

SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF SELECTED HOUSING SOLUTIONS FOR REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE

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LEAD-IN

Since 24 February, the day of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, over 6.05 million refugees from Ukraine have crossed into Poland, as reported by the Polish Border Guard on Monday, 5 September. Over 2 million people have returned to Ukraine.

This, of course, does not translate into simple maths to show real refugee figures, but at least, gives a idea of the scale of the phenomenon¹. Moreover, the movement of migrants into Poland has been constantly upward (23.2 thousand people came from Ukraine and 22.5 thousand left Poland on 5 September only). Based on survey data on the refugees applying for a PESEL number in Poland, more than half intend to stay here for at least a few months or longer, or have not yet decided where to go next. These surveyed Ukrainian nationals point to finding accommodation and employment as the two top priorities, at least at this point. Therefore, to have proper housing solutions in place is currently one of the most important and strategic matters to be taken care of in response to the current wave of migration².

1. Source: Polish Border Guard, 5 September 2022

2. Wojdat, M., Cywiński, P. (April 2022). Urban Hospitality: Unprecedented Growth, Challenges, and Opportunities. A Report on Ukrainian Refugees in the Largest Polish

This report describes various forms of housing options provided to refugees in large cities, with particular emphasis on the social and psychological effects of specific housing solutions. The highlighted problems concern both immediate humanitarian aid and the medium- and long-term integration of refugees. These three aspects were first addressed in the report by the Union of Polish Metropolises, Urban Hospitality. Unprecedented Growth, Challenges, and Opportunities. A Report on Ukrainian Refugees in the Largest Polish Cities (hereinafter: "Urban Hospitality Report"):

"The changes that we will set out to put in place should therefore be sustainable in the long term, so that they can benefit both the Ukrainian and the Polish parts of our society. We do not want to put up tents for temporary hospitals; we want to increase the capacity of the facilities that we already have. We do not want to build large halls to accommodate hundreds of refugees temporarily; we want to build new residential sites and create a system whereby they will be designed in spaces that already exist. Such a system will serve not only Ukrainian refugees and migrants but

Cities. Research and Analysis Centre of the Union of Polish Metropolises

also Poles. The idea is to maintain or even raise the current standard of living of such people. It is hoped that this will prevent potential social conflicts. It will also be useful after the end of the war, irrespective of the changes to the demographic structure of the Ukrainian community in Poland³."

Currently, many legislative initiatives are being tabled that aim to open up new possibilities; likewise, diagnostic reports are being published that attempt to cast some light on the situation of refugees on the basis of incomplete data gathered so far. When adopting new laws or drafting strategic documents on various forms of housing, various aspects of implemented housing solutions are worth considering. The best moment for drawing up a study covering the social dimension of selected forms of accommodation is now.

Social and psychological effects of selected housing solutions

3. The reports, Urban Hospitality, and, Ukrainians in the 12 Largest Polish Cities after 24 April 2022. Key Results from Reports of the UMP Research and Analysis Centre. Social and psychological effects of selected housing solutions for refugees from Ukraine

We are fully aware that many of the solutions discussed below will require adjustments to the law as well collecting additional data. However, already at this stage, the social effects of certain housing solutions should be looked into.

This is driven by both the cities' attention devoted to their own citizens as well as by scientific research which construct possible scenarios of social integration of refugees, also by making allowances for tensions that inevitability accompany the integration process. The authorities of large Polish cities should be prepared for and reasonably respond to that.

The report briefly recalls and provides an overview of the currently prevailing housing options made available to refugees in large cities and considers which of them are likely to continue in the near future and how. Descriptions of the individual forms of accommodation list their advantages and associated risks, as well as showing the territorial government how to prevent adverse social phenomena, where possible, and how to prepare for what perhaps cannot be prevented.

The following content is primarily based on the results of workshop sessions held with the representatives of cities that are

How to prevent negative social phenomena where possible?

directly handling the problem of refugee accommodation and on discussions with experts on migration, refugees, and social processes.

Where possible, we refer to publicly available reports or studies and supplement the discussed phenomena with extracts from media features. This approach, however, is encumbered with two limitations. First, quantitative data on the scale of the problem and the selection of existing housing solutions in individual cities is not collected at all or, in the best-case scenario, is incomplete and difficult to compare directly. In the further part of the report, we refer to a research carried out by the Union of Polish Metropolises ("UMP"). Owing to a number of UMP's reports, we obtain the picture of the migrant situation in the largest Polish cities: data on refugees applying for a PESEL number; data on sheltered refugees; data on the extent of aid and assistance provided by the populations of the 12 UMP cities; and figures related to refugees hosted by private persons. Second, future scenarios are uncertain and largely depend on factors that are beyond the control of territorial governments: the progress of the armed conflict, Ukraine's migration policy, and central government's decisions. It seems justified to rely on the opinion of experts and researchers, so that any planned activities could build on to the previous experience of territorial governments and the general knowledge on migra-

tion, refugees, and any related social and spatial phenomena.

The report is intended primarily for territorial government officials who are facing the task of drafting an action/response strategy covering several time frames and the task of selecting a package of housing solutions that would best suit their specific spatial and social conditions. According to the UMP Report, "the overwhelming majority of Ukrainian nationals decided to stay longer in the largest Polish metropolises, mainly in the metropolitan areas associated in the UMP. In March 2022, our cities and the neighbouring municipalities hosted almost 70% of all Ukrainians who came to Poland after 24 February and those who had lived here before. Over 2.2 million people in total⁴." Therefore, this report highlights the situation, provides solutions, and lists possible consequences of a refugee crisis from the perspective of large cities ●

This report highlights the situation, provides solutions, and lists possible consequences of a refugee

4. Wojdat, M., Cywiński, P. (April 2022). Urban Hospitality: Unprecedented Growth, Challenges, and Opportunities. A Report on Ukrainian Refugees in the Largest Polish Cities. Research and Analysis Centre of the Union of Polish Metropolises

STATE OF PLAY

The binding law on assistance to Ukrainian nationals fleeing the war says that both the territorial government and a local governor may (but do not have to) provide accommodation for Ukrainian citizens. However, governors may also give (orally or in writing) instructions to territorial government authorities that do not require justification and are immediately enforceable (Act of 12 March 2022 on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine in Connection with the Armed Conflict on the Territory of Ukraine, Article 12). This means that the scope of assistance required from territorial government units may change quickly and in a not necessarily predictable manner. At the same time, the situation of Polish metropolises is specific since about half of those crossing into Poland from war-torn Ukraine decided to make for large cities or their metropolitan areas⁵.

Data collected by the UMP shows that at the end of May 2022 Ukrainian nationals accounted for 9-10% of the population of Białystok, Bydgoszcz, Szczecin, Łódź, up to 25% of the population of Gdańsk and Wrocław and even 30% of the population of Rzeszów. In other UMP cities, they represented more than 10% of the

5. (June 2022). Ukrainians in the 12 largest Polish cities after 24 Feb 2022. Key Results from Reports of the UMP Research and Analysis Centre.

local residents⁶.

This influx into the largest cities can be explained by social and economic factors. Cities with a Ukrainian diaspora already there also promised a greater sense of security, and wider assistance and transit opportunities. Some cities, however, were no longer able to accept further groups of refugees. Although Poland has largely satisfied the need for humanitarian aid so far, the current housing provision system is based on temporary and expedient forms of accommodation. At the same time, the availability of free accommodation and the involvement of individual residents in helping refugees has declined over time.

The burnout and fatigue effect among Poles who have been hosting people fleeing the war are evident. Some forms of financial assistance from the state

(cash benefit for providing accommodation and meals to Ukrainian nationals staying in the territory of the Republic of Poland in connection with hostilities going on in the territory of Ukraine is available for 120 days from the date of the first entry into Poland).

Data of the Polish Border Guard⁷ indicates that at the moment (mid-July 2022) the number of people returning to Ukraine is higher than the number of people arriving in Poland. However, intense migratory movement continues all the time. And still most of those who decide to come to Poland because of the war land in big cities. Certainly, some of the refugees will return to their homes once the conflict subsides; some will remain in Poland until the end of the war; and some have not yet made a decision on returning or have nowhere to go back to ●

ESTIMATED NO. OF UKRAINIANS POLAND	3,19 M March '22	3,85 M April '22	3,37 M May '22
ESTIMATED NO. OF UKRAINIANS 12 UMP CITIES	1,37 M March '22	1,60 M April '22	1,43 M May '22

The data in the table has been sourced from the report: Research and Analysis Centre of the Union of Polish Metropolises (June 2022). Ukrainians in 12 Largest Polish Cities after 24 Feb 2022. Key Results from Reports of the UMP Research and Analysis Centre.

6. Ibidem

7. Source: Polish Border Guard, 14 July 2022

NEW CHALLENGES

Territorial governments had a major role to play in the first weeks of the war in Ukraine. Thanks to the cooperation with the central government agencies, the great involvement of individual citizens, non-governmental organisations, and cooperation with the Ukrainian diaspora, several weeks after the outbreak of the war, we can say that the people fleeing Ukraine were successfully provided with temporary shelter in the middle of a sudden refugee crisis. Estimates generated at the end of April 2022 showed that around 525 thousand refugees had received shelter at approx. 149 thousand private individuals in the UMP cities⁸.

8. *Neighbourly Help. Inhabitants of the 12 Largest Polish Cities on Helping Refugees.* Research and Analysis Centre of the Union of Polish Metropolises (August 2022).

Surveyed refugees applying for a PESEL number in Polish cities at the end of April 2022 reported that Poles were hosting them in their own or other independent premises in urban areas (38%). The support of the Ukrainian diaspora (23%) was also significant. A similar share of the surveyed refugees were living independently (in rented apartments or premises lent for use). 7% of the respondents admitted staying in collective accommodation facilities (hotel, hostel, guesthouse)⁹. Listed below are the prevailing forms of shelter for refugees in large cities identi-

9. Research and Analysis Centre of the Union of Polish Metropolises (June 2022). *Ukrainians in the 12 largest Polish cities after 24 Feb 2022.* Key Results from Reports of the Research and Analysis Centre of the Union of Polish Metropolises.

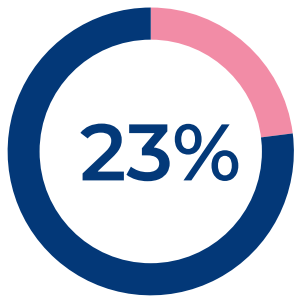
fied by civil servants handling this matter on a daily basis.

It can be expected that most of these forms should soon be replaced by more long-term solutions. Below, we will briefly describe each form of housing available to refugees in large cities to highlight what changes can be expected.

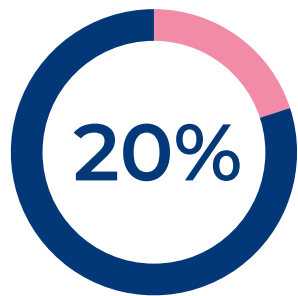
The new challenges that large cities are facing today are not only related to the large number of refugees who decided to settle here. Therefore, the commonly held opinion that we are dealing with “the same housing problem as we used to but on a larger scale” is risky. Based on interviews with experts, there are at least four factors that make the current problem unlike any others before ●

Where are you living now? (TOP5)

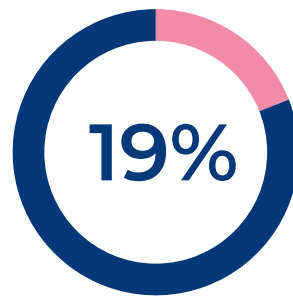
The data is sourced from the report: *Research and Analysis Centre of the Union of Polish Metropolises (June 2022). Ukrainians in 12 Largest Polish Cities after 24 Feb 2022. Key Results from Reports of the UMP Research and Analysis Centre.*



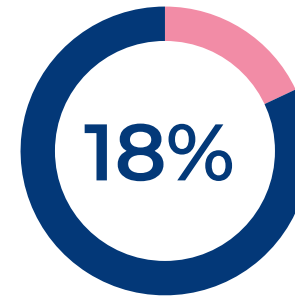
living together with friends/family from Ukraine



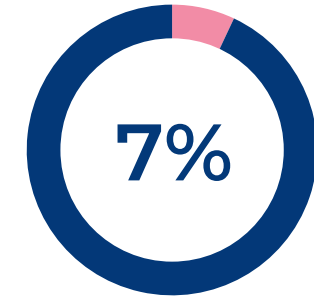
staying in Poles' private flats/houses, with hosts



renting an apartment



staying in Poles' private flats/houses, without hosts



hotel/hostel/guesthouse

NEW CIRCUMSTANCES

1. Demographic characteristics of the refugee group arriving in Poland

The UNHCR forecasts that around 4.3 million people will have left Ukraine by December 2022, of which around 2.6 million are likely to remain abroad. This group will consist of adult women (approx. 49%), children (37%), and men (only 14%). This demographic structure differs from that in Poland where adult women account for 42%, children for approx. 20%, and adult men for approx. 38% of the population¹⁰. This structure is also significantly different from the mean values for refugees globally (UNHCR data),

10. Statistics Poland (2021). Demographic Yearbook. Table 14. Population by Gender and Age.

where adult women constitute approx. 25%, children 49%, and adult men 27% of refugees¹¹. According to the aforesaid UMP reports, *“In each of the UMP central cities, women account for almost three-fourths of all Ukrainian nationals applying for a PESEL number¹².”* This means that we are actually witnessing a migration movement of women with their (or entrusted) children and often also accompanied by seniors. This is particularly relevant for the type of public services available to them in large cities (education and childcare, healthcare), which should be as close to their place of residence as possible, so that these

11. Own study based on UNHCR Refugee Data Finder
12. Wojdat, M., Cywiński, P. (April 2022). Urban Hospitality: Unprecedented Growth, Challenges, and Opportunities. A Report on Ukrainian Refugees in the Largest Polish Cities and Analysis and Research Centre of the Union of Polish Metropolises (June 2022). Ukrainians in 12 Largest Polish Cities after 24 Feb 2022. Key Results from Reports of the UMP Research and Analysis Centre.

women can take up employment and be fully on their own.

2. Inevitable social tensions

Refugees who remain in Poland were first and primarily treated as victims of hostilities who require immediate support.

However, there is a plausible scenario that, after some time, the Polish society will begin to perceive these people as competition in access to vital public resources (such as healthcare services, education and childcare, labour market, housing market). This entails a serious risk of exacerbating social tensions and creating hostile attitudes, stereotypes, and social fears.

We are actually witnessing a migration movement of women with their (or entrusted) children and often also accompanied by seniors.

This is particularly relevant for the type of public services available to them in large cities (education and childcare, healthcare), which should be as close

to their place of residence as possible, so that these women can take up employment and be fully on their own.

3. Uncertainty of scenarios

The future development of warfare in Ukraine remains a great unknown. It is difficult to predict how long it will last and where the conflict is going to spread. When drawing up this report, the main armed struggle is taking place in the Donbas region, while most of western Ukraine is relatively peaceful. However, whether there will be a quick end to hostilities or the war spills over to the rest of the Ukrainian territory is not certain, and either of the two scenarios cannot be ruled out. And each of them leads to different consequences: more people may be fleeing the country and needing help, and some may be determined to go back to start their lives in Ukraine anew as soon as reasonably possible. Moreover, this uncertainty of the future significantly influences refugees' decisions regarding relocation or taking up employment abroad.

4. Increased risk group

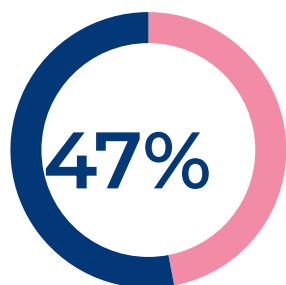
Addressing the issue of housing is inevitable when dealing with refugees, and prolonged inaction may entail long-term and significant costs. Experience of other countries shows that people forced into relocation are at a greater risk of homelessness, and those who are refugees fleeing war may suffer from PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), and experience problems with social integration and obtaining social support. Therefore, the refugees from Ukraine should be provided with both specialist psychosocial consultancy and should be sheltered in properly designed facilities. It is also worth noting that members of the Ukrainian diaspora, who had settled in Poland before the war and are now hosting their families and friends escaping hostilities, need to shoulder a heavy financial, mental, and social burden ●

FAMILY SITUATION AND ACCESS TO EDUCATION

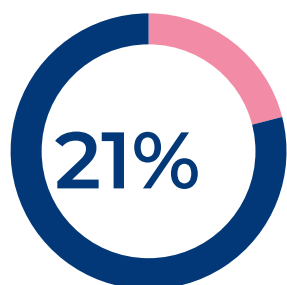
Source: The data shown on the graphics comes from the report, A NEW HOME OR A TEMPORARY SHELTER? The Situation of Refugees from Ukraine Applying for the Polish Personal Identification Number in the 12 Largest Polish Cities. A Survey Report September 2022. Analysis and Research Centre of the Union of Polish Metropolises. It was collected at the end of April 2022.

Who did you come to Poland with?

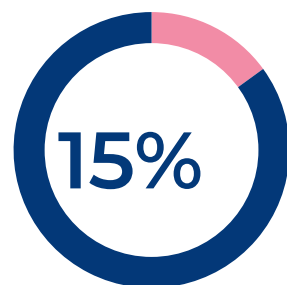
Or who are the persons that you are living with now?



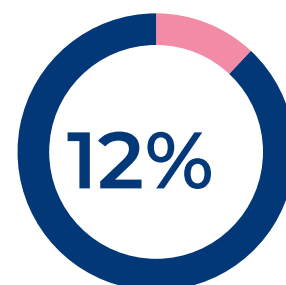
with a minor (below 18) child/children



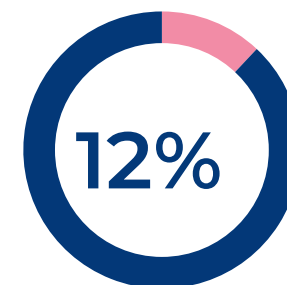
I came alone



with other family member/members



with my parent/parents



with my husband/wife/partner

N=3 628 (all respondents), main responses. The data does not add up to 100% because the respondents were able to choose more than one answer

Children under the age of 6 who do not attend kindergarten/nursery



Children aged 7-14 who are not attending any school (either in Poland or remotely in Ukraine)



Children aged 15-18 who do not attend at any school (either in Poland or remotely in Ukraine)



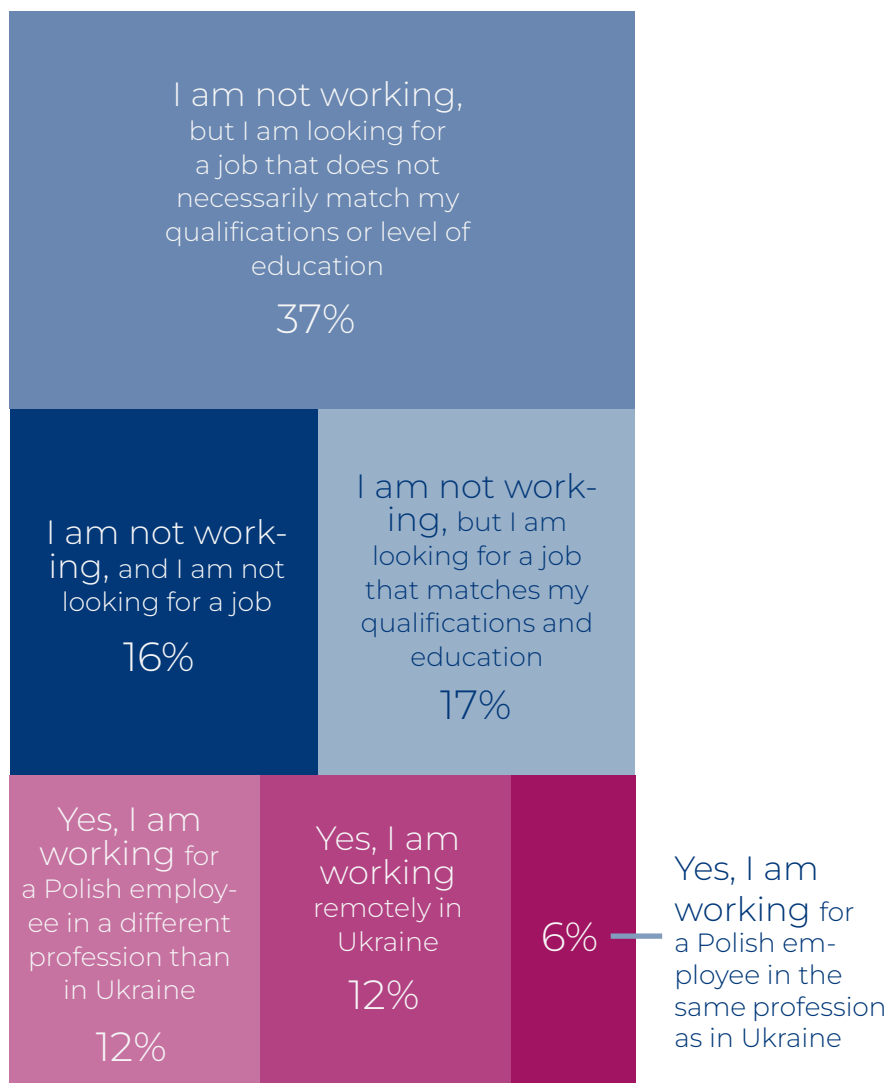
47% of refugees applying for PESEL came to Poland with a minor child

67% of their children up to 6 are not attending any nursery or kindergarten

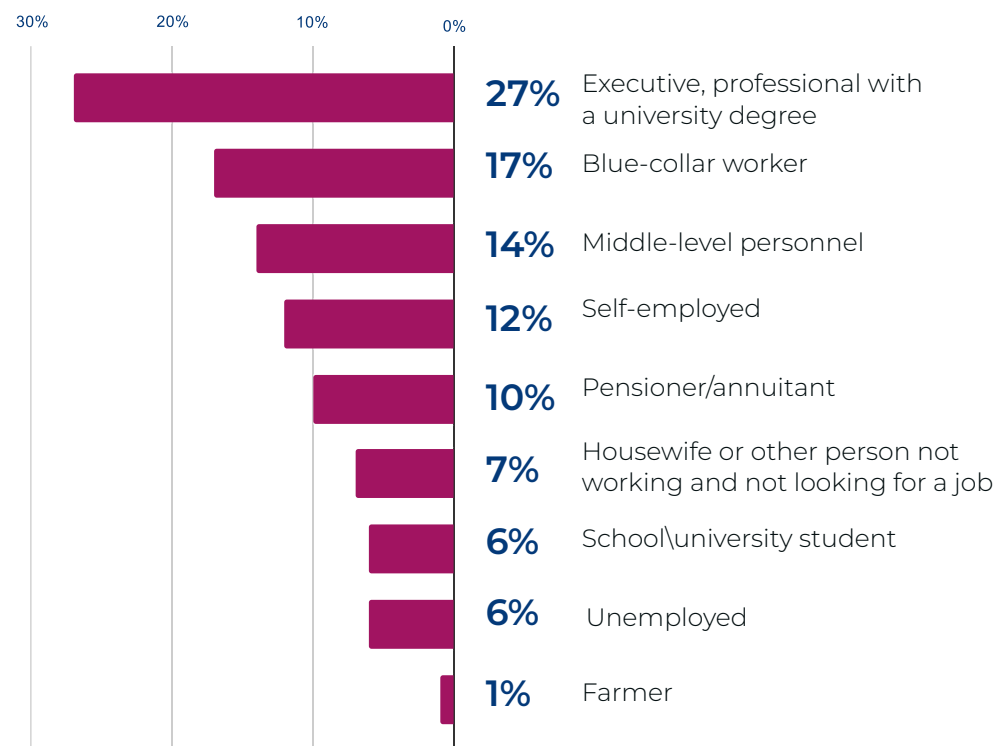
OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF REFUGEES APPLYING FOR PESEL

Source: The data shown on the graphics comes from the report, A NEW HOME OR A TEMPORARY SHELTER? The Situation of Refugees from Ukraine Applying for the Polish Personal Identification Number in the 12 Largest Polish Cities. A Survey Report September 2022. Analysis and Research Centre of the Union of Polish Metropolises. It was collected at the end of April 2022.

Are you working currently?



What was your employment situation before leaving Ukraine?



The prevailing group among the respondents are educated specialists and executives (27%)

70% of those applying for PESEL are not working now, 54% are looking for a job

FROM HUMANITARIAN AID TO TARGETED SOLUTIONS

The analysis of housing solutions for refugees should address different types of accommodation that may be needed over different time horizons. Experts in the field distinguish different types of housing to be made available in the event of a refugee crisis:

EMERGENCY SHELTER

It is the first place where assistance can be provided in the event of a crisis (abandoning one's home). Such places are intended to quickly satisfy the very basic needs and secure a short stay (overnight stay, food, toilet facilities).

TEMPORARY SHELTER

Such sites permit longer stays, for example, to plan further travel and find a new destination.

This is where not only the basic needs are satisfied, but where refugees can establish contacts to be able to make further decisions. Temporary shelters are often shared, collective spaces.

TEMPORARY HOUSING

Temporary accommodation but relatively comfortable and with a spatial layout

resembling flats or houses (not shared, collective facilities). Temporary housing is supposed to meet conditions that offer independence and privacy, as well as enabling the residents to take care of employment, childcare, education. However, this solution may be made available, for example, for a specified period of time or under certain conditions, and the residents are not basically free to have full control over the premises.

PERMANENT HOUSING

This is a target place of domicile that meets all the criteria of an independent flat or house. This solution comes with various forms of ownership and the right to decide about the premises. As pointed out in many diagnostic reports on the current situation in Poland, we have been able to provide accommodation to refugees in the crisis situation, but most of the current housing solutions in place are provided on a short- or medium-term basis.

"The currently available solutions are temporary and short-term. In the medium-term perspective, other forms of accommodation will be expected, which will provide refugee families with a relatively autonomous shelter for the

adjustment period, that is, until a) they can return to Ukraine, b) they will be able to sustain on their own in Poland (will have a source of income, job, and a relatively permanent place of residence)¹³."

Described below are the currently prevailing forms of sheltering refugees in large Polish cities, as reported by civil servants in charge of this area. It can be expected that most of these forms should soon be replaced by more long-term solutions. We will briefly explain each form of housing available in large cities and will suggest how it can evolve ●

13. Milert M., Nowak K., Sroka B., (2022). "Kwestia mieszkaniowa a kryzys uchodźczy. Wspólne wyzwania i rozwiązania dla równoważenia sektora mieszkalnictwa w Polsce." In: K. Nowak, H. Milewska-Wilk, eds. Mieszkalnictwo i polityki społeczne. Raport o stanie polskich miast, Instytut Rozwoju Miast i Regionów. Warszawa- Kraków

EMERGENCY AID AND TEMPORARY SHELTER



When setting up temporary shelter facilities, certain risks should be kept in mind that are associated with the fact that the hosted refugees find themselves in a completely new environment.

Research shows that poorly organized temporary accommodation may be conducive to recurrent traumas and increase the risk of undesirable social phenomena.

A well-prepared temporary shelter is a prerequisite for refugees to regain a sense of security after a trauma and a sense of agency that helps them function independently in a new community.

SHELTER HALLS

Shelter halls are envisaged as a short-term solution and are seen in all urban centres. Most often, such sites offer accommodation for 2-3 days, access to sanitary facilities, meals, and basic assistance for people in transit, in other words, emergency aid for a couple of first days of stay. In late spring 2022, such facilities still hosted people in transit; there were also cases of individuals staying there for several weeks. According to experts, the halls should be maintained as the fastest response to an unexpected crisis.

The halls can permanently serve as sites hosting people coming from Ukraine who wish to stay overnight; mind you, the migration movement had not stopped. For example, on 4 September, the inbound traffic from Ukraine reached 23.2 thousand people. Based on the data of the Polish Border Guard, approx. 20 thousand people from Ukraine have been entering Poland every day for several weeks now.



CITIES' PERSPECTIVE

The number of people in shelter halls is decreasing. According to data obtained from some UMP cities, in early May, it was roughly 300-500 people in Poznań and Gdańsk, over 500 people

in Białystok, 1.4 thousand people in Wrocław (with over 2 thousand available

places). Bydgoszcz has “eight hotels with approx. one thousand refugees as the primary measure to provide shelter”¹⁴.

“The shelter halls in Wrocław are for overnight stays of up to 2-3 days; they are occupied mainly by people who come straight from the border. ... Larger halls are being closed, they are no longer needed; but we are able to restore their shelter function within 12 hours. Now, collective accommodation establishments are the most accessible and quickest way to provide shelter to refugees that Wrocław Municipality can offer. Premises recovered by the municipality from former tenants require refurbishment, often a thorough one. In other words, the city does not have any habitable premises that would be ready to accept refugees right away”¹⁵.



RISKS

The main risks related to the operation of shelter halls are the worsening accommodation standard (e.g. insufficient supplies, insufficient sanitary condition, wear and tear, insufficient availability of medical assistance, too few volunteers, etc.) and mental and social problems

¹⁴. UMP's internal data.

¹⁵. Memo from the meeting of the UMP Settlement Committee, 24 April 2022.

that their residents may suffer from. The absence of psychological consultancy and solutions supporting mental hygiene (e.g. no privacy, excessive stimulation, lack of control over the environment) may be particularly severe for individuals displaying symptoms of post-traumatic stress. Staying in shelter halls for more than a few days generates unwanted psychological effects, increased aggression, difficulties in maintaining basic social contacts (the so-called behavioural marsh), even in people without particularly traumatic experience.

Long-term stay in shelter halls is particularly acute among individuals with special needs: single seniors, people with mental illnesses, people with profound disabilities, terminally ill people. The lack of alternative systemic solutions makes such people stay in shelter halls for many weeks and struggle with conditions that do not match their specific needs.

Prolonged stay in shelter halls is particularly acute for people with special needs

Moving shelter halls to suburban districts poses the following risks of spatial and social marginalisation:

- a more distant location makes it difficult or impossible for volunteers to reach the site;
- less social control over events taking place in halls (fewer volunteers, fewer journalists, fewer observers);
- limited access to spontaneous collections and assistance points due to the distance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Experts agree that the standards of operation of shelter halls (including flexibility of capacity) should be set at the national level, and collective accommodation establishments should stand by in case the situation in Ukraine deteriorates, and a new influx of refugees is seen.

Regardless of the choice of emergency and collective accommodation, certain standards should be respected, which are prioritised by international aid organisations:

- Shelter must offer protection, living space, a place to keep own belongings, and a sense of security and privacy.
- The equipment should include blankets, bed linen, towels, and should be

supplemented as needed.

- Shelter should not lead to the separation of families and should
- Be conducive to conduct in line with cultural and social standards.
- Shelter should be adaptable to seasonal adjustments.
- Wherever possible, refugees should be invited to get involved in running the site. As a result, they will have a sense of influence over how the place is adapted to their needs; they will regain agency and assume responsibility for the place¹⁶.

Regardless of what standards are implemented, shelter halls should be regarded as short-term stay facilities. This is not only because of the low comfort of living in such places but also due to the full dependence of residents on the staff. For them, the hall is a place to sleep and secures all their basic needs, but at the same time, it isolates (protects) them from the challenges of social life. Psychologists studying collective traumas, for example, caused by forced relocation in a war situation, point out that in the circumstances of crisis, shelters and forms of assistance should take care of certain psychological needs: a sense of security, emotional balancing, a sense of agency (at the individual and communi-

ty level), a sense of belonging to a greater community, keeping hope, etc.

In the long term, failure to meet these needs during a crisis can lead to helplessness and excessive dependence on institutional aid. Therefore, it is worth taking systematic action aimed to relocate shelter residents in a manner that is compatible with urban policies and ensures of refugees' autonomy.

Another thing to consider is how to keep such places ready at low cost, and how to reorganise shelters that have been operating so far to raise the residents' standard of living. For this purpose, certain minimum standards should be established that would fit the Polish conditions.

Failure to meet certain needs during a crisis can lead to helplessness and excessive dependence on institutional aid.

¹⁶ UNHCR's Emergency shelter standard

USE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

This solution enables quick rearrangement of office space and preparation of a building to a new function without having to refurbish it (“beds for desks”). It does not require conversion or permanent change of purpose of buildings. The use of existing community facilities (public buildings) is not a popular solution. Today, this form of housing is gradually disappearing.



CITIES' PERSPECTIVE

In Wrocław... The train station building has been converted into a night shelter. The gallery of the Bureau of Art Exhibitions is filled with beds; the neighbouring library has turned into an assistance point for mothers with children. The librarians stopped loaning books last week. They are now volunteers¹⁷.” (Wrocław)



RISKS

The main risk linked to this solution is the prolonged time of living in collective shelter facilities, often below certain standards. Moreover, such facilities tend to be underequipped; their spatial layout is inconvenient for the residents and diffi-

¹⁷. From an article in the Polityka weekly, 10 March 2022.

cult to control by the site operator.

In many cases, spontaneous adaptation of a community site prevents the host institution (library, community centre, etc.) from performing its original functions, which may be a source of dissatisfaction for some city residents. In addition, serving the hosted refugees and maintaining the place in its new function often becomes a new job for the institution personnel.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Wherever possible and mindful of the current situation, such facilities should be restored their original functions and should open up to regular urban users. One of the discussed ideas is to keep some of such sites (best adapted ones) as refugee shelters and diversify them. Accommodation could be offered to individuals somehow linked to the programme and operation of the institution, e.g. an artistic residence in a community centre. The same approach can be applied to education personnel, healthcare professionals, etc. One of the actual examples of this type of shelter arrangement is the solution proposed by the Centre of Polish Sculpture in Orońsko. The facility offers accommodation to Ukrainian sculpture artists and their families. Site availability depends on the number of currently hosted persons: accommodation in 1-, 2-,

3- or 4-bed rooms, pocket money, free access to specialist workshop sessions (ceramics, carpentry, smithy), free access to specialist equipment and tools, free access to an open-plan studio (200 m²), free access to the gallery and library and, if necessary, administrative support, curation support, assistance in establishing contacts with the artistic community. A declaration of Ukrainian origin and the date of crossing the Ukrainian border must be provided; besides, the resident must demonstrate their artistic output or portfolio (e.g. by sharing a link to his or her social media or website) and submit a cover letter.

HOLIDAY FACILITIES, DORMITORIES

Some of the refugees are currently being hosted in various types of holiday facilities, dormitories, and school residence halls. This is only a temporary solution. Many of such sites have no kitchens, so the residents need to rely on delivered meals. A similar solution is the use of Airbnb resources currently offering a maximum 30-day subsidized stay for refugees.



CITIES' PERSPECTIVE

121 Ukrainian women and their children have found a new home in the Tossta Hotel in Bydgoszcz. It is largely thanks to donors. The hotel management say that they will help as long as it is needed. The women and children came here at the beginning of March. Now, they are saying that it is their home, although they hope to return to their real homes in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odessa, Kramatorsk if only possible¹⁸.

In Poznań we have fewer and fewer collective accommodation establishments; therefore, we refer refugees to smaller guesthouses and hostels outside Poznań. These sites are not used for other purposes. They are much more comfortable for Ukrainian nationals

¹⁸. From an article from the Nasze Miasto daily from Bydgoszcz, 29 from 2022.

because they can contain around 30-40 and not 300 people¹⁹.



RISKS

Depending on the standard of accommodation and its organisation, residents may feel better or worse. There are differences in terms of availability of kitchen equipment, washing machines, etc., so not all of them have a chance to be on their own in everyday routines (e.g. dining, washing). The spatial layout also determines whether it is possible to live a normal family life, maintain privacy, maintain preferred social contacts, or experience a sense of security.

The availability of such establishments will fluctuate along the holiday season. There may be an added pressure from the tourism industry to restore the original commercial function of such sites at the outset of the summer season.

A side effect of the use of holiday facilities and dormitories by refugees may be an increase in accommodation fees in the tourism industry and a greater pressure from university students seeking lodgings in university cities at the beginning of the new academic year.



RECOMMENDATIONS

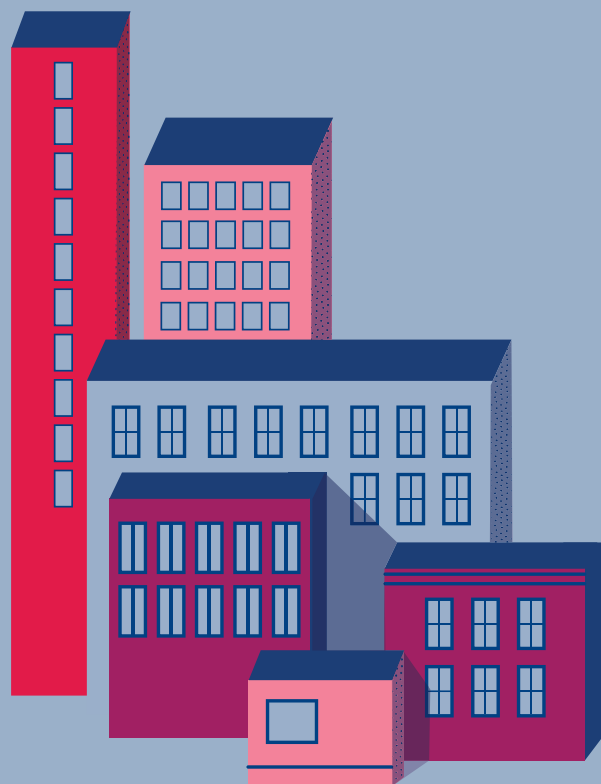
It can be expected that smaller and well-

¹⁹. UMP's internal data

equipped holiday establishments (with kitchens, washing machines, bathrooms, etc.) will remain active on the rental market by offering short or long-term stay on near-commercial terms. Other than fully commercial use of tourism infrastructure to accommodate refugees would require continuous government funding that would allow hotel owners to maintain liquidity in the long term. It should be kept in mind that, from the viewpoint of refugees, the infrastructure in the area of residence should ensure day care and education facilities for children, access to healthcare services, efficient public transport, and access to jobs, which would permit refugees to become independent. It is not necessarily so in locations previously focused mainly on tourist attendance; such cases require careful consideration by local authorities ●

The infrastructure in the area of residence should ensure day care and education facilities for children, access to healthcare services, efficient public transport, and access to jobs, which would permit refugees to become independent.

TEMPORARY HOUSING



It is expected that, after a few days or weeks, some refugees will start looking for a place to stay “until the end of the war.” Currently, the legislators sets the timeframe of 18 months of legal residence in Poland for refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine. Given such a long-term perspective, it is not possible to stay in a collective shelter hall or to share a flat with a Polish family; also, the pool of premises for rent is also limited. Therefore, the need to find new forms of temporary housing becomes paramount.

Many interviewed experts stress that over the next year or so it will not be possible to offer independent housing to refugee families in the desired number in large cities. Therefore, solutions considered alternative to standard, individual and independent housing should be sought. It will also be necessary to set the terms for providing this type of support, as well as initiating new forms of cooperation with non-governmental organisations other than those rendering humanitarian aid. It seems that this medium-term perspective poses the greatest challenge for territorial governments.

SHARING HOME WITH A REFUGEE FAMILY

In response to the humanitarian crisis, in the first weeks of the war, many residents of Polish cities decided to host Ukrainian refugees fleeing the war in their homes. According to the estimates of the UMP, until the end of April 2022, approx. 525 thousand Ukrainians found shelter in private premises in the UMP cities²⁰.

Due to the spontaneous nature of this response, some of the hosts accepted refugee families without a careful analysis of their own financial or housing capabilities, assuming that they were offering temporary shelter for a few days or weeks. As a result, many refugees ended up in very different living standards (e.g. no separate room).

CITIES' PERSPECTIVE

Incomplete data held by cities and concerning various welfare and financial aspect comes from information collected in connection with 40+ applications.

20. Wojdat, M., Cywiński, P. (April 2022). Urban Hospitality: Unprecedented Growth, Challenges, and Opportunities. A Report on Ukrainian Refugees in the Largest Polish Cities. Analysis and Research Centre of the Union of Polish Metropolises and Sobierajski, T., Sobestjańska A., Sopińska, A., Kuszewska M. (August 2022). Neighbourly Help. Inhabitants of the 12 Largest Polish Cities on Helping Refugees from Ukraine. UMP Research and Analysis Centre.

The 40+ programme is a cash benefit (PLN 40 a day per hosted refugee) paid to property owners for providing accommodation and meals to Ukrainian nationals staying in the territory of the Republic of Poland in connection with hostilities going on in the territory of Ukraine. The number of 40+ applications submitted until the end of April:

Białystok: 515, the applications are mostly submitted for three people.

Bydgoszcz: 1284, the applications are mostly submitted for two people.

Gdańsk: 1948, the applications are mostly submitted for two or three people.

Poznań: 2107, the applications are usually submitted for two or three people²¹.

RISKS

Sharing a flat with another family can be difficult for both hosts and guests. The hosts need to assume responsibility for the well-being of hosted refugees. Language and cultural differences, let alone more people in the house, do not make things easier. There are cases of conflicts or sudden crises (e.g. related to war traumas) that the hosts are not able to handle. Cases of previously accepted refugees being “thrown out” are not infrequent.

21. UMP's internal data.

Compassion fatigue among hosts is a fact. There are fewer and fewer owners willing to lend a place to refugees. Some refugees are forced to move to other temporary sites (e.g. back to shelter halls).

In a conversation with the mayor of Katowice on 21 April, the representatives of the UNHCR learned that the residents of Katowice who were hosting refugees said that they would no longer be able to do so. Therefore, the territorial government was forced to work out another medium- and long-term solution. The UNHCR reported similar feedback from in Lublin and Kraków²².

Poles hosting refugees are already tired and frustrated. Social media and the press report that Ukrainian nationals are forced to move homes more and more often. Therefore, this kind of measure (hosting refugees in private homes) is expected to dwindle.

RECOMMENDATIONS

At this point, this solution should be approached as transitional and as “buying time.” Straightforward and really useful support for host families can buy refugees from a few to several weeks; over this time, other and more appropriate and sustainable solutions should be put

22. MEETING MINUTES UNHCR Basic Needs Working Group - Poland April 2022.

in place. Support for Polish citizens who have accepted refugees is also crucial for social reasons. A positive experience of hosting Ukrainian guests will strengthen Poles' readiness to help people from Ukraine in the long term. In contrast, a negative experience and a sense of being abandoned by the authorities in the face of a problem will not only fuel prejudices but is likely to reduce the overall motivation to help, empathy, and civic involvement in other areas.

The most clear-cut solutions come in the form of financial support (40+ programme), but they have been closed. No less important is psychological support or consultancy for property owners hosting refugees. They can take the form of regular, open self-help groups, for example, to help draft a "contract" between the host and guest. The key to the success of this solution is regular meetings (e.g. weekly), a low entry threshold (e.g. the only criterion is hosting a refugee family; no need to sign up) and the presence of a trained adviser (e.g. facilitator).

In addition to identifying people and institutions in the city that could provide such services, it is worth drafting a standard conversation script for civil servants to learn how to address certain issues that are likely to surface when talking to individuals applying for assistance. Such a script would help identify crisis situations and generally monitor how the solution works at the local level

(district, city). In the event of conflict situations where neither the host nor guests can find a satisfying solution, it would be useful to hire a mediator available to both parties (and bilingual).

STAYING WITH ONE'S UKRAINIAN FAMILY OR FRIENDS

Before the war, many people from Ukraine working in Poland would rent apartments, houses, and rooms on commercial terms. After 24 February 2022, many of these people accepted their families and friends fleeing the war at their homes. Some refugees may be able to stay longer (even until the end of the war) with their Ukrainian relatives or friends who settled in Poland some time ago.



CITIES' PERSPECTIVE

During talks, city representatives pointed to possible forms of support for residents providing assistance: "first, by assuming responsibility for managing all this...; second, by providing information, referring Ukrainian citizens to appropriate services and institutions; third, by collecting food and other livelihoods for Ukrainian families; four, by exempting the hosting families from fees and taxes (garbage collection, water, sewage, real property tax). The question is who is go-

ing to pay for it." (Kraków)

"Ukrainian nationals could obtain something like food vouchers to decide on their own what they want to buy; this will no longer be a financial burden for the host who shares their house or apartment because they want to.

Therefore, the amount awarded for accommodation alone will reduce the amount of benefit to be paid²³." (Poznań)



RISKS

At this stage, it is impossible to measure how many refugees will continue to be hosted by their Ukrainian relatives and friends living in Poland. Likewise, it is not easy to tell whether this solution is durable, and what social and psychological consequences it entails. It can be expected that more people sharing the same premises significantly reduce the standard of living in the long run, yet there is no data to infer whether and when the hosted refugees will suffer from the severe consequences of this form of accommodation or will be forced to move out.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Various forms of support need to be made available to people who have decided to host Ukrainian refugees.

²³. UMP's internal data

It is needed for pragmatic reasons. Reduced number of refugees to be accommodated in municipal resources means more dispersed housing, which is the best way, from the cities' perspective, to ensure integration of refugee families and entails hosts' involvement in the process, as well as building refugee autonomy.

The International Red Cross and the Red Crescent have produced a separate report²⁴ on the subject of support for refugees by families and individuals.

This solution is rarely addressed in a systemic context and is rarely supported; however, it is one of the most effective methods of support: private people are usually the first to help and their help comes faster than the systemic support of large organizations or state administration and may last longer than any formal programmes. The quality of the support rendered by private individuals depends on the general level of development of civil society and preparedness of local authorities and aid organisations.

The major challenges to overcome when pursuing this solution are now the monitoring (regular collection of data) of the scale and nature of the phenomenon and hosts' limited resources (including

financial and mental).

Several aspects of the recommended solutions are noteworthy:

1. Solidarity family: refugees and their host family should be regarded as a single entity, and any forms of support should cover this entire system.
2. Participation: refugees and their host families must establish the rules of distribution of external aid before it is actually delivered. These rules should be written down and confirmed by competent local authorities.
3. Benefits due to a host family should depend on whether they are still sheltering refugees. This is to maintain a balance of power between refugees and hosts.
4. Support for host families and their guests may be in the form of kits, i.e. fixed sets of specific useful tools or items (e.g. to enable the performance of a specific work; intended for people with special needs, such as sets of baby products; to facilitate return to the country of origin, e.g. sets of materials for renewing/refurbishing a house) or financial support (e.g. one-time payments to buy a vehicle, to pay a deposit for independent accommodation, or to be expended for any purpose).
5. The existing assistance points for

refugees and host should be maintained, and new ones should be established. Step by step, their operation should be standardised. Also, information campaigns about such points should be designed at the city/municipal level. Ultimately, it is worth gathering information on refugees' and hosts' permanent needs and build the assistance response based on that. In this solution, accessibility and regular and predictable assistance are of great importance.

„Solidarity family” – refugees and their host family should be regarded as a single entity.

24. Assisting Host Families and Communities after Crises and Natural Disasters. A Step-by-Step Guide (2012). International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

INDEPENDENT ACCOMMODATION LENT FOR USE

This solution entails the free (or low-cost) lending of independent premises for use by refugees. Apparently, this system covers residential property owned by Poles, often fitted with necessary equipment/fittings but not available on the rental market previously.

This solution seems most dependent on financial support for the owners, and it is likely to gradually disappear or evolve towards the renting of premises on near-commercial terms.

According to experts, one of the popular issues that come with this form of housing is the absence of clear and agreed terms of lending, written down, for example, as a contract. Consequently, both owners (lenders) and refugees may feel uncertain about the timeframe of the arrangement or who is responsible for the upkeep or potential damage caused on the premises. Owners may have concerns about whether they can continue to exercise full control over their property; residents may complain about uncertainty in their situation and the inability to plan or make commitments in the medium and long term (e.g. accepting a job offer in the area or putting children in an educational institution).

RISKS

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Both financial and non-financial support can work in this solution. The financial one may include maintaining or even increasing subsidies for lenders (the 40+ programme).

The non-financial forms of support may focus on the balanced protection of

interests of both refugees and lenders, for example, by suggesting model contracts containing provisions that would be consulted with lawyers and fair. They would set the terms of lending for use. Establishment of consultation points should be considered. Both refugees and lenders might go there to learn about their rights and obligations, when the lending arrangement can or cannot be terminated, or how to find a balance between the refugees' right to shelter and the owner's right to dispose of their own property. Another thing is to how to secure the lender's interest in terms of damage caused by tenants.

A mechanism to keep property lent for use available to current tenants is also worth considering. Owners might be encouraged to move from lending to secure rental, for example, through social rental agencies. This would put this kind of housing stock in the permanent housing category.

COHOUSING

In search of housing solutions that would prove the most effective in the current situation, experts often stress the need to reach for new forms of accommodation. One of the solutions in the area of alternative housing, cohousing (also co-living) is worth considering. In this type of accommodation, private space may be relatively small (e.g. a studio unit or a small apartment), and common areas are shared by all community members following certain rules.

The private space in cohousing establishments contains most of the basic functions: bedroom, bathroom, and kitchenette, yet smaller than in traditional apartments. Common areas are key, e.g. a large kitchen and dining room, laundry, playrooms, guest rooms, studios, reading/living room, shared outdoor spaces (playgrounds). The option of spending time together, preparing meals and sharing childcare, which is a regular part of cohousing life, seems to be particularly appealing, given the demographic characteristic of refugee families. Such solutions help foster neighbourly relations, community control, a sense of security and the possibility of social assistance.



CITIES' PERSPECTIVE

We refurbish large apartments to offer co-rental options (several families in one apartment); we want to refurbish 200-300 vacant premises per year. As regards subsidised housing, especially large apartments can be converted into shared flats with shared family rooms, bathroom, and kitchen. (Kraków)

We have a pool of large-size apartments, some of which could be handed over to refugees. But given their technical condition, they are not suitable for tenants without prior refurbishment. After renewal, these premises could be transferred to NGOs that undertake to shelter Ukrainian nationals in them. The question is who pays for the refurbishment and from what budget. And what amount of money are we talking about to encourage NGOs to join this scheme. (Poznań)

The process of creating accommodation space is different and depends on the target structure or building. Erecting a multi-family building is an investment project taking about three years. It covers the design stage, formal arrangements, and the construction proper. On the other hand, adaptation of existing premises depends on the infrastructure available on the spot. In some cases, where a building has kitchen facilities,

toilets and showers, adaptation takes weeks or months (there may be a need

for extra refurbishment). (Warsaw)

There are ideas and initiatives of external entities to provide housing for refugees. The city is open to cooperation, especially with public benefit organisations. They can take over large-size municipal premises and refurbish them, which will significantly speed up preparations for accepting first tenants²⁵. (Wrocław)



RISKS

To make sure that cohousing works, appropriate tenant selection criteria must be put in place, preferably ignoring the financial aspect. It is risky to create a cohousing scheme for people who are dependent on financial aid; this can cause problems known from container towns (social exclusion and stigmatisation). The criteria should increase the chances of creating a financially independent, diverse and resilient community. Depending on the chosen spatial and social configuration of a cohousing establishment, it may resemble a student residence hall or a retirement home.

Depending on the target configuration, there may be different risks related to, for example, the resilience and self-sufficiency of the community. There is also a risk behind the participatory model of community management, in which the residents assume most of the duties. It

25. UMP's internal data.

is worth pondering upon what know-how, skills, and types of support the local authorities can offer to community members to make the scheme resilient enough.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Pay attention that cohousing is not only an architectural design but also a social process that involves the building of a community based on cooperation and close, and even friendly, neighbourly relations. In many already completed cohousing projects (including in Denmark, Great Britain, the Netherlands), future residents were invited to participate in the process of planning and organising their estate. Together they decided about the purpose and regulations of using certain shared spaces; they also determined the terms of entering or leaving the community. Each community agreed how to take care of the cohousing site, how to divide responsibilities, what duties would be shared, and what should remain part of the private sphere.

Some of the cohoused communities would agree on contributions to a community budget to help satisfy some community needs, such as minor repairs and renovations, childcare, basic foodstuffs. This form of self-help may be relevant, given irregular income of some

refugee families²⁶.

The experience of western European countries shows that cohousing can stem from a grassroots initiative of housing organisations or local government units. They recruit residents according to specific criteria that reflect the character of the given cohousing project. There are numerous examples of adapting existing facilities to serve as cohousing space.

Cohousing is not only an architectural design but also a social process that involves the building of a community based on cooperation and close, and even friendly, neighbourly relations

26. McCamant K., Durrett Ch. (2003). Cohousing, A contemporary approach to housing ourselves. Ten Speed Press; 2nd edition

CONTAINER/MODULAR TOWNS

The concept of container towns triggers negative associations and recalls bad experiences related to this type of solutions, otherwise popular in the context of social housing. Hanna Gil-Piątek, Polish politician and MP, spent three days in a container town in Szczecin. Her experience was widely covered by the mass-media and shows the actual social attitude to this kind of solutions, *“Nobody knows how many people live in the containers. They say that this is a penal colony for evicted families and individuals. Of course, Polish law does not provide for any form of banishment, but the approach of municipalities is not far from that. Some say that it is a destination for single men who are aggressive, do not pay their liabilities, cause damage and destruction. But when you actually go there, you will see families or single women with several children, people with some degree of mental disability, physically disabled individuals, seniors. In other words, people who got into trouble because welfare services had failed to address their needs at a right time. In addition, the residents are intimidated and stigmatised for being part of this radical housing system²⁷.”* Similar opinions about container towns

27. From the article, “Mieszkała przez trzy dni w kontenerze na placu Orła Białego. Teraz została posłanką.” Wyborcza.pl, Szczecin, 26 October 2019.

as places of exclusion are voiced in the publication, *Solidarnie przeciw biedzie, Socjologiczno-pedagogiczny przyczynek do nowych rozwiązań starego problemu* [Solidarity against poverty. A sociological and educational contribution to new solutions to an old problem]²⁸.

Few experts even consider this solution as viable. Only some, among them the sociologist Dr Radosław Poniak, indicate that in a situation of shortage of housing, it may be the only practical and available solution²⁹. It seems that we are witnessing such a situation at the moment.

EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION

An example of a modular town project is *Re:Ukraine* by designers from the Ukrainian Balbek studio. Having studied 20 refugee camps in different parts of the world, the designers created a “temporary but decent” space for internally displaced people in Ukraine. Their plan is to build modular room systems with an area of 21 m² each with living rooms, kitchens, bathrooms, and shared space.

The designers paid much attention to how the containers should be laid out in the site area to meet residents' social needs. The first project will be most likely implemented between the towns of Bucha and Irpin in the Kyiv region. According to the original design, the houses will accommodate from 1,300 to 5,000 people who were displaced from the area ruined by the Russian army. The staff of the Balbek studio say that the complex could be completed in four to five months³⁰.

A more temporary project has already been completed in Lviv, which has received over 300 thousand refugees since the outbreak of the war. Stryiskyi Park in Lviv has been become home to a container town for refugees from various parts of Ukraine. It consists of 88 heated, furnished, and powered containers. The site was prepared by the Lviv authorities, and the residential modules, along with the entire equipment, were provided by the Polish Strategic Reserves Agency. The town is occupied by university students who fled from eastern Ukraine, as well as single mothers with children. The number of residents is close to 350³¹.”

A system of residential containers for families and people with disabilities is being assembled in Bondyryz and Biało-brzegi, near Zamość. In total, 50 people will move into the containers (or “little houses” as Maria Król, head of the Step-by-Step Aid Association for Children with Disabilities, prefers to refer to them) adapted to the needs of the disabled in Zamość. “Refugees are offered shelter and more than that. Children with disabilities receive therapy and rehabilitation. The residents can also work with a psychologist. Next to well-adapted habitat, we can also provide them with access to the rehabilitation facilities at our disposal. They can use it freely, thus mitigating the difficulties of everyday life. ... Obviously, you cannot live like that for ever. But once the family becomes more independent, and someone starts working, they will be able to rent a place. Or perhaps, they will go home³².”

28. Boryczko, M., Frysztański, K., Kotlarska-Michalska, A., Mendel, M. (2016). *Solidarnie przeciw biedzie, Socjologiczno-pedagogiczny przyczynek do nowych rozwiązań starego problemu*, European Solidarity Centre
29. An article by Aneta Boruch, *Kontenerowe Osiedla Socjalne*, Kurier Poranny, 3 July 2008

30. An article by Mateusz Ćwierz, *W rejonie Buczy ma powstać nowy kompleks mieszkalny*. Żelenski spotkał się z architektami”, 27 April 2022, noizz.pl.

31. An article by Jarosław Kosmatka, *We Lwowie stanęło miasteczko kontenerowe dla uchodźców*, 19 April 2022, radiolodz.pl

32. An article by Anna Gmiterek-Zabłocka, *To pierwsze takie kontenerowe osiedle dla uchodźców. Chcemy bezpiecznie przeczekać wojnę i wrócić do domu*, 9 May 2022, tokfm.pl.

RISKS

Non-governmental organisations defending tenants' rights protest against container towns³³ as purely social accommodation, which has been the case so far. Activists highlight adverse social consequences of this approach:

- **Segregation** – increased social disparities, generation of multi-generational poverty, stigmatisation of people in a crisis (“penalty for debt”), reinforcement of prejudices, vulnerability to vandalism and aggression by the “ordinary” residents of the area
- **Spatial mismatch**³⁴ – impeded access to public and commercial services, mainly due to peripheral and insufficiently connected locations, difficulties in finding a job (long, troublesome, expensive commuting)

33. An essay by Katarzyna Czarnota and Sebastian Miłkołajczak, Kontenery: polityka wykluczenia, rozbrat.org, 1 October 2008

34. Spatial mismatch is a spatial, economic, and political phenomenon. In spatial mismatch, jobs for people with the lowest social and financial status are very distant from their place of residence. By extension, they are forced to devote a lot of time and spend money on commuting at the expense of satisfying other important needs. Such circumstances often lead to resignation and helplessness and reinforce negative stereotypes, e.g. in employers. These factors create a spiral of social and spatial exclusion.

- **Difficult living conditions** – high costs of living, low standards of construction, ventilation, insulation, hygiene; often fences and monitoring are installed, which creates the image of a ghetto³⁵
- **Problems caused by employing the cheapest possible construction technology** – containers are poorly insulated (high heating costs) and ventilated, which means excessive moisture, mould, and fragmentation of structural elements; poor workmanship; poor acoustics (serious intrusion into privacy). Poor living conditions result in residents' poor health status.

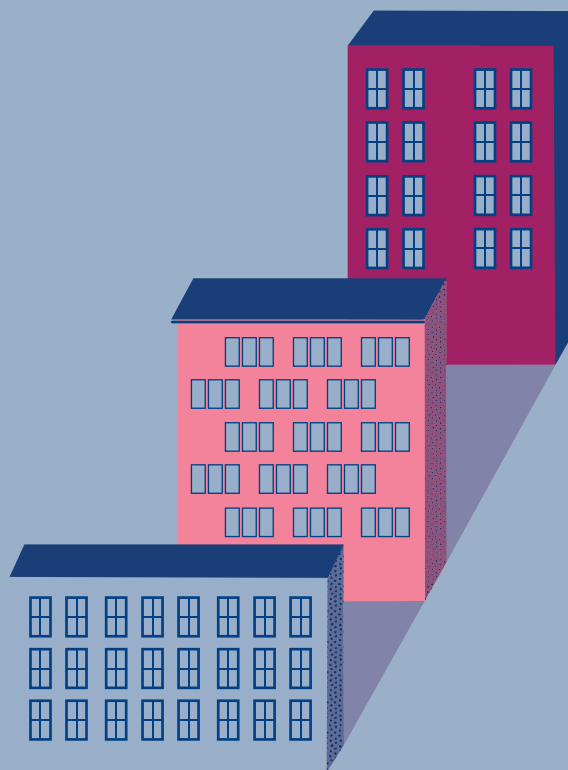
35. In sociological terms, ghetto is a homogeneous urban area inhabited by a specific social group. Ghettoisation can refer to ethnic, economic, religious, or other aspects, or result from specific choices or life circumstances (security estates, prestige estates, lifestyle estates). The negative consequences of ghettoisation are: profound social stratification through the spatial mapping of social differences (division into “the better” and “the worse,” living in “better” and “worse” neighbourhood); fragmentation of urban space, i.e. physical or symbolic limitation of availability of public spaces for people from outside a specific group (e.g. fenced housing enclaves); fostering a sense of threat, especially in fenced housing estates; marginalisation or exclusion of ghetto residents, especially in peripheral locations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Modular or container towns, if only a decent standard of implementation of such projects is ensured, may prove to be one of the few realistic solutions of creating a large number of residential premises relatively quickly. Initiatives of providing housing for refugees from Ukraine in modular towns are already there. The location and size of a modular or container town are just as important as the standard of workmanship. Locations that are well connected with the city centre, with appropriate childcare infrastructure, and offering options of satisfying everyday needs not far from home are conducive to social integration. The size of such a town should facilitate people-to-people relations, which will further strengthen the sense of security and encourage activities benefiting the community ●

Modular or container towns may prove to be one of the few realistic solutions of creating a large number of residential premises relatively quickly.

PERMANENT HOUSING



Permanent housing solutions are intended for those who will decide to stay in Poland for good and become part of the Polish society: attend to Polish schools, be active on the Polish labour market, benefit from own education and professional competence. Therefore, the main goal and criterion when choosing permanent housing will be the capability of satisfying life needs.

Adequate, permanent accommodation, as one of the central needs of refugees, will facilitate social integration and encourage independence. One of the main challenges for cities will be to support the functioning of refugee families and their housing needs; this, however, should be done in such a way as to defuse social tensions.

PERMANENT HOUSING FROM MUNICIPAL RESOURCES

It is quite probable that some part of or perhaps numerous refugees will decide to stay in Poland on a permanent basis. Polish self-governments, economists, and sociologists name many positive consequences of such a scenario.

We assume that our response will be to offer permanent housing, such as independent houses or apartments available for an indefinite period. What a long-term perspective means for refugees who decide to live in Poland will be defined by the legislator, and this law will also bind Polish citizens. In other words, refugees will follow the same procedures and will wait for assistance in the form of housing from municipal resources or housing subsidies as Polish citizens do.



CITIES' PERSPECTIVE

(...) we expect that some of the refugees fleeing the war will wish to stay in Warsaw permanently and will be looking for premises to rent or purchase on their own; groups that will not be able to satisfy their housing needs on their own will apply for assistance (for municipal or

TBS housing resources) just like other citizens. (Warsaw)
There are tensions, indeed; for example, the Polish Development Fund has announced that 480 municipal apartments prepared for Polish families will be occupied temporarily by Ukrainians. People complain more and more that Ukrainians enjoy more rights than Poles. The solution is completely separate financing and pre-financing outside the remit of the territorial government. When the UNHCR undertook to pay for the construction of a shelter facility for Ukrainians in Kraków, it was welcomed as giving something extra and not as something away from Poles. If something is funded from external, non-governmental sources, it is perceived as strengthening and broadening certain options without denying similar advantages to Poles. (Kraków)

Our apartment stock is not enough even to serve our existing clients. So, we will not be offering apartments from our stock that are intended for "Poznań" clients to Ukrainian nationals. (Poznań)

Such tensions are inevitable if someone is waiting for accommodation. It is natural that people on a waiting list for an apartment are concerned about getting it later because a war refugee needs to get it first. It is necessary to reassure those who wait that the expected assistance will be provided in line with the original sequence,

and then, of course, do not to withdraw from help. Regardless of nationality and origin, everyone should have equal access to housing from municipal resources. However, too many people from Ukraine applying for an apartment will generate problems, so it will be necessary to seek the support of the government to increase the housing stock or refurbish existing premises. (Warsaw)³⁶.



RISKS

Even Poles lack knowledge about legal regulations and specific forms of support regarding housing that residents are entitled to. Foreigners find it difficult to understand regulations on tenancy or access to premises from municipal resources. In addition to the complexity of relevant laws, an additional obstacle will be to collect documents that demonstrate financial credibility or confirm the fulfilment of certain social criteria. One of the objectives at the local level will therefore be to prepare and distribute an information pack among refugees, so that they would be capable of initiating certain procedures on their own.

An extremely important question raised in discussions on rental of premises from municipal resources is the communication of the territorial government with residents in the face of challenges related to the shortage of housing supply. Experts studying prejudice point out

³⁶. UMP's internal material

that the phase of sincere involvement in helping war refugees will be followed by a phase of measuring the consequences of their influx. While in the first phase the most important values were: solidarity, humanitarianism, or empathy, the next phase will see competition for limited resources, in this case housing. Interviewed by OKO. press³⁷, Prof. Paweł Kaczmarczyk points out: *“The lack of communication with Polish men and women regarding migration will have severe consequences. We will have overloaded public institutions, meaning restricted access to services, problems with housing, healthcare, and child-care institutions, such as nurseries and kindergartens. I am not sure if Poles will understand the fact of accepting 2 million refugees and designing special solutions for them. Will they be able to see why Poland allocates some taxpayers’ money to social benefits for newcomers?”*

RECOMMENDATIONS

In this situation, it is key to design a coherent communication strategy with residents, conveying four basic messages:

- **What we are doing is aligned with the urban policy**, that is, any temporary or target investment projects

37. Magdalena Chrzczonowicz’s interview with Prof. Paweł Kaczmarczyk, “Jeżeli rząd nie stworzy dobrego komunikatu o migracji, na wątpliwości Polaków odpowiedzą populiści,” 4 April 2022, oko.press.

and working towards allocating housing resources to refugees are consistent with the adopted development line, consistent with the strategy, local spatial development plans, and do not hinder city’s development

- **What we are doing benefits our community in the short term**, that is, the presence of refugees has a positive impact on the local market (e.g. local shops, as these people hardly own cars); it will generate new jobs; refugees can find employment in entities that struggle with understaffing (they are not only unskilled workers; there are highly qualified people among them, such as teachers, medical doctors, etc.)
- **What we are doing will benefits our residents in the long term**, that is, we will be able to test some innovative solutions (e.g. modular towns, cohousing for young people, new road solutions); when the war is over and Ukraine recovers, the accommodation facilities will serve Poles, e.g. struggling with the problem of homelessness (modular towns) or left alone after the death of parents or guardians (cohousing).³⁸
- **Because of what we are doing, we can rely on additional sources**

38. An article by Anny Szewc, “Osiedla kontenerowe powstaną pod Zamościem,” 21 April 2022, dziennikwschodni.pl.

of support, that is, we are going to receive financial and organisational assistance; we implement more and better-quality investment projects; we have access to extra sources of funding to satisfy the needs of our community.

Any activities for refugees are communicated primarily as extraordinary measures organised and financed from sources outside the territorial government. There must be a clear separation (in terms of the subject-matter and finance) between initiatives for refugees and activities for indigenous residents. It should be highlighted how the local residents will benefit (some refugees will return to Ukraine, and the facilities and opportunities will remain). The advantages of refugee presence should be underlined (not only pride and a sense of doing something good, but also younger society, people willing to work where Poles do not want to, more tax money and charges paid to strengthen Polish institutions, e.g. social insurance institution, taxes, and local fees). (Kraków).³⁹

An important question is the communication of the territorial government with residents in the face of the shortage of housing supply.

39. UMP’s internal data.

COMMERCIAL HOUSING

Some better-off refugees, either with savings or employed in Poland or remotely in Ukraine, decided to rent a flat on commercial terms. Real property market experts agree that the availability of residential premises for rent has decreased dramatically since March 2022, especially in large cities, and rental fees are rising rapidly.



CITIES' PERSPECTIVE

The number of apartments rented by refugees on commercial terms is very difficult to estimate. Our cities do not have such data. Judging by the surge in rental fees in large cities, it can be inferred that this housing solution is popular among some people fleeing Ukraine.

"Fewer apartments on the market and growing demand from Ukrainians are pushing up fees. The number of active ads on rooms or flats for rent on the Otodom website has dropped by as much as 58% compared to the week before Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Cheap premises in large cities are in greatest demand. This is driven by the influx of refugees from Ukraine who are looking for shelter. ...On 7 March, the number of rental searches on the Otodom website was by as much as 166% higher than on 24 February, i.e. on the first day of

Russian aggression against Ukraine. Declining supply and rapidly growing demand cause fees to skyrocket⁴⁰." "Real property market experts point out that the increase in rental fees in large cities (compared to the fees from the previous year) is from several to even approx. 40% in Warsaw or Wrocław. These surges are seen especially in small apartments of up to 60 m²⁴¹."



RISKS

It is difficult to estimate how many of Ukrainian nationals will be able to stay in this type of housing for long; much depends on employment opportunities close to the place of residence and, in the case of many women, availability of childcare.

There is also a high risk of speculation and upping rental fees for people "who have nowhere else to go."

Fast-rising rental fees and the shrinking housing stock, coinciding with the collapse of the mortgage market, reduce the availability of housing, both for refugees and for Polish citizens.

40. An article, "Mniej dostępnych mieszkań na rynku i rosnący popyt ze strony Ukraińców windują ceny," aleBank.pl

41. Marcin Kaźmierczak "Cenowy rajd w ogłoszeniach najmu mieszkań. Nowy raport Bankier.pl i Otodom" (17.05.2022, bankier.pl). Social and psychological effects of selected housing solutions for refugees from Ukraine.



RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the currently workable solutions is "guaranteed rent." At the end of June, the Senate adopted an amendment to the law on selected forms of supporting housing. The law establishes the so-called social rental agencies (SAN) model, "With the mediation of municipal companies or social organisations, the municipality will be able to provide apartments for rent to members of the local government community who cannot afford to rent or purchase premises on commercial terms: The designed SAN model is intended to mitigate the negative impact of the Covid-19 epidemic on the rental market. Social rental agencies will act as intermediaries between property owners and individuals living off medium or low income who want to rent a flat (Deputy Minister of Development, Labour and Technology Anna Kornecka). SANs will be able to rent apartments below market rates after receiving a guarantee of timely payment of rent, regular use and maintenance of the apartments in good technical condition, and tax exemptions for property owners under an agreement with a SAN.

By offering a long-term tenancy with guaranteed rent, SANs will be able to negotiate reductions in rental fees. Based on experience in foreign countries, reductions may even amount to approx.

20%. An additional incentive for owners to let SAN premises are tax exemptions proposed in the amended law, including VAT⁴².”

RELOCATIONS

Relocation is aimed to encourage refugees to move and stay in medium-sized and small towns. Many such towns struggle with depopulation, and the influx of refugees could provide a development incentive. Small towns have employment opportunities, development potential and infrastructure but not enough people. On the other hand, the largest cities are no longer capable of accepting more refugees in the short term due to limited housing and infrastructure resources.

EXPERTS' VIEW

“Infrastructure-wise, large metropolises are not ready to receive this number of people now. Of course, there are also exhibition venues turned into shelters, like the famous Ptak Expo near Warsaw, but the early assumptions do not necessarily match the present reality. The plan was to keep refugees in such locations for up to several days. Meanwhile, some stay there for weeks. Almost every refugee strives to land in the largest

agglomerations, but the labour market there is not easy to enter.

More apartments for rent by low-income tenants.

First of all, to adjust the capabilities and qualifications of refugees to the needs of the labour market remains a challenge. Apartments for rent are short, and rental fees are prohibitive for most of them; decent job ads attract many applicants. Therefore, having contacted various organisations and local governments in smaller towns, we started to refer refugees to them, thus performing a kind of internal relocation (in addition to our main programme of foreign relocation). Employment in eco tourism and seasonal work is an opportunity, though not the only one. We strive to do it in a more systemic way⁴³.” Additionally, according to the representatives of the Open Dialogue Foundation, residents of smaller towns are often more open, less tired of helping refugees, and more sympathetic towards them.

The foundation designed a campaign in which refugees, who had moved to smaller towns some time before, demonstrated how much they were benefiting from that. A dedicated website was prepared: <https://domivka.pl/>, officially launched on Monday, 22 May. The social campaign covers thematic

events, meetings with municipalities, and networking. An ambitious information campaign was launched, video spots and printed materials were made available. According to the representatives of the foundation,

“Conversation is key. For that reason, we have set up a stand at Warsaw East; we are present in the assistance centre in ul. Modlińska and in Ptak Expo; next week (early June), our volunteers start working in smaller assistance points: in ul. Wolska and Arena Ursynów. We are looking for people who are willing to talk and want to convince them that it is worth moving to a smaller town. Most refugees prefer to stay in large cities where they feel safer, but this is not always so. Often, smaller towns still have the capacity to get engaged in helping refugees. There are generally fewer people in smaller localities (districts); there is also more space to accommodate refugees. In the medium and long term, there is a chance that the newcomers will provide a development, but also demographic and infrastructural, stimulus; new investment projects will be needed for that, but we must ensure their integration and adaptation to the requirements of the labour market. This is a major challenge for women with children and for seniors, but we must respond to it. Much depends on whether their family members, who are currently defending the country, will join them in the foreseeable future. We need a real immigration policy resting on two pillars: relocation and integration.”

42. Draft law introducing the social rental agency (SAN) model adopted by the government.

43. From an interview with the Open Dialogue Foundation held on 30 May and updated on 20 July 2022.

The foundation works with local organizations: they check residential premises, talk to people, ask who wants to help. One way to address housing problems in large cities is to relocate refugees to smaller localities. The Open Dialogue Foundation has been handling this in a systemic way. First, they attend to those whom they take under their wing. The foundation also has a hotline (daily from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) with Polish- and Ukrainian-speaking operators on duty.

It is constantly looking for offers from smaller towns. Currently, they have about 400 people interested in moving and about as many places. These are premises intended for long-term stay, and if the resident finds such a place inappropriate, they can leave it. It seems that this course of action should be backed by both local governments and central authorities. *“It is spring and seasonal work has just started; the countryside has much more to offer. Regardless of the season, according to the foundation, it is now easier to find a job for 5-50 people in a small or medium-sized town than for 100 thousand in Warsaw. This solution has a potential to create conditions for stable and permanent independence of refugees. According to the foundation, this change would also strengthen the demographic and economic potential of rural and provincial Poland⁴⁴.”*

44. An article by Krzysztof Boczek, *“Dlaczego uchodźcy z Ukrainy nie chcą mieszkać na polskiej wsi?”*, of 17 May 2022, oko.press.

RISKS

The major problem with relocation is that the refugees from Ukraine are not really interested in this solution. They do not want to move to smaller towns or to the countryside. This can be explained by their experience of rural life brought along from Ukraine. *“In Ukraine when you fall ill in the countryside, you have to go to a large city to see a doctor. The Ukrainian countryside suffers from unemployment and the lack of infrastructure; there is no sewerage and next to no support from the local administration. Schools, if any, are poor quality and far away⁴⁵.”* Therefore, relocation to smaller towns should be seen as a process. *“At the beginning, everyone wanted to go to Warsaw, but now many people want to leave it. But they are afraid that in the countryside they will have no stores and will need to cover long distances. We try to show them that the reality is not what they expect, and the opportunities are ample. For example, people who went to Nowy Targ were able to be back on their feet in a week or two; they got a job, had much better access to Polish language classes, received psychological assistance, so at least as much as in a large city⁴⁶.”*

45. Ibidem.

46. From an interview with the Open Dialogue Foundation held on 30 May and updated on 20 July 2022.

In addition, large cities mean social support and a sense of integration within the Ukrainian diaspora; smaller communities are less diverse ethnically and culturally and seem to be less open to new residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Relocation requires a combination of data on the housing stock in smaller localities, labour market needs, and professional qualifications of refugees. In addition, this measure requires that an appropriate level of social services, public transport services to large cities, and integration activities are ensured. Supported from the central budget, relocation may rapidly improve the demographic and economic situation of shrinking towns or villages.

Interviewed practitioners and social researchers highlighted that while in the humanitarian sphere it is necessary to take care of basic needs and in the medium term of the autonomy of persons, in the long run, it is mandatory to ensure that refugees feel like full-time community members. International standards governing response to a refugee crisis advise not to ignore participatory mechanisms, despite a temptation to do so (extra cost, time, organisational effort), wherever possible.

Otherwise, refugees will not be interested in satisfying their own needs and will not learn how to be active citizens.

Also, social integration requires that relocation schemes be accompanied by social activities aimed to include new residents in the life of the community (work, school, local activities).

It is worth noting that not all contacts with Ukrainian nationals should be transferred to non-governmental organisations. Ukrainian nationals staying in Poland for a long time should be given a natural opportunity to learn how Polish institutions work and have an impact on their work, just like Poles do, so that they can become autonomous members of local communities.

On the other hand, direct contact of local and governmental institutions with refugees will make it easier for civil servants to understand the problems of this community. A situation in which there is no direct exchange with diaspora and no contact with its members on public matters must be definitely avoided. Certainly, how to ensure the availability, transparency, and representativeness of public processes in this new situation is another thing to consider.

We do not consider involving refugees in creating housing opportunities for themselves because, as we know, they are mostly women and children. It is not

reasonable to expect that they would make suggestions as to the furnishing or layout of apartments, given the very crisis situation in which they found themselves in the war circumstances in Ukraine. (Poznań)

Qualified individuals can join refurbishment projects by submitting a declaration to the e-mail address remonty-dlaUkrainy@um.warszawa.pl. However, we do not expect people fleeing the war to joint housing development projects en masse (they should be licensed to take part in construction works in Poland anyway)⁴⁷. (Warsaw)

In the long term, steps must be taken to ensure that refugees feel like full-time members of the community.

⁴⁷. UMP's internal data.

MORE FLEXIBILITY OF THE RENTAL MARKET

This solution would entail a review and amendment of a number of regulations concerning tenancy, enforcement, and management of housing stock held by municipalities, so that it actually serves those who really need it.

Speaking of social and economic effects, this requires balanced solutions regarding protection of the most vulnerable tenants. The complexity of this problem requires in-depth analysis and consultation with stakeholders, let alone amendments to a number of legal acts. Besides, changes to tenancy rules might also facilitate access to private uninhabited property. Greater availability of space for rent should build up the resilience of the system, which may be of significance in the event of another sudden refugee crisis. However, greater flexibility of the rental market may, due to social prejudices, may benefit Poles and refugees to a varied extent.

CITIES' PERSPECTIVE

We have amended a resolution on tenancy terms regarding our housing stock. This will help provide emergency housing assistance to Ukrainian nationals.

Besides, we are implementing our housing programme, part of which is the construction of so-called council flats and apartments by municipal TBS companies (social housing associations). (Warsaw)

Our options of long-term accommodation for refugees are limited. We have no free housing stock. There are, in fact, three ways to shelter them: 1) refurbished uninhabited buildings, 2) residential premises rented from private owners, 3) adapted commercial spaces and office premises⁴⁸. (Kraków)

Changes to tenancy rules might also facilitate access to private uninhabited property. Greater availability of space for rent should build up the resilience of the system, which may be of significance in the event of another sudden refugee crisis.

48. UMP's internal material

RISKS

A serious and long-term threat to refugees is stereotypes, discriminatory activities, and the reinforcement of social prejudices against refugees from Ukraine⁴⁹.

Among the key factors that lead to prejudice,⁵⁰ experts point to the economic situation. The have-nots and individuals experiencing a subjective feeling of deterioration of their financial standing are usually more prejudiced. The latter experience is particularly important, especially when compared to the past or to other people who seem to be better off (the so-called relative deprivation). Another factor is strong identification with one's own nation (national identity), which may, in certain situations, lead to favouring one's own group and holding prejudice towards other groups.

49. There are three concepts related to what we THINK and FEEL about a minority group, how we BEHAVE toward them as a majority. Stereotype is a simplified and evaluative image of a certain group of people. Stereotype makes certain identical qualities being attributed to all members of that group, regardless of the actual differences between them. Prejudice is a hostile or negative feeling about a certain group of people and is solely based on the fact of their belonging to that group. Discrimination is unfair or harmful action against people belonging to a certain group, motivated only by their belonging to that group.

50. Winiewski, M. & Bilewicz, M. & Stefaniak, A. (2015), *Upředzenia w Polsce*. Liberi Libri, ISBN: 978-83-6348714-0.

This phenomenon is primarily associated with the forms of national identity that are rested on the conviction that the nation was a victim and suffered in the past. It can be explained by psychological mechanisms that cause a memory of the past wrong to fuel selfishness, thus making some groups develop aversion to other victims and condone harm done to them.

The rapidly deteriorating economic situation in the country is a fact (inflation, collapse of the mortgage market). On top of this, there is warfare going on just beyond Poland's eastern border. These factors facilitate the emergence of prejudices among Poles, both as a result of spontaneous psychological processes and undesirable phenomena incited by the information war waged by the Russian Federation

RECOMMENDATIONS

Persons working with refugees should be sensitised to the fact that manifestations of prejudice, although seemingly insignificant when incidental, if they become recurrent, they will lead to the development of community prejudice. Attention should be paid to instances of discrimination and different (worse) treatment of refugees on the rental market:

- worse treatment: uncomfortable questions, uneven division of rights and obligations between the tenant and the owner, higher advance or “guarantee” fees, ignoring potential refugee tenants when publishing offers;
- substandard service when dealing with civil servants: excessive interest in origin, poor-quality service, or refusal to render services;
- substandard treatment in public places: negative reactions from the members of the general public, suspicion or even aggression caused by behaviour or appearance inconsistent with formed images.
- Positive examples – experiencing positive stories, images, or personal patterns shatters negative stereotypes (they are cool; they do things well, properly, professionally; their stories are interesting and valuable), e.g. sharing success stories: thanks to our help, this person has become independent and can now have a positive impact on our community.
- Focus on “we” – to redefine a group, so that members of different groups can feel like a new whole (“we, the residents of this city,” “we, the specialists in this field”), e.g. “we” of different origin but in the same roles (parents, physicians, residents); creating local identities based on the place of residence (district, estate) ●

Strategies recommended for counteracting prejudices include, apart from legislative changes, certain social activities conducive to the opening up of the rental market:

- Adopting multiple viewing angles – promotion of empathy, reflection on subjective feelings and points of view (“how do they see it”), e.g. supporting current residents in empathic response (lending/letting apartments, quick repairs, deferred payments). Sharing information on the situation of refugees (how many people are still stuck in shelter halls, their real access to schooling, jobs, care, financial standing).

Attention should be paid to instances of discrimination and different (worse) treatment of refugees on the rental market

1. Creating conditions for becoming independent

The overarching goal of initiatives related to accommodating refugees is to create conditions for their independent and autonomous life in Poland. Housing issues must be closely linked to the satisfaction of other needs, e.g. assistance in finding a job (including in the recognition of degrees, Polish language courses, etc.), care for dependent family members, transport, finding locations for permanent residence, applying for various forms of support under general terms.

2. Shared cross-sectoral responsibility

The question of refugee accommodation cannot be handled by a single entity; it requires cooperation. Responsibility should be shared between the central government, territorial government, NGOs and, if possible, the people concerned.

3. Testing non-standard solutions

The current situation requires and, at the same time, presents an opportunity to look for non-standard forms of accommodation which do not have to lead to stigmatisation, exclusion, or substandard living but may enable a targeted response to the needs of specific groups. For this reason, more flexibility is required at the local level to propose specific criteria for tenant selection or specific forms of residence.

4. Solutions embedded in urban strategies

Action taken to help refugees should be consistent with the strategic goals of cities and should be aligned with strategic and programming documents. This is how it should be communicated to the residents.

5. New solutions for Polish residents

Measures taken to provide non-standard forms of accommodation to refugees may also inspire solutions to the housing problems of Polish citizens; they also afford an opportunity for testing certain target solutions.

6. Support for the dependent

Among the refugees, there are individuals who, for various reasons, are not able to find proper accommodation on their own. This group is particularly vulnerable to social marginalisation, discrimination, and abuse. Dependent, sick, and helpless people are also exposed to stress that builds up during prolonged stay in collective facilities (such as halls).

7. New citizen counselling

Besides legal, financial, and infrastructural solutions, an important step is to increase the availability of certain measures through information, helping out with formalities, citizen counselling, social communication, and appropriate preparation of civil servants and procedures.

8. Volatile circumstances require flexible solutions

Because the situation is dynamic, when implementing specific housing or legal solutions, enough flexibility should be kept in mind as the way we will use these solutions over the next year or so may need to be adjusted ●