refugees from the border to reception points and across the border
- Taking the initiative by local authorities
- Support for the Ukrainian diaspora living in Poland and Ukrainian refugees who have been in Poland for a long time.



Which didn't work in the previous response, but could be effective in the future:

- Insufficient coordination of volunteers and supervision of the work they do.
- Insufficient focus on humanitarian principles.
- Lack of regulations tailored to the needs and situation of hosting large numbers of refugees.
- Lack of a coherent system of intersectoral coordination, mainly between the local government, the Lublin Voivodeship Office and national and international NGOs.
- Insufficient flow of information between those involved in helping refugees at the local and regional levels.
- The challenges of caring for and supporting the elderly and those with special needs arriving in Poland.
- Relocation and transfer of refugees to other centers and cities, organized in ways that were not always consistent with their needs and capabilities.

Which didn't work in the previous response and certainly won't be effective in the future:

- Border crossings on the Ukrainian side unsuitable for handling large numbers of refugees, including those crossing the border on foot.

What worked in the previous response and will certainly not be effective in the future:

- Response of individuals, level of solidarity with refugees from Ukraine.

Strategic objectives - an example from Hrubieszow

Strategic Objective 1: Provide timely and effective protection and assistance to refugees newly arrived at the border in Zosin and Dolhobyczow.

This includes ensuring that reception arrangements at borders, reception points and refugee accommodation centers are in place and able to accommodate new arrivals, and that vulnerable populations are identified and prioritized for access to information, protection services and basic humanitarian assistance (food, housing, clothing, medical assistance, etc.).

Strategic Goal 2: Ensure the timely and effective ability of refugees to continue moving from the borders of Zosin and Dolhobyczow to Hrubieszow and other cities in Poland and abroad.

Ensure that onward movements from border areas (including the Hrubieszów Municipality area) are carried out in a timely, efficient, free and coordinated manner (between the sending and receiving sides) to avoid overloading reception centers and exposing new arrivals to unnecessary protection risks. Without congestion at the border and in the first reception areas, the time refugees spend there will be minimal, making the response more efficient.

Strategic Objective 3: Ensure that all actors involved in the response act in a coordinated manner, avoid repetition and maximize impact.

This includes the key role of municipal and provincial governments to provide a real-time coordination space for all state and municipal institutions, non-governmental organizations (national and international), international organizations, volunteers (organized into groups or individuals) and private sector actors who contribute to the response.

Emergency response plans

- **Strategy document** developed jointly with each border town
- **Consulted** with its relevant units
- **Approved** by local authorities
- **Submission** to the Department of Crisis Management of the Voivodeship Office in Lublin.
- **Update** at a later stage (Chelm)

Save the Children also informed participants about its plans to work on emergency planning missions with selected municipalities in Podkarpackie. The pilot of this project will be conducted in the municipalities of Jaroslaw and Lubaczow.

Presentation of the Q Foundation report	Action Points
<p>On February 1, 2024, the Q Foundation, with the support of IOM, launched the project "Polish language courses for refugees and migrants who fled the war in Ukraine to Poland."</p> <p>They held classes in 10 collective accommodation centers in the Podkarpackie and Małopolskie provinces.</p> <p>In Podkarpackie: Przeworsk, Przemyśl, Ropczyce, Berezka, Gorzyca.</p> <p>In Małopolskie: Koniki, Skomielna Biała, Rabka, Ponice, Grabie.</p> <p>Preparations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -13 groups, each with about 15 people - A total of 13 lecturers participated in the project <p>Some data:</p> <p>From the beginning of March to the end of May, 1560 teaching hours of classes were conducted: in each of 13 groups: 120 hours. Learning support was provided to 200 people.</p> <p><u>Gender</u></p> <p>19% male 81% female</p> <p><u>How long have they been in Poland</u></p> <p>11% less than 3 months 17% 3-6 months 2% 6-12 months 28% 12-14 months 42% over 24 months</p> <p>According to the surveys, course participants enjoyed the Q Foundation classes and were eager to use them - the rating given to the instructors was 4.86/5. Participants felt that the content in the classes was conveyed in an accessible and understandable manner.</p> <p>The Q Foundation has identified the needs that those participating in the classes have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Psychological support ▪ Space for talking about your experiences (war trauma, homesickness) ▪ Comments ▪ Implementation of compulsory education ▪ Obtain additional information about the school and changes in the law ▪ Contact with peers (including Poles) ▪ They go outside the boundaries of their community, want contact and are very contactable, activities allow them to open up to the Polish community ▪ Showing possible life scenarios for the coming years ▪ Demonstrate acceptable patterns of behavior ▪ Integration into Polish society, without creating ghettos ▪ Reworking the trauma with a Ukrainian psychologist ▪ Rehabilitation for children and the elderly ▪ Language courses 	



- Assistance in job search and retraining
- Childcare for single mothers

Progress of those participating in the class:

- More openness
- Higher communication capabilities
- They understood that communication does not have to be based on perfect language skills
- Greater knowledge of cultural differences
- Increase in computer skills
- Learning to acquire knowledge independently
- Fluency in expressing your thoughts and feelings
- Increased trust and openness between participants, which promotes better group integration and more effective teamwork
- Building bonds between participants, which positively affects the atmosphere in groups and cooperation.

The easiest/most enjoyable during the pacing with groups was:

- Communicating with people, learning about their culture
- Openness to proposed activities
- Teaching that communicativeness is more important than linguistic correctness
- Establishing contact and understanding
- Singing lessons
- Developing their own pedagogical skills and experimenting with different teaching methods, which made the work interesting
- Active involvement of participants
- Classes on cultural differences
- Building an atmosphere of trust and cooperation
- Stimulate active participation and interaction and support the development of language and personal skills

The hardest part while working with the groups was:

- Contact with difficult, traumatic stories and experiences of class participants
- Focusing the attention of Roma children for longer
- Embarrassment of illiterate people in front of other members of the group, which made them blocked in communication
- Different language levels in groups
- Mitigation of the conflict between the groups of refugees of the eastern and western parts, the Roma from Transcarpathia and the rest of the Roma community
- Adaptation of tasks for a group with different language levels
- Need to constantly adapt classes to changing needs

Participants:

Organization	Name	Name
Alight	Oksana	Zawalska
Alight	Yozdana	Potopliak
Bibliothèques Sans Frontières (BSF).	Nadzeya	Luchanok
Caritas of the Archdiocese of Przemyśl	Monika	Laska
Caritas Rzeszow	Krystian	Snopkowski

Central Roma Council	Nicolas	Antersen
Folkowisko Foundation	Paul	Zielinski
Q Foundation	Magdalena	Buczowska
Foundation Towards Dialogue	Ewelina	Bosak
IOM	Eve	Rodziewicz
Board of Education in Rzeszow	Bartosz	Szymanski
Podkarpackie Voivodeship Office	Maria	Gnap
Podkarpackie Voivodeship Office	Dariusz	Tracz
Podkarpackie Voivodeship Office	Jan	Ziobro
Podkarpackie Voivodeship Office	Ewelina	Czenczek
Podkarpackie Voivodeship Office	Joseph	Gdansk
Podkarpackie Voivodeship Office	Gregory	Lons
Podkarpackie Voivodeship Office	James	Boar
Polish Red Cross (PCK)	Alicia	Bobola
PRO-FIL	Tomasz	Kobylanski
PSAR	Jan	Markovic
PSAR	Monika	Markovic
Save the Children	Philip	Bujanowski
UNHCR	Sophie	Chromicka
UNHCR	Jose Luis	Hernandez
UNHCR	Yolanda	Zapata
UNHCR	Marco	Procaccini
UNHCR	Berthold	Kandora
UNHCR	Agnieszka	Kubiak
University of Rzeszow	Alexandra	Pelczar
University of Rzeszow	Magdalena	Biernacka
Municipality of Rzeszow	Kamil	Czyż

Zofia Chromicka, Field Operations Specialist, chromick@unhcr.org

END---