



It's not always easy, but together we are stronger

Activities of the Polish Migration Forum Foundation in 2024.

Warsaw, March 2025

**Polish
Migration
Forum**
FOUNDATION

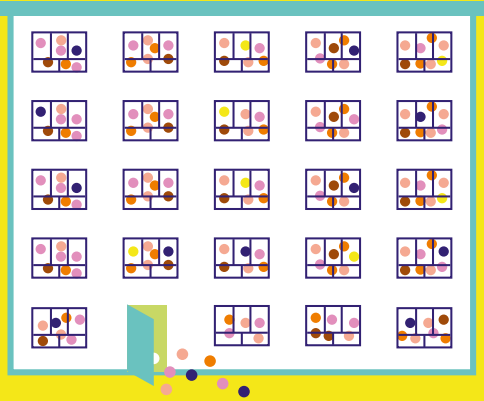
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25 classrooms
would be filled by children with
migrant experience under the care
of our intercultural assistants.



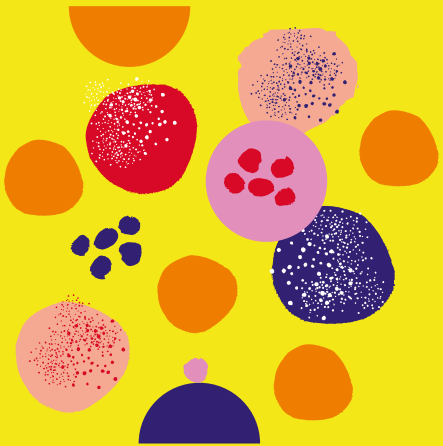
34 countries
were represented by the parents-to-be
who attended the 12 birthing schools in
2024.

We speak a total of 19
languages at PMF!

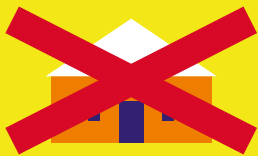
PMF is already
18 years old!
We are a
mature
Foundation!



over 2 km
- that's how long the queue would be to
see our case workers if all our clients
(2518 people) lined up one after another.



300 Haller cakes
were made to celebrate the opening of the
Multicultural Centre.
Our facility was visited by more than 400
people that day. Our slogan is: WE WIL ALL FIT!



**a staggering
29%**
of beneficiaries using the
help of our case workers
are people at risk of
homelessness.



Who are we?

The Polish Migration Forum Foundation has been supporting migrants and refugees in Poland since 2007. We strive to integrate people with migration experience into Polish society, to respect their rights and to counteract discrimination.

We are committed to building a Poland that is open to diversity and welcoming. We want our knowledge and experience to help create a safe living space in Poland for all those who form part of our communities and societies, no matter where they come from.

We ensure that our work is reliable and that our services are of a high quality: responsive, delivered by professional staff, while respecting the dignity and autonomy of the people we work with.

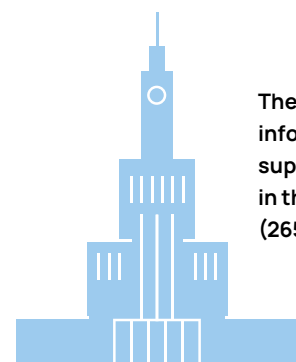
The Foundation offers support in the areas of mental health, information, counselling, legal aid, education and labour market. We work in two ways: we act directly and support the development of systemic solutions through advocacy based on direct experience.

We help everyone, regardless of country of origin, gender, ethnic background, nationality, religion, belief, worldview, disability, sexual orientation or age. Our support is available free of charge.



Our activities

Legal and information support



The people we provided information-based support to would barely fit in the Congress Hall (2652 beneficiaries)

18 per day

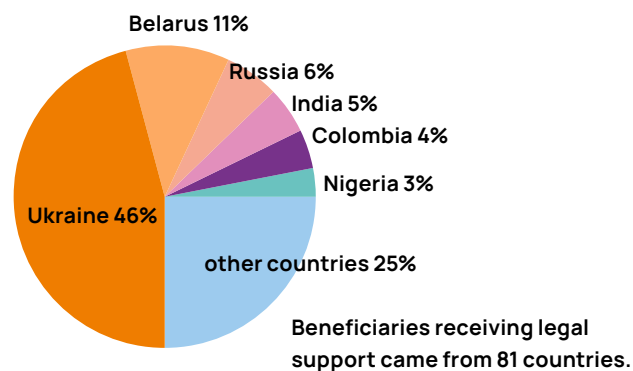
– that is how many advisory consultations were provided by our specialists (4415 in total)

The most frequently asked questions concerned legalisation of residence, obtaining Polish citizenship, UKR status (especially leaving Poland and returning), employment, access to education and student rights, sworn translations, official certification of various documents and recognition of competences, social benefits, pensions, availability of Polish language courses, visas from various countries.

Informational support was provided in-house at our location in ul. Górczewska 137, online and by telephone.

The **helpline** is a service delivered by experts who speak Ukrainian, Russian, English and Polish, providing consultations and information on a wide variety of issues relating to life in Poland. The service operates five days a week, six hours a day.

The **legal team** provides advice and support in the area of migration law, including legalisation of stay and the procedure for obtaining protection in the territory of Poland, as well as broadly-defined civil law, commercial law, business law, labour law, family law and criminal law. Our team consists of solicitors, barristers and legal advisers. In 2024, the demand for qualified assistance definitely increased for those deprived of support other than free assistance. Legal aid was used, among others, by people facing the crisis of homelessness, women living in single mothers' homes, victims of domestic violence, hospital patients (and staff involved in



2 575

– that's the number of legal consultations held in 2024.

Legal consultation topics:

legalisation of stay 60%,
family law 10%,
civil law 8%,
Social Security (ZUS) and benefits 7%,
labour law 5%,
criminal cases 3%

helping them), people living in extreme poverty, carers of people who are actually incapacitated (due to mental disorders). The level of complexity of the legal problems faced by migrants increased significantly. Often other organisations and even officials would forward the most difficult cases to our legal team. We succeeded in securing child and elderly support and benefits, asserting labour rights, countering discrimination against foreign children in schools, appealing erroneous decisions on the legalisation of residence and even halting deportations. We were successful in assisting clients even with very difficult cases, for instance, as a result of our actions after a complaint to the Regional Administrative Court, the President of the Social Insurance Institution himself changed his final decision granting the beneficiary the right to 800+ benefits towards the child.

At the same time, the legal team worked on legislative changes by, among other things, preparing comments on the draft Act on Access to the Labour Market for Foreigners.

Key challenges:

- inefficient system and procedures related to the legalisation of residence (e.g. lengthy legalisation procedures, incomprehensible communication with institutions, e.g. official letters),
- misinterpretations of the law being repeated by the authorities, e.g. concerning Individual Integration Programmes,
- discrimination against foreigners, mainly in schools, in the labour market,
- lack of accessible information and legal support for the most vulnerable.

System recommendations:

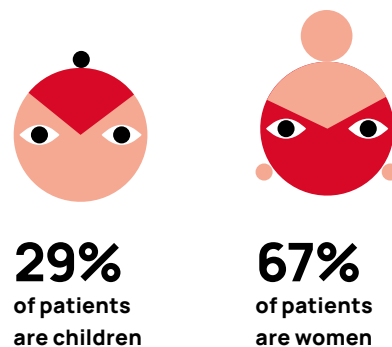
- effective and responsible integration policy,
- streamlining legalisation procedures,
- improving access to information for non-Polish speakers, especially in the public services sector,
- training of public administration employees,
- effectively countering the exploitation of foreigners in the labour market.

I wholeheartedly recommend the professional assistance provided by Attorney Agata Glinka, (...) As a final result of her efforts, Ms Agata Glinka secured the right to permanent residence for a Nigerian citizen, who had been in Poland for 11 years! The officials in the first instance proceedings dropped the case in order to get rid of the problem and, due to their incompetence, my son-in-law was in Poland illegally for a whole year in spite of having a passport, although he has a Polish wife. I would like to thank this foundation for being the only one to respond to my desperate email, so that we can now live without the immense stress. I would recommend her expertise and professionalism to anyone in need.

Psychological support



Our team provided 7091 consultations (in total in office, over the phone and in the field: in collective accommodation centres, in centres for foreigners and Social Welfare Centres)



Everyone around is suffering. Report on psychological support offered by the Polish Migration Forum Foundation to persons staying in guarded detention centres for foreigners.

Our aim is invariably to provide psychological support at the highest level, as accessibly as possible, in a language in which the person needing support is able to communicate comfortably.

We advocate that the whole system of support for refugees and migrants in Poland takes into account the psycho-social and cultural conditions connected with migration, such as stress, trauma and adaptation challenges.

We are committed to ensuring that all services put the dignity of their beneficiaries at the centre. We are happy to share our knowledge – we train other psychologists, teachers, educators. The entire team working directly with clients are able to provide psychological first aid and, if necessary, refer clients to specialists.

Our team of psychologists work with people with experiences of trauma, difficulties in functioning as a parent, experiencing bereavement, anxiety, adjustment disorders, suicide crisis, addictions, perinatal crisis. We work in different psychotherapeutic streams.

We also run psychological support groups. One of them featured a series of original workshops entitled "MENTALITY – Discover Your Potential", in which a local mental health expert collaborated with a trainer with migration experience. The workshops aimed to build mental resilience and support social integration and were dedicated to groups of young people and students.

Until June 2024, we provided specialised psychological support in guarded centres for foreigners (in detention). PMF psychologists conducted interventions, often preventing mental health and suicide crisis. Due to limited access, financial and operational difficulties, we were forced to suspend the programme. In June, we issued a report called "Everyone around is suffering", summarising our activities, which included testimonies from migrants with experience of detention. **Our demands to increase the availability of psychological support and to stop the repeated prolonged detention remain valid.**

We are one of only few organisations specialising in diagnosing the needs, resources and difficulties of children and young people with experience of forced migration.

This process requires a customised and specialised approach, taking into account language barriers, cultural differences, the effects of traumatic experiences. We use methods and diagnostic tools that respond to the specific needs of this group.

In Polish schools, nearly 7% of pupils are foreign children. This percentage is projected to increase, and with it the recognition of the need for professional diagnosis and therapeutic support. It is extremely important that professionals working in educational and psychological counselling centres are prepared to work with children and young people with such a variety of experiences and difficulties. In the diagnostic and therapeutic process, it is vital to take into account the specificities of the migration experience, especially forced migration, including the various stages of culture shock, the process of forming cultural sensitivity, as well as cultural differences and traumatic experiences.

Recommendations for diagnosing children with migration experience:

Access to professional interpreters. Often, the role of interpreter is filled by the child's sibling or other family member, which should not be the case. The interpreter should be a professional who not only knows the language or the specific dialect, but also the specifics of working with a psychologist and understands the cultural and religious context. In addition, the use of an interpreter significantly prolongs the diagnostic process, which needs to be taken into account.

Awareness of cultural differences and the adaptation process. Children from different cultures may present behaviours that in Poland are sometimes misinterpreted as symptoms of a disorder. For example, a child from an unfamiliar cultural background who does not make eye contact with the diagnostician, does not signal their demands and needs, does not express their opinion, does not ask questions, or performs tasks even

without understanding them, may be perceived as withdrawn or fearful. Whereas this may be due to social norms in the country of origin. Supervision, so an opportunity to consult with people who have more experience in diagnosing migrant children, is very important.

Adequate diagnostic space. Refugee children may have different, potentially traumatic experiences of their previous stays in centres, especially closed ones. So the conditions and space in which the diagnostic process will be carried out should be adapted to their needs.

Extending the diagnostic process – working with migrant children requires more time to build rapport and a sense of security. The standard 2-3 hours is not enough time to feel safe in a new place and build trust in the diagnostician. Too rapid a diagnosis can lead to wrong conclusions and the wrong recommendations.

Attention to trauma-related symptoms and differential diagnosis – migrant children may exhibit symptoms that are easily confused with other disorders, neuroatypical symptoms or even intellectual disabilities. It is important to consider the impact of the trauma on the child's functioning and to ensure an accurate differential diagnosis.

Avoiding language tests and selecting appropriate diagnostic tools: most standardised psychological tests require language, even if they include a non-verbal part. The Stanford - Binet 5 Intelligence Test can be difficult for a child to understand and perform, despite the fact that it contains non-verbal subtests. Each of the tasks contains verbal instructions, so their understanding requires knowledge of the language. It is similar for Cattell Culture Fair Intelligence Test, as the tasks are executive (paper - pencil), but instructions on how to complete them are complex. Therefore, culturally neutral and non-verbal tools such as Leiter-3 tests are crucial when diagnosing migrant children.

Contact with the parents: It is important for diagnosticians to be attentive to the different, culturally influenced parenting styles, to take into account the individual situation of the parents and to show sensitivity to their specific experiences and difficulties in building a life in a new place.



We would like to remind you of our 2022 publication. "Refugee children. Standards, diagnostic tools and psychological support" (available in Polish only).

Educational support



25 classrooms

would be filled by children with migrant experience under the care of our intercultural assistants.

In 2024, as a result of combined efforts, intercultural assistantship was incorporated in the education system! This is a real breakthrough! From September, compulsory schooling also covered all children from Ukraine.

Our Diversity School e-learning platform gained considerable popularity. We know that the principals of many schools require their intercultural assistants to take our course in order to properly prepare them for their work and improve their professional competence. **"Diversity School"** is an online course for those working with children with migration experience. It covers issues such as the Polish education system, support for children with special needs, support for foreign pupils, countering violence against children, psychological first aid and more.

The team of intercultural assistants are constantly improving their competences and sharing them with others. We launched a peer supervision programme for non-PMF intercultural assistants, which serves as a tool for counteracting job burnout.



1435 children

took part in educational, intercultural, integration and mental resilience workshops. They would fill an entire underground train!

1390 educators,

teachers, psychologists and others working with children with a migrant experience participated in our online and on-site competency-boosting training sessions.

In 2024, we held a series of workshops for children and young people studying in Polish schools. All the workshops we run are based on original methods: "The whole world in our classroom" project, "WISE – cooperation, integration, success, education" Workshops, "ReSET" – a workshop to strengthen the mental resilience of children with migration experience. The workshop was primarily aimed at:

- developing sensitivity and **understanding of** cultural and linguistic **diversity**;
- strengthen pupils' **ability to cooperate** in a multicultural environment;
- developing **communication skills and handling conflicts** and misunderstandings, also those on cultural grounds, in a constructive way;
- creating an **atmosphere for conversation and dialogue** about migration, cultural differences and the dreams and aspirations of children (regardless of their skin colour, background or life experiences);
- reinforcing **positive attitudes** – respect, kindness, acceptance of differences (mainly cultural and linguistic, but not only) and appreciating them in the classroom;
- improving in-class team **integration**.

The teachers working with the class receive ready-made learning packages so that they can continue and broaden the topics covered in our workshops in order to reinforce and consolidate the positive processes initiated in the workshops (class integration, curiosity about mutual differences, cooperation, conflict prevention, etc.).



Universal welcome package at a Polish school



Guide to the Polish School. The stages of education in Poland, recruitment, exams, system of support...



Why do Polish schools need intercultural assistants?

Key challenges:

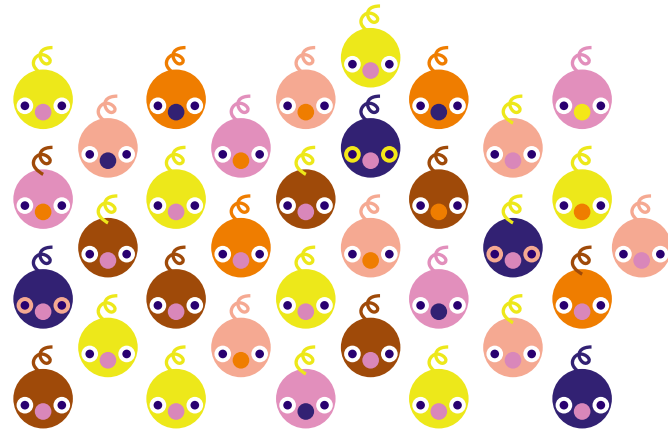
- publicising the role of intercultural assistant as the most effective tool to support the education and adaptation of foreign pupils and their families in the school environment;
- building the competences of school psychological-educational teams and the staff at psychological-pedagogical clinics in working with foreign children to support the correct diagnostic process for children with difficulties and deficits
- improving access of foreign pupils to psychological-pedagogical clinics,
- improving the competences of intercultural assistants and persons working as teaching assistants,
- disseminating knowledge on the role of intercultural assistants among educational management staff

System recommendations:

- extending the presence of IAs to kindergartens (at the moment, according to the regulations, IAs can be employed in primary and secondary schools)
- working on the development of nationwide standards for intercultural assistants
- improving IA competences, including a reflection on building a career advancement path (along the lines of the pedagogical staff in the education system)
- incorporating intercultural and global education as well as inclusive elements and anti-discrimination education into the curriculum,
- improving the competences of teachers, educators and school counsellors in working with multicultural groups.

Support for women

- 12 birthing schools
- 95 obstetrics consultations
- 113 consultations with physiotherapists
- 9 infant first aid courses
- training for midwives all over Poland



34 countries

were represented by the parents-to-be who attended the 12 birthing schools in 2024.

We support migrant and refugee women, especially those who are pregnant, with young children, after experiencing trauma and those who want to improve their parenting and caring skills.

We run antenatal classes for migrant and refugee women, support groups for women, mothers of babies and young children, workshops to improve parenting/caring skills, we provide midwifery consultations, one-to-one consultations for young children with a physiotherapist, and train medical staff on perinatal care in a culturally diverse environment. We also run baby first aid classes, yoga classes for pregnant women and women with young children.

We provided financial and material support to pregnant women and women of young children. Our support was received by women from countries

such as: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, India, Turkey, Egypt, Ukraine, Kenya, USA, Mali, Tanzania, Congo, Iran, Belarus, Portugal, Indonesia, Spain, Pakistan, Sweden, Greece, Poland, Russia, Kazakhstan, Zimbabwe, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Rwanda, Romania, France, Mexico, Morocco, Malaysia, Chechnya.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the PMF women's support programme, we released the publication entitled **"Being There is the Most Important Thing"**.

We share our knowledge, diagnoses and recommendations with the community of institutions responsible for women's health, such as hospitals, clinics, municipal and local offices, as well as other NGOs – those supporting refugee and migrant women as well as those focusing on the protection of reproductive rights and preventive healthcare. We hope that our experience will improve the quality of perinatal support for migrant women in Poland.



Being There is the Most Important Thing. Supporting Refugee and Migrant Women in the Perinatal Period – the Experiences of the Polish Migration Forum Foundation



The women's support programme was awarded in the **Third S3KTOR competition for the best non-governmental initiative in Warsaw!**

Programme Coordinator Weronika Brączyk can be seen speaking in the photo. Over 10 years, the project has had many mothers! Marta Piegat-Kaczmarek, Agnieszka Kosowicz, Karolina Czerwińska. We are very proud!



System recommendations

- training for midwifery students and healthcare professionals on supporting migrant women in the perinatal period,
- facilitating access for migrant midwives to practise the profession,
- involvement of interpreters in maternity and paediatric hospitals,
- promotion of preventive healthcare among women and children (e.g. educating on vaccinations),
- cooperating with organisations and institutions supporting women,
- improving access to information on reproductive rights in Poland,
- sensitising healthcare personnel to the increased risk of perinatal depression in women with migration experience.



Support for the most vulnerable (case working)



over 2 km

- that's how long the queue would be to see our case workers if all our clients (2518 people) lined up one after another.

4682

- that is the number of consultations held and handled cases of our beneficiaries. That makes almost 20 a day!

Our case workers supported people from 54 countries, working in 14 languages!

Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, Chechen, Belarusian, English, Persian, Pashto, Dari, Urdu, Hindi, Georgian, Armenian, Megrel.



a staggering 29% of beneficiaries using the help of our case workers are people at risk of homelessness.

Our team of case workers help clients deal with specific issues, e.g. dealing with the authorities, issues connected to the education system or healthcare services. The majority of people who ask for support are from vulnerable groups*, finding themselves in increasingly desperate situations. The problems reported to us by migrant men and women are increasingly complex and we are finding it more and more difficult to help them in the face of weakening support from international organisations and insufficient systemic solutions. Here are some of the problems faced by foreigners in Poland, which our team of case workers try to help them overcome.

Homelessness

In our experience, homelessness among migrants is becoming more common – as many as 29% of beneficiaries assisted by our case workers are at risk of homelessness. Having to flee one's country suddenly (due to war and persecution, among other reasons) is a traumatising experience, often making it impossible to find one's way in a new reality without support from other people or organisations. We were approached by an elderly lady from an occupied area of Ukraine, who applied for international protection out of fear of the changes to the special act on assistance to Ukrainian citizens. After obtaining refugee status, she had to leave the asylum centre. At the same time, she lost her temporary protection (so-called "UKR status") and was no longer eligible to live in collective accommodation centres for people from Ukraine. The lady could not afford to rent accommodation on the open market, and had to wait several weeks for

the Individual Integration Programme to start. She found herself in a crisis of homelessness. With our help, it was possible to find her a temporary shelter – however, due to the traumas experienced and her poor mental condition, she had great difficulties in her relationship with the staff and other residents of the subsequent shelters and centres. This situation demonstrates the importance of comprehensive support for refugees facing homelessness, whose situation is further complicated by prolonged legislative procedures, the language barrier, cultural differences and often experiences of trauma. At the same time, renting a flat on the open market is beyond the financial possibilities of many people. Landlords are often reluctant to rent flats to migrants, especially families with children and people whose appearance indicates a migrant experience. They often require a deposit equal to two months' rent, an occasional rental contract (which has to be signed at a notarial office in the presence of a sworn translator, which generates additional costs). We are encountering cases of fraudulent intermediaries offering to help people rent flats with fake occasional rental contracts for an additional high fee. Access to public housing is very limited. **System recommendations:** increasing the availability of municipal, social, sheltered, supported, training and interventional housing. Abolishing (or at least reducing) fees in collective accommodation centres for refugees. Improving conditions in open centres for foreigners and revising the system of admissions so that it does not generate a risk of homelessness, especially in the transitional stages of procedures concerning legalisation of stay.

Labour market abuse

In 2024, we were approached by a number of people who had come to Poland to work but were misled. Employers and intermediaries promised them good wages, help with residence formalities, accommodation. While in Poland, it often turned out that the work was quite different from what had been promised, the working conditions much harder and the pay not always as agreed. Worst of all, however, is the fact that the stay of such workers is legal for 90 days, and instead of completing the legalisation formalities, the lying employers would often throw such workers out on the street, even without pay. Migrants treated in this way benefited not only from

the support of case workers at PMF, but often also from the support of lawyers.

Although Poland is a country with one of the highest employment rates of foreigners in the European Union, finding a job can sometimes be difficult, especially one suited for high qualifications. It is particularly difficult for women and people with a Russian passport to find work.

Systemic recommendations: strengthening systemic labour control tools (such as the State Labour Inspectorate) and punishing dishonest employers; simplifying procedures allowing legal employment of foreigners.

Seniors:

Seniors account for 16% of those benefiting from case worker support. More often than not, they are unable to take up any work and their only stable source of income is a pension from their country of origin (for pensioners from Ukraine, this is usually PLN 200). Sometimes they lose access even to those funds. Under Ukrainian law, in order to maintain benefits, pensioners are required to prove their identity. Identification can be done in person at specific offices, via e-banking or the Diia portal. For many seniors, none of these options are available for a number of reasons: digital exclusion, loss of documents or lack of a Ukrainian SIM card.

Our case workers were asked to provide support to an elderly lady who had come from an occupied area. She was unable to confirm her identity or obtain the necessary documents herself. She was also unable to receive her pension, which made her situation much worse. Problems with the documents were only resolved in cooperation with the Ukrainian Consulate and the Pension Fund of Ukraine office in Lviv.

Older people with migration experience arriving in Poland are often very ill. In their home country, they had access to regular doctor appointments, rehabilitation, prescription drugs, while in Poland they have difficulty making appointments with specialists, often do not know where to seek help, and simply cannot afford medication.

System recommendations: countering digital exclusion, improving access to equipment (smartphones, computers); increasing knowledge of the rights of older people, social support dedicated to seniors.

* In the context of humanitarian aid, vulnerable groups are often singled out as those in particular need of support. According to the European Parliament Directive, vulnerable groups are: minors, unaccompanied minors, persons with disabilities, elderly persons, pregnant women, single parents of minor children, victims of human trafficking, people suffering from serious diseases, persons with mental disorders and persons who have been subjected to torture, victims of rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence.

Single parents

12% of our beneficiaries are single parents, mainly mothers from the Ukraine. One of the main problems they face is difficulties with finding housing. The problem was further exacerbated in the second half of 2024 with the entry into force of an act removing subsidies for private individuals who provided housing to Ukrainian refugees (the so-called "40+"). We were approached by a family of three: a woman caring for her son alone and her chronically ill mother. According to the new regulations, only the grandmother was eligible for free residence in a collective accommodation centre. The family could not afford the cost of living in such a centre for the others. Through cooperation with the Biedronka Foundation and the Warsaw Family Assistance Centre, it was possible to find a place for this family to live for a few months and to apply for housing assistance.

System recommendations: increasing the availability of emergency housing, social housing and other housing opportunities. Social support for those with dependants and those in need of care.

Violence against women

For many victims, the topic of violence is taboo and reaching out for support requires exceptional determination but also discretion, which in the work of case workers can be quite challenging. Last year, we sometimes worked with migrant women who suffered violence from people who were addicted to drugs. In addition to psychological support, these women also required help with their physical health and support in developing a crisis recovery plan.

From finding the right specialist doctors, to medical assistance, to professional translation, to finding solutions to everyday living problems (financial, family), the process of providing comprehensive support was demanding, especially as our priority was the women's dignity, autonomy and the need for discretion.

Abused women seeking support very often have children or other close dependants (e.g. elderly relatives), who also need to be supported. Usually, they are married women mostly needing medical support, not always ready for radical life changes.

System recommendations: greater availability of specialist doctors and interpreters, normalising the use of psychological support. Raising awareness of violence of different types and ways to counteract it.

Domestic violence

Migrant women experiencing domestic violence often find themselves in an extremely vulnerable situation. The abuser is usually the husband or partner, who is also the family's only financial security. Our case workers work with women who, after fleeing abusive relationships, often with children, have lost not only their livelihoods and a roof over their heads, but also their self-esteem. Plunged into despair and helplessness, often without good knowledge of the Polish language or the social welfare system, they were reliant on help that was very difficult to provide comprehensively in such a drastic situation.

First, basic needs must be addressed: safe shelter, food, clothing, medication. When the emotional state of a victim of domestic violence needs to be stabilised, the case worker team reach out for support from the psychological team. It is not uncommon for women to be harassed by their partners – so case workers accompany them as interpreters to the police station or to appointments at social welfare institutions. They arrange medical appointments if necessary and, if possible, the Foundation covers the costs of examinations or treatment.

Our caseworker Leyla talks about the suffering of children in violent homes: *The child learns about life by watching their mother. If they see that she cannot defend herself, the child becomes convinced that violence is normal, that there is no way out, that you must remain silent. And to make matters worse, the perpetrator often intimidates children by telling them: Don't tell your mother or something bad will happen, or I'll kill your mother. The child lives in constant fear and does not know who to trust.*

Systemic recommendations: strengthening systemic support for victims of violence; disseminating knowledge about the Polish system for counteracting domestic violence; further training for employees of the social welfare system in working with foreigners. Special care for children.

Helplessness

People applying for international protection and starting the asylum procedure can only legally take up work after six months. Before that, they rely solely on support. At the same time, they often live in fear of deportation until the procedures are completed – this has a paralysing effect on many people. They need to be determined to make an effort to adapt and integrate – to learn the Polish language, to establish relations with people outside their immediate surroundings, to start planning their lives in the new country. Centres for foreigners (both closed and open) offer little individual support – there are no Polish lessons or adaptation supports, there's lack of simple information about their situation, rights, opportunities. Refugees often remain in limbo for months after a traumatic experience, often without even knowing or being aware of their specific situation, without prospects, sometimes without hope. It has a retraumatising effect on many people, especially those in detention. Our case workers do not have access to closed centres, but they try to visit open ones more and more. Collective accommodation centres, often established ad hoc in response to the war in Ukraine, are full of people from vulnerable groups who no longer attempt to become independent, and often no longer even have the chance to do so.

System recommendations: strengthening the powers of the Office for Foreigners administering open centres for foreigners – to streamline procedures, empowering staff by employing more qualified and committed social workers. It is worth thoroughly rebuilding the system of reception centres and open centres – introducing universal Polish language lessons, vocational and further training courses, activating adaptation mechanisms.

Systemic gaps and vicious circles

Applicants for international protection have the right to live in detention centres for foreigners during the procedure. Once they have received a decision on granting refugee status, for example, they have 60 days to leave the centre and live on their own. More often than not, they are then confronted not only with high rental prices, but also with widespread landlord reluctance and discrimination. When these people are enrolled in the Individual Integration Programme, they have to attend Polish lessons several times a week, and at the same time they have to look for accommodation and work. *It's unrealistic* – says our case worker Leyla, – *how is someone supposed to*

find a job if they have to take a course every day, don't have money for a flat and don't know where to safely leave their children? And if they can't find housing, they can't enrol their children in school. Some schools require proof of registration in the district and refuse to enrol children, contrary to the law. Some parents don't even know that the school is obliged to accept their child – and no one tells them that.

It is a vicious circle that leaves these people with no chance of a normal life in Poland. Without a job they will not get housing, without housing they will not enrol their children in school, and without school and stability they cannot find a job. I really feel sorry for these people, but I don't know how they can be helped (...).

Officials often ask: why don't refugees stay in Poland? The answer is simple – because they don't have a roof over their head and don't feel safe. In the West, they get housing, support and language courses. Here they have nothing – so they have to leave to survive.

Personal multicrisis

A young female migrant interrupted her studies in Poland due to becoming pregnant. She lost her residency status and the person she is involved with not only does not support her, but blackmails her that he will take the child away from her after she gives birth. For religious and moral reasons, this woman cannot return to her country of origin as an unmarried pregnant woman. She fears for her safety and that of her child. Due to her unregulated residence situation, she cannot benefit from support under the Polish social support system, cannot benefit from free healthcare, cannot take up legal employment. Applying for international protection gives her some chance, but she comes from a country that is not considered dangerous. Simply submitting an application offers the possibility of support from the Head of the Office for Foreigners, but several weeks pass between submitting the application and the meeting with an official, during which time she is deprived of any systemic support. Her greatest fear is justified: the father (a Polish citizen) may act on his threats and she may be expelled from Poland.

Systemic recommendations: facilitating access to the social assistance and healthcare system, taking into account the specific situation of applicants for international protection and persons with an unregulated status; strengthening cooperation between state institutions and non-governmental organisations.

Capacity building and joining forces

- 9 networking meetings
- 15 training sessions



570 people took part in our expert meetings and training sessions – that’s as many as sit in the Sejm and Senate

Some of the training and meetings we organised in 2024:

- Networking meeting dedicated to migrants experiencing a mental health crisis,
- Training course: "Supporting staff assisting people with migration experience in effective intercultural communication and tools for looking after their wellbeing. Psychological aspects of work with people with migration experience".
- Training course: "Employing foreigners. Legal aspects" for employees of Warsaw’s public cultural institutions
- Training course: "Working with people experiencing domestic violence – recognising and responding in line with new changes in legislation"
- Informational meeting with an advisor specialising in legalisation of stay on the changes introduced by the amendment of the act on assistance to Ukrainian citizens
- Training course: "Not just IIP (Individual Integration Programme). Foreigners in the Polish Social Welfare System"
- Training course: "Interviewing a child with a forced migration experience" for staff at the Office for Foreigners.
- Informational meeting on the social welfare system provided by the Office for Foreigners to applicants for international protection
- we visited two Warsaw special schools as part of study visits aimed at gaining a better understanding of special education in Poland in relation to foreign children
- at the invitation of the Intercultural Centre for Social Development, as event partners, we co-organised a networking meeting of Warsaw-based organisations and institutions supporting people with migration and refugee experience
- 2-day competence building training for intercultural assistants: "How to support a child with migration experience in a Polish school"

Dialogue and cooperation between the non-governmental sector and public institutions create synergies. We live in a complex and fast-changing world, so we believe that sharing knowledge, experiences and perspectives allows us to better respond to needs and be flexible to change.

The training sessions and meetings we organised in 2024 served to educate, but also to facilitate learning, networking with each other and to develop recommendations and demands for joint advocacy. They allowed the other side’s perspective to be presented and provided an opportunity to engage in a discussion and ask questions.

Objectives of our capacity-building activities (training, meetings, conferences, webinars):

Advocacy - Strengthening a civil society that is open to and understands the challenges brought by diversity.

Dissemination of knowledge in the areas of interculturalism, migration law, residence rights and access to benefits, psychological aspects of migration, intercultural communication.

Thus strengthening the Polish migration system and boosting the competences of the staff of institutions and organisations.

Networking and partnership building – creating a friendly and supportive environment made up by professionals – employees of public institutions, local government, NGOs and businesses – who know each other and their competences and are ready to work together to achieve the set goals even more effectively.

A broader description of one of the training courses:

Supporting staff who assist people with migration experience in effective intercultural communication. Tools for looking after wellbeing to prevent job burnout. Psychological aspects of work with people with migration experience.

The training sessions were attended by social workers, employees of social assistance centres, psychologists, career advisors, educators, family assistants, job mediators and trainers working, among others, at the Warsaw Family Assistance Centre, the District Labour Office, the National Health Fund, the Provincial Labour Office, the Social Services Centre, Warsaw’s Social Assistance Centres, Warsaw’s museums and cultural centres. Staff from private companies and NGOs were also in attendance.

The training included:

- Introduction to migration: Diversity of migration: forced and voluntary. Importance of culture for migrants: language, customs, traditions. Migration as a potentially traumatic experience. Crisis in the adaptation process.
- Communication and empathy: Building communication with a person with migration experience with elements of motivational dialogue. Techniques of effective intercultural communication. Practical exercises in communication.
- Self-care skills and job burnout prevention: Recognising the symptoms of job burnout, Techniques for dealing with stress and managing emotions, Relaxation and meditation exercises, Creating a plan for taking care of yourself every day.

One of the important networking meetings we organised in 2024 was dedicated to supporting migrants and refugees in mental health crisis.

The meeting was attended by representatives of mental health facilities as well as organisations and institutions which do not specialise in psychiatric support but have clients in need of such assistance.

We share insights and recommendations from this meeting:

We identify the following groups of people in need of support and the main challenges faced by these groups:

1. Ill people arriving in Poland face difficulties such as: loss of access to medicines and inability to continue treatment; lack of access to previous medical records; differences in treatment protocols, methods and medicines.
2. People who suffer from experiences of war, trauma, loss and forced migration are confronted with: low availability of psychologists and psychiatrists who speak foreign languages; low availability of professionals who are knowledgeable in working with people experiencing the effects of war and able to work with people from other cultures; cultural differences and different perceptions of the role of psychologist and psychiatrist by migrants (the topic is sometimes taboo) creating barriers.
3. Those in need of diagnosis, especially children, face obstacles such as: low availability of diagnosticians prepared to work in foreign languages or with a child from a different culture; difficulty with accessing appropriate diagnostic tools; a cultural barrier in communication with parents; a lack of support services for children who are not fluent in Polish.
4. Uninsured persons. We are observing an increasing number of people who suffer from a mental illness but do not have access to medical assistance in Poland because of their legal status (some legal residence statuses do not entitle them to free medical assistance). Uninsured people in critical condition, in a mental health crisis, do not have the access to hospital care or post-hospital care.

Recommendations

(Meeting on supporting migrants and refugees in a mental health crisis):

Increasing the pool of mental health professionals (psychologists, psychiatrists) who are competent to work with people from other cultures. To this end, it is worthwhile:

- identifying psychologists and psychiatrists with migration experience and helping them receive further training and language training and enter the labour market
- promoting the training of professions in short supply (psychiatry) at universities and supporting people with migration experience studying these subjects (e.g. by reducing tuition fees or offering free admissions)
- considering remote work by psychiatrists from other countries, especially in case of rare languages
- training practitioners in the area of working with people with experience of migration
- promoting education in the area of working with people with experience of migration within medical fields of study.

Improved knowledge sharing at system level

- organising the available information on practising mental health professionals with foreign language skills and competences in working with people with migration experience
- creating mechanisms for the exchange of knowledge between specialists of different specialisations
- (e.g. working groups of diagnosticians working with foreign children, platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience for doctors, promoting specific tools, etc.)

Building the knowledge of patients with migration experience about mental health and available help

- in the context of supporting adults
- in the context of supporting children

Mental illness prevention - access to information and activities to support the sense of stability and wellbeing of people with migration experience, building support networks.

Expanding the system of interventional support and long-term support for incapacitated persons

(Crisis Intervention Centres, supported housing, etc.).



At the invitation of the Intercultural Centre for Social Development, as event partners, we co-organised a networking meeting of Warsaw-based organisations and institutions supporting people with migration and refugee experience.

We agreed on a number of table topics important for Warsaw's migrant community: the labour market, housing, seniors, the problem of violence, community sponsorship, community building, intercultural education.

Pictured are Kasia Sawko and Magda Piaskowska moderating a conversation on community building, integration and active participation.

Support Centre – Górczewska 137

I am very grateful to the PMF employee for helping me prepare documents, especially for her individual approach. All problems were resolved quickly and professionally. PMF employees are true professionals in their field, always ready to help and answer any questions. They take a very responsible approach to preparing document; with such specialists, you can feel confident in a foreign country. Special thanks for the individual approach and effective ongoing support. Thank you again, you are doing a great job. I wish you great success and career progression.

Our Support Centre operated in ul. Górczewska 137 until mid-December 2024.

It was open from Monday to Friday. It provided on-site information support, case worker support (without earlier registration) and assistance with dealing with officials, healthcare, education and other matters. Children between the ages of 3 and 7 were able to use the day care centre under the professional care of Foundation for Freedom staff. With earlier appointment, it was possible to obtain psychological, legal and career counselling assistance. We also ran support groups for women, for children of all ages, seniors, social skills training sessions for children, yoga for pregnant women and mothers of young children, and many more integration activities. From the beginning of 2025, we have been running an accessible 'off the street' support centre at the Multicultural Centre in Hallera Square. The range of support is a little different, there is no day care centre for children, but there are plenty of integration activities and events open to various groups of people who have not previously benefited from our support. More about the Multicultural Centre on the next page.

208 children benefited from a day care centre run by our partners from the Foundation for Freedom



Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the help our family has received – we are retired and have a granddaughter with a first-degree disability. We always need the Foundation's help because we cannot work due to severe chronic illnesses.

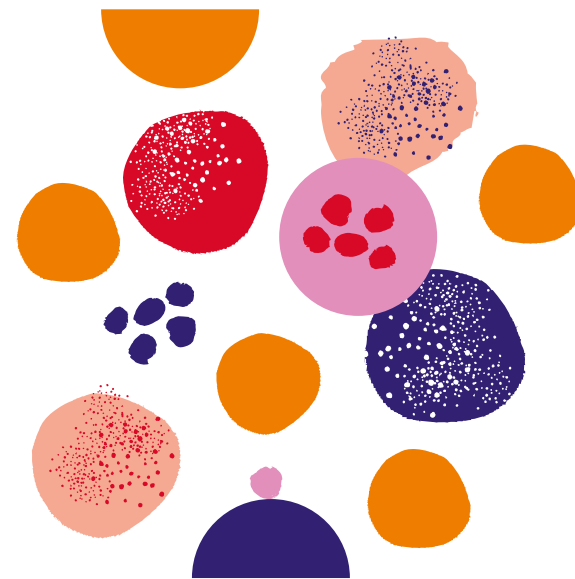
The services are provided at the highest level. The staff are very friendly and provide a top-quality service. Very helpful staff.

The PMF employee is very caring, empathetic and helpful. She has helped me with legal issues and showed great kindness.

Multicultural Centre

300 Haller cakes

were made to celebrate the opening of the Multicultural Centre. Our facility was visited by more than 400 people that day. Our slogan is: **WE WIL ALL FIT!**



One of the nicest things that happened to us in 2024 was winning the City of Warsaw's competition to take over the Multicultural Centre! Together with partners: Foundation for Freedom, Mova Association – language without barriers, Code Your Path and Mudita Association, we will be here for 2 years! We organise varied integration activities here and also host external initiatives. It is so great to be able to be genuinely welcoming and open instead of just talking about how necessary and good it is! Our slogan is "we will all fit" – we've tested it – it works! Join us! Jagiellońska 54, entrance from Hallera Square. We are open Monday to Friday from 9 AM to 8 PM and on Saturdays from 10 AM to 4 PM. You can find information on current activities on the website:

centrumwielokulturowe.waw.pl

On a daily basis, PMF case workers help people with migration experience cope with a variety of difficulties. They speak Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, Chechen, Belorussian, English, Persian, Pashto, Dari, Urdu, Hindi, Georgian, Armenian, Megrel.

We opened on 17 January and by the end of the month we had already held 50 events, including:

- A group of seniors from Poland and Ukraine meet regularly to, after putting on blue caps and gloves, make delicious fluffy dumplings and enjoy them together at a long table
- Around 40 people practised handpoke tattoos on bananas during a workshop organized by BAZA by Inclusive.Buzz
- An academy for advanced psychologists working with children with migrant experience was launched, led by outstanding PMF experts
- Justyna from PMF organised a local government and NGO meeting: "Migrants in the crisis of homelessness", mapping the challenges, difficulties and solutions to this growing problem.
- Jose (the most cheerful man in Warsaw even in January!) led several cooking workshops, not only on making Haller cakes
- Two groups meeting in the language cafe inherited with the Multicultural Centre regularly draw in a lot of participants
- A visit by experts from Utrecht and international partners of the URBACT programme dedicated to the challenges of migration.
- We also hosted participants of Shipyard Foundation's "Business unusual" programme,
- UNHCR Poland runs an information desk every other Tuesday, and on Saturdays twice a month the Mova Association - Language without Barriers provides two multilingual interpreters and several telephone interpreters to help with various matters.



On the occasion of the opening of the Multicultural Centre, we also celebrated our 18th birthday! The Polish Migration Forum Foundation was registered on 23.01.2007!

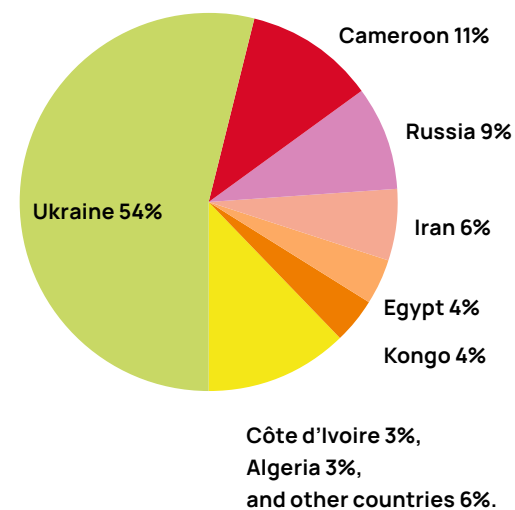
Assistance provided outside Warsaw



more than 100 coaches
would be filled by our beneficiaries if they were
to come to Warsaw for support.
These individuals benefited from, among other
things:

1298 consultations
with case workers.
98% of clients were from the Ukraine.

382 consultations
with psychologists for people from
24 countries:



In 2024, we provided assistance in 22 collective accommodation places and centres for foreigners. Some of the facilities were under the care of our psychological team, most were visited periodically by our mobile team consisting of a case worker, a psychologist and a coordinator (and also a midwife). Getting to places outside of Warsaw, within the Mazovian Voivodeship, where often no other help reaches, is extremely important and necessary work. For the past three years, people in particular need of support have been housed in collective accommodation centres: this includes the elderly, individuals caring for people with disabilities, the chronically ill, incapacitated persons.



in 2024, we visited 22 sites in Mazovia:

Szydłowiec / Rynek Wielki /Hotel
Siedlce
Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki / OPS
Dębak
Milanówek
Izabelin
Chrośla / Zajazd pod Dębem
Ożarów Mazowiecki
Brudnów
Warszawa / Małego Rycerza / Dom
Samotnej Matki
Konstancin
Wyszaków / Hotel
Warszawa / Piaseczno
Warszawa / Wesoła
Warszawa / Marki
Warszawa / Targowa 33 / grupa
osób głuchich
Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki /Tytusa
Halubińskiego /Hostel
Szydłowiec / Hotel Ballaton
Szydłowiec / Hotel Olenka
Wyszaków OPS
Linin
Święcice
Piłazzków

Key challenges:

- changing dynamics and unpredictability of needs at the locations visited,
- we are not always able to respond to the needs reported,

System recommendations:

- improving coordination and cooperation with other support providers at the sites visited,
- improving the availability of support (of any kind) in smaller towns, on a systemic level – this probably applies to the whole of Poland, not just Mazovia.
- need to actively counter xenophobia and origin-based violence.

Volunteering



over 100
male and female volunteers of twenty
different nationalities
share their time
and skills with PMF. Thank you!



„Let's talk
Language classes
tailored to individuals
www.wwwwwwwith
migration and refugee
experience.
led by volunteers”.



At the Polish Migration Forum Foundation, the volunteer community is at the heart of our activities. We offer opportunities to get involved in projects that combine support for migrants with the personal development of volunteers. By working together, we support the migrant community in a variety of areas – from teaching Polish and English, to translation support, to helping organise cultural and integration events.

Our male and female volunteers support the Foundation team in the following areas:

- language teaching as part of the “Come Have a Word” project, for which we are continuously recruiting people willing to conduct conversations in Polish and English, on site or online. We train our volunteers in the methodology of teaching Polish as a foreign language and tell them about the specifics of working in a migrant environment. For willing participants, we organise training in psychological first aid according to the International Medical Corps method. Everyone gets access to exercises and textbooks and can also benefit from methodological advice;
- support with the organisation and running of meetings and workshops – handicrafts, dance, sports, cooking, etc.;
- day-to-day assistance with office and administrative work at the Foundation;
- translations into various languages;
- implementation of our own community initiatives under mini-grants;
- support with the running of the International Seniors' Club.

Among over 100 PMF volunteers there are also migrants from Ukraine, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Iran, Venezuela, Bolivia, Colombia, Afghanistan, Spain, the United States, India and Belarus etc.

Volunteering to help migrant people learn Polish can be very rewarding! Volunteers can also benefit from it:

- **Supporting social integration** – by helping migrants learn Polish, you are facilitating their adaptation and relationship-building in their new country.
- **Communication skills development** – working with people from different cultures strengthens communication and intercultural skills.
- **The satisfaction of helping** – volunteering makes you feel that you are contributing to making a difference in the lives of others.
- **Broadening your horizons** – you learn about other cultures and traditions from migrants, enriching your experiences.
- **Personal and professional development** – gain valuable educational skills that can be an asset in your career.
- **Strengthening local ties** – by supporting migrants, you also contribute to building a more integrated and tolerant community.

40 people
participated in the
“Let's talk”
get-together!



Key challenges:

- the declared commitment of volunteers is greater than the current capacity to manage it effectively,
- a significant challenge, paradoxically, is the high interest in the events – especially among seniors, so we have to limit accessibility (organise closed groups), which means that there is a group of people who want to but cannot benefit from the support.

Recommendations:

- there is great potential for activities initiated and carried out by migrants themselves – empowering, integrating, educating, giving a sense of agency, experience, strengthening local relationships,
- local activities are very beneficial, where the voluntary involvement of neighbours has an excellent integrating effect; it would be worthwhile to support such initiatives regularly.
- the “Let's talk” programme is adaptable to any environment, which we encourage. We particularly recommend the senior-migrant conversation model developed as part of the 'New Relations' project, “Poland for Beginners and the Advanced - Pass it on!” (implemented jointly with the “ę” Association of Creative Initiatives).

Professional activation



Participants of MAKÓW - Intercultural Academy of Women's Initiatives and Aleksandra Ośko, Project Coordinator. Read more about the women in the photo and their initiatives [on our website](#).

We support people with a migration experience to become independent in Poland – also professionally. Barriers such as language, cultural differences, not being able to work in one's own profession, having to work in under-qualified jobs or retrain, lack of opportunities in languages other than Polish make it very difficult to get a job.

In 2024, we conducted individual career counselling and group information and industry meetings. We launched the Step into a Career in Poland project – we run consultations with career counsellors, Polish language courses (for which over 500 people signed up in one week!), including medical language, adaptation workshops on work culture in Poland, information and industry meetings.

We implemented the Intercultural Academy of Women's Initiatives project dedicated to women with migration experience from different parts of the world who want to open and develop their own businesses.

Participants were supported in planning, promoting and developing their initiatives, networking, reaching out to customers and clients. They showcased their products, among others, at the WZORY fair at the Powiśle Power Plant.

In addition to gaining specific skills and trying their hand at the market, the project allowed the participants to strengthen their sense of agency and self-confidence. Read more about the participants, [on our website](#).

We are also active in various working groups working develop systemic solutions to support the economic integration of migrants.

We also carried out the POP Fund project "Pathways to Success" for people wishing to gain specific professional skills to become independent in Poland. Participants had the opportunity to take the following courses:

- **welding,**
- **barista and bartender,**
- **manicure, make-up**
- **forklift trucks,**
- **computer skills.**

Both the interest in participating and the level of satisfaction of the participants were very high.

For women from countries outside the European Union we also had a project countering digital exclusion (DIGITS), run jointly with local NGOs and companies from Belgium, Germany, Austria, Greece and Romania. Together, we developed tools to support the acquisition of digital qualifications and methods to disseminate skills and knowledge of good practices. Find out more about the project at [digitsproject.eu](#).

372 career consultations,
350 business consultations

100 people benefited from computer courses and vocational courses – including, for example, a make-up course completed by 14 participants.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to attend the make-up course. To be honest, these were the most enjoyable courses ever. Absolute zen. I arrived in the morning tired from lack of sleep and I left feeling elated – happy and beautiful. I think all the girls will understand what I mean.

Key challenges:

- lack of knowledge of the Polish language and low availability of Polish language courses for people with migration experience, especially at higher levels
- structural mismatch – migrants' qualifications are not matched to market needs,
- need to work below one's qualifications,
- lack of contacts and social networks
- unfamiliarity with regulations, norms and rules applicable to Polish work culture
- instability and everyday difficulties that affect the ability to engage in activities,
- experiencing discrimination, racism and xenophobia in the workplace

System recommendations:

- Polish language lessons organised on a systemic level, not only by NGOs,
- greater labour market control – thereby eliminating or at least reducing the scale of exploitation and discrimination against workers with migrant experience,
- supporting employers so that they are more willing to hire migrants,
- employment support programmes in line with qualifications, courses to help with retraining,
- helping with recognition of diplomas, providing pathways the labour market for specialists particularly needed in Poland, e.g. medics.

Coordination of the national project with UNHCR



FUNDACJA
Polskie
Forum
Migracyjne



Konsorcjum
Migracyjne
Migration Consortium



UKRAIŃSKI
DOM



Since 2024, we have been coordinating a nationwide campaign for refugees with UNHCR funding.

Together with partner organisations: Nomada from Wrocław, Homo Faber from Lublin, Ukrainian Home, Migration Consortium, Foundation for Freedom from Warsaw, we implement a number of activities aimed at providing comprehensive support to refugees and asylum seekers in Poland.

Our priority is to reach out with support to vulnerable people, such as children, the elderly, people with disabilities or chronic illnesses.

Together with partners, we provided information support, case worker support (with solving everyday problems), psychological support, integration support, legal support, vocational activation initiatives, educational support, abuse prevention measures, for example, against gender violence.

The project also included direct financial support to the most vulnerable, advocacy activities, upskilling of teams and networking with other organisations, both NGOs and public institutions. We attach great importance to working on sustainable support – we try to refer clients with specific needs to relevant public institutions (to which we offer expert support) or other NGOs specialised in the field.

A particularly important part of our programme was to support people outside major cities (Warsaw, Lublin, Wrocław). We regularly visited collective accommodation centres outside the big cities, offering assistance where it is still not regularly available.

Collaboration and coordination allow us to learn from each other, raise standards on services and internal procedures and policies (such as purchasing, response to violence, anti-trafficking and sexual harassment, employment, child protection, whistleblowing and others), standardise and improve the ways we report on the outcomes of our work, survey beneficiaries' needs and the effectiveness and quality of support.

Cooperation between local organisations and international organisations in providing key services to refugee and migrant communities can be challenging, so we particularly appreciate the partnership with UNHCR Poland. Efficient knowledge sharing and transparency in key decision-making enables us to provide the best possible support to those who need it most.

Key challenges:

- a large project covering three major cities and regions helped identify systemic gaps in support and challenges. It was difficult for us to face challenges beyond our capabilities.
- bringing together the different perspectives of the diverse partners was sometimes challenging, although we feel that a shared understanding of the purpose of our work enabled us to overcome these challenges.
- problems that remain without a systemic solution are still growing: lack of housing, growing crisis, including mental health crisis. The number of elderly and incapacitated people turning to us for support is increasing. We do not have the capacity to respond to a significant proportion of these needs.

System recommendations:

- expanding and adapting the support system for people in crisis to the needs of people with migration experience, including in areas such as homelessness, mental illness, experience of violence.
- exchange of knowledge and good practices between different regions of Poland at NGO level is inspiring and effective. We are convinced that a similar process of sharing experiences would be valuable at the level of local and government institutions.
- regularly examining the effectiveness of integration and assistance measures implemented. We see that collecting regular feedback from the people we support helps us better address problems and help more effectively.
- anticipating future challenges and responses to dynamically-changing situation. We need a multi-sectoral reflection on the phenomena and challenges we observe (above all, the potential consequences of the end of the war in Ukraine).



MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning) and research

The MEAL team at the PMF Foundation guarantees the highest quality of support for our beneficiaries. We monitor the implementation of projects on a daily basis, analyse the needs of those who approach us for help and enable them to provide feedback. Our priority is to ensure the comfort and sense of security of those using our support and to continuously improve our operations.

In each place where we conduct our work – until December 2024 at the centre in ul. Górczewska 137, and from 2025 at Hallera Square, in the offices in ul. Szpitalna 5/14 and in the field where our mobile teams operate – we allow our beneficiaries the opportunity to express their opinions. Specially developed questionnaires available in eight languages (Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, English, French, Polish, Spanish and Farsi) allow us to better tailor our services to the needs of the people we help.

With seniors and the digitally excluded in mind, we have also developed special paper forms. Everyone has the right to have a voice and we try our best to adapt the tools to make it heard.

Transparency and accountability system

We are continually developing our procedures to ensure that the PMF Foundation is accountable for the actions of our team. We have set up a system for responding to complaints and inappropriate behaviour, which guarantees anonymity for those raising their concerns. We believe that transparency and openness to feedback is the key to effective assistance.

Research activities for better support

From 2024, we have strengthened our commitment to research. As part of the 2024 project founded by UNHCR, we held four focus groups to better understand the needs of seniors, young adults in the labour market, parents and school-age children, and people staying at the open centre for foreigners in Dębak. The focus-based activities will continue into 2025 and the data collected is already helping us tailor our support more effectively.

With funding from the Batory Foundation, we conducted a study on the experiences and needs of people after leaving guarded centres for foreigners, "Showing that you can live here". We are also working with the Association for Legal Intervention and We Are Monitoring on a study of the situation of unaccompanied minors crossing the Polish-Belarusian border, commissioned by Save the Children – the report from this study should be released in March/April 2025.

Our research isn't just about numbers – it's about real change and a better future for vulnerable people. Every voice heard, every survey and every analysis translates into specific decisions and into adapting supports to real needs.

We are proud of our commitment and strive to make sure the PMF Foundation embodies efficiency, professionalism and care for others.



Course for intercultural assistants in May 2024.

Polish-Belarusian border

We have been campaigning for human rights to be respected in the Polish-Belarusian border area since August 2021. We strongly oppose the pushbacks practised by Polish uniformed services – the removal of people en route to Belarus without the possibility to effectively apply for international protection in the EU, in violation of Polish, EU and international law. We do not agree with the militarisation of border regions, the repression of humanitarian activists and the residents of these areas. We do not agree with the destruction of nature, the dehumanisation of refugees, the social and political condoning of violence and indifference. **We get involved to the best of our ability:**

Until the end of September 2024, we managed **Shop Without Borders**, a fundraising tool making it easy to choose what a donor's money would be used for. At the beginning of October 2024, the Polish Migration Forum Foundation handed over the administration of the Shop Without Borders to the Club of Catholic Intelligentsia (KIK). KIK is an organisation actively involved in direct humanitarian assistance for people who cross the Polish-Belarusian border in an unregulated manner. Changing the administrator does not change the way the shop operates – neither technically nor formally. The system of redistribution of funds is maintained – the money is shared between the organisations operating in Podlasie associated with the Border Group, in the most efficient, jointly-determined way (i.e. "round table") and spent according to your chosen objectives. The decision to hand over the shop was purely administrative. As PMF, we did not regularly draw funds for salaries and accounting support for the shop from the pool of donations, and this limited its operational capacity. We would like to thank you for your trust so far and we still certainly recommend shopping at the online humanitarian shop!



SKLEP BEZ GRANIC

Psychological assistance was an element of the work carried out for persons who crossed the Polish-Belarusian border and were detained in guarded centres for foreigners (SOC). A team of psychologists provided intervention support to people in crisis, primarily by telephone. During that time, we were dealing regularly with people who, in our opinion, should not have been detained at all because of their experience of violence or torture. We also supported people in suicide crisis. In many cases, they did not receive the necessary medical assistance from the state. After three years of providing psychological support to people in detention, we stopped this type of activity in June due to limited access, financial and operational difficulties. Our experience was summarised in the **report entitled "Everyone around is suffering"**, prepared jointly with Save the Children and the Association for Legal Intervention (also presented at a conference in the European Parliament).

Our key demands are:

- **immediate suspension of the detention of children,**
- **moving away from the detention of people who have experienced violence and torture**
- **moving away from the practice of repeatedly extending periods of detention, which in itself constitutes psychological violence,**
- **providing psychological and psychiatric assistance to persons in detention.**

We engage in advocacy at many levels and in many forms. In 2024, we took an active part in both the citizens' hearing on the Migration Strategy for Poland and the public hearing on the so-called act on the suspension of the right to asylum. Agnieszka Kosowicz wrote a number of letters (some open) and spoke publicly at every possible opportunity opposing the extension of the 'buffer' zone at the border, the government's hostile narrative fuelling an atmosphere of fear and hatred towards people with migration experience, and the proposed act on the suspension of the right to asylum.

The humanitarian crisis at the border continues!

Statistics for 2024 describing the humanitarian crisis on the Polish-Belarusian border*:
5

666 people requested humanitarian aid

3438 people received humanitarian aid

1424 interventions were carried out by people involved in grassroots humanitarian aid

703 people on the road reported violence experienced in Poland

**3296 people in transit reported experiencing pushbacks
(many people were taken to Belarus multiple times)**

more data, reports and testimonies are available on the [website of We Are Monitoring Association](#). Please take a look!



Key challenges:

- lack of political will to end the practice of pushback,
- rising racism and xenophobia, a global neo-Nazi megatrend
- waning public interest in the topic of the Polish-Belarusian border,
- lack of secure funding for humanitarian aid at the Polish-Belarusian border,
- fatigue and burnout of the communities providing aid in the absence of any stable systemic solutions.

System recommendations

- immediate end to the practice of pushbacks
- use of detention in accordance with Polish law (as a last resort, not standard practice)
- stopping the detention of children – alternative security measures should be applied to families with children,
- stopping the detention of people with experiences of violence
- implementing legal and safe solutions for refugees to find protection in Poland, such as joint participation in relocations or the 'community sponsorship' model,
- amending the regulations for determining the age of persons claiming to be minors (current methods leave a very large margin of error, resulting in children often being classified as adults).

Advocacy and sharing of experiences

We carried out experience-based advocacy activities, seeking to make Polish decision-makers aware of the needs and difficulties of people with migration experience, the identified gaps in support systems and emerging phenomena and trends.

The main area of focus for PMF in 2024 was the state **migration strategy**. We remained in ongoing contact with the Ministry of Interior and Administration, sharing our knowledge of how the legislation works in practice and calling for solutions that take into account the needs of diverse Polish-migrant communities.

Just before the announcement of Poland's Migration Strategy "Take back control, ensure security", PMF prepared and sent its own vision of migration strategy: **"Security means a strong community"** to ministers and senators. The title reflects our demands well. The basis for the security of our communities is – always – relationships with other people, the ability to get along, to care for each other, to work together. In many different groups, at dozens of meetings, we encouraged decision-makers to build communities in Poland that take into account the needs of all, promote dialogue and involve people of different backgrounds in cooperation. We also recalled Poland's Non-Governmental Migration Policy, developed in 2021 by the Migration Consortium (of which PMF is a part).

We were pushing for a participatory state policy-making process in the area of migration and the abandonment of the fear-based narrative. The **speech given by Agnieszka Kosowicz at the civic hearing** on the government's strategy evoked the Indian tale of the two wolves that everyone carries within them, including every society. There is a good wolf and a bad wolf. One seeks agreement, the other conflict and war. Which one wins? The one we feed. 2024 also saw the amendment of many migration laws and regulations.

The Polish Migration Forum had the opportunity to **consult on a draft amendment to the "special act" – the basic legal act that regulates the situation of people who came to Poland as a result of the start of the full-scale war in Ukraine** in February 2022. We made a number of comments – some of which were taken into account, but several important recommendations were ignored.

The legal team prepared a package of comments on the draft Act on Foreigners' Access to the Labour Market.

We spoke out publicly on many occasions, trying to secure the rights and dignity of people with a migration experience.

We **disagree with the government's decisions to suspend the right to apply for international protection**. We believe that a political narrative that builds resentment towards migrants, for example in the context of taking away 800+ benefits from children, is dangerous (it feeds the bad wolf).

But with greater hope and satisfaction we participated in the activities of the **working team for the educational integration of children from Ukraine, set up by the Ministry of Education** and led by Minister Joanna Mucha. PMF led a working group on school integration. We are pleased that the employment of intercultural assistants in schools has now been adopted as a systemic solution and is gradually being introduced in Polish schools.

We also have a sense of good cooperation in the **field of education with the Warsaw local government**.

In cooperation with the Education Office of the capital city of Warsaw, we were able to share our experience and knowledge with the headmasters of Warsaw schools (over 600!), the heads of the education departments of all Warsaw districts and city experts.

We actively participate in the work of the non-governmental Coalition for strengthening the role



Security is a strong community. A migration strategy for Poland. (Bezpieczeństwo to silna wspólnota. Strategia migracyjna dla Polski – available in Polish only)

of intercultural and Roma assistants. Thanks to the involvement of PMF, among other things, the profession of intercultural assistant was introduced into education legislation in mid-2024. In May 2024, **we published a brochure called "Why Polish schools need intercultural assistants"** on the role and tasks of intercultural assistants, which we promote among school managers.

An important advocacy project was our **report entitled "Everyone around is suffering" on psychological assistance from the Polish Migration Forum Foundation for people in guarded centres for foreigners**. More information can be found on page 12.

We campaigned for a reasonable and moderate approach in the public debate on migration

– persistently, but so far without success. Open letters to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland, Donald Tusk, and the Speaker of the Sejm, Szymon Hołownia, in which we called in June 2024 for the inhibition of slanderous hate speech by some politicians, went unanswered. Words have power – we know this from experience and from history. When we talk about migration, we are talking about specific people. We cannot forget that.

The whole of 2024 was a time of collaboration, of joining forces, also in the advocacy area. We collaborated within the Migration Consortium, "Razem" Forum, the Coalition for Intercultural and Roma Assistants, and meetings and groups coordinated by UNHCR. We also developed an internal advocacy programme, which provided an opportunity to reflect on advocacy goals, as well as to build advocacy competencies within our team.



Agnieszka Kosowicz speaks at a conference on intercultural assistantship on 5 June 2024.

Another aspect of our advocacy work is upskilling and educating those implementing the relevant processes. Among other things, we conducted a training course for employees of the Refugee Processing Department of the Office for Foreigners:

Interviewing children with experiences of forced migration.

We carried out the training in Warsaw and at the Office for Foreigners headquarters in Biała Podlaska. The training covered topics such as:

- Psychological and social effects of forced migration
- (Cultural differences, Taboos, Individual resources and difficulties).
- How stress and trauma affect a child's brain, executive functions and communication capabilities.
- Possible reactions and strategies of children in response to the stress of being interviewed.
- Symptoms indicative of a child experiencing violence.
- How to talk to a child about violence and difficult experiences during an interview.
- How to prepare a child for an interview? And how to support them during the interview?

Our paid training courses

The high demand for knowledge in the areas of integration, intercultural education, law relating to people with a migration experience and other topics we specialise in, and at the same time the Foundation's dwindling financial resources, prompted us to launch paid training courses.

Find the training topic you are interested in on our website and we will make you an offer. Below are some of our paid training courses. We will be happy to respond to the needs of your company, organisation or institution by preparing tailor-made training sessions. Contact us!

- Training in the area of migration law, legalisation of stay and access to social benefits
- Training based on psychological aspects:
- Training on the employment of foreigners:
- Training based on cultural differences and intercultural integration:
- Training based on language:
- Training on project activities:
- Cooking and handicraft workshops:
- Training for schools
- Training for intercultural assistants

Sample training programme:

Foreigners in the Polish social welfare system – residence rights and access to benefits.

We have conducted several such training courses, attended by social workers, employees of social assistance centres and social service centres, single mother's homes, crisis intervention centres, district family assistance centres.

The training includes, among others:

- Foreigner residence rights in Poland and related rights under the Foreigners Act. Changes introduced by the amendment of the Act on Assistance to Ukrainian Citizens.
- Different residence rights and entitlement to social welfare benefits – overview of the current provisions of the Social Welfare Act concerning persons with a migration experience
- Social work with people with experience of migration – workshop showing the specifics of social work addressed at people with experience of migration



Training on the legal aspects of the employment of foreigners.

Training is provided in Polish, English, Ukrainian and Russian.

Training includes:

Introduction:

- Challenges and constraints related to the employment of foreigners in Poland
- Acts governing the employment of foreign nationals
- Legal changes planned for 2025
- Polish Migration Strategy 2025-2020
- Glossary – terms you should know
- **Legality of employment of foreigners**
- Work as the purpose of foreigners' stay in Poland
- Illegal work
- Labour market control and legality of employment

Types of contracts under which a foreigner may take up employment:

- employment contract,
- commission contract,
- specific work contract,
- B2B contract,
- economic activity of foreigners in Poland: sole proprietorship, partnership
- Aspects to look out for when concluding employment contracts with foreigners

Documents that enable the employment of foreigners who do not have free access to the labour market

- Work permit: Types of work permits. When does a foreigner not need a work permit?
- Declaration of entrusting work
- Notification of entrusting work
- CUKR card for Ukrainian citizens

Recognition of foreign diplomas, studies and job seniority

Obligations of an employer who employs foreigners

Procedure of employing foreigners

- Permit issue procedure
- Simplified procedure
- Foreign nationals in the company – inspections and penalties for employers

International protection and legal work



How we did it
our team, partners
and friends

The team



2024 saw a gradual shrinking of the Foundation's team, which had grown exponentially in previous years due to the humanitarian crisis caused by Russian aggression in Ukraine. As the funds available for humanitarian aid were decreased, we successively reduced the number of individual teams, we also changed the division of work and, in several cases, we abandoned previously conducted activities. For many, this change required flexibility and taking on a greater range of responsibilities. In December 2024, the PMF team comprised 75 people (almost 30 less than the year before). The group of volunteers cooperating with the PMF is invariably large (over a hundred people).

Our team remains multicultural and multilingual. More than half of the team are people with migration experience, representing eight countries (or many more if we include volunteers!).

We speak a total of nineteen languages at PMF!

(Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, Chechen, Belorussian, English, Farsi, Pashto, Dari, Urdu, Hindi, Georgian, Armenian, German, Megrel, French, Arabic, Vietnamese, Serbian)

Partners and donors

Last year was a time of intense growth for us, expanding our range of activities and forging new relationships with organisations and institutions that share our mission and values.

Local government partners

We believe that local authorities play a key role in building intercultural communities, which is why it is so important for us to be able to develop cooperation with Warsaw's local institutions. It is local governments that have the power to build spaces where cultural diversity is treated as a value rather than a barrier.

Since the end of December, the core of our activities has been the Multicultural Centre at Hallera Square. Many thanks to the **Centre for Social Communication of the capital city of Warsaw** for entrusting us with the role of the host of the Multicultural Centre, as well as the **Board of the Praga Północ District** for warmly welcoming us into the community of neighbourhood organisations operating in the vicinity of Hallera Square. We are excited about our presence at the Multicultural Centre and are planning a series of activities with local cultural institutions and neighbourhood organisations. Thanks to funding from the Centre for Social Communication of the capital city of Warsaw, we also launched a programme to support people with a migration experience who suffer from domestic violence.

In 2024, we continued to work with **Warsaw's Office of Education** in the area of developing intercultural assistantship in the capital's primary schools and supporting intercultural education for pupils. In 2024, we also collaborated with the **Office of Culture of the capital city of Warsaw** to help build a multicultural Polish-migrant community in Warsaw. We are also very pleased to have established cooperation with the **Office for International Cooperation of the capital city of Warsaw**, as part of which we can support the integration of people with migration experience into the Polish labour market.

We would also like to thank the **Union of Polish Metropolises** for their trust and the successful fruitful cooperation.

Local partnerships

We would also like to thank the partners who hosted our activities, carried out projects with us or simply worked with us:

- Stowarzyszenie Homo Faber
- Stowarzyszenie Nomada
- Fundacja Ukraiński Dom
- Konsorcjum Migracyjne
- Stowarzyszenie Inicjatyw Twórczych „ę”
- Fundacja dla Wolności
- Stowarzyszenie Inclusive.Buzz
- Fundacja na Rzecz Różnorodności Społecznej
- Stowarzyszenie Mova - język bez barier
- Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej
- Stowarzyszenie We Are Monitoring
- Fundacja Cup of Polish
- Klub Inteligencji Katolickiej
- Ambasada Wielkiej Brytanii
- Stowarzyszenie Mudita
- Code Your Path
- Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców
- Związek Ukraińców w Polsce Oddział Przemyski
- International Centre for Migration Policy Development
- Koalicja Na Rzecz Wzmacniania Roli Asystentek Międzykulturowych oraz Romskich
- Warszawskie Centrum Pomocy Rodzinie
- MORS
- Fundacja im. Stefana Batorego
- Miejsce Aktywności Lokalnej Grójecka 109
- Fundacja Kraina
- Muzeum Warszawy
- Magazyn Pismo
- Magazyn Kontakt
- barStudio
- Stacja Praga
- schools where our intercultural assistants work
- locations in Mazovia hosting our mobile team as well as organisations, activists and everyone else involved in humanitarian aid on the Polish-Belarusian border.

Individual donors

Thank you very much to all those who support us by donating 1.5 % of their taxes, making contributions through our website and giving us regular donations. Thank you for your trust and for being part of our community.
Your help gives us not only financial support, but also a huge motivation to keep going.
Remember us when doing your tax return!
KRS 0000272075
You can also support the activities of the PMF by making a donation through the website (PayU):
<https://forummigracyjne.org/donate>

Business and corporate foundations

Thanks to our cooperation with the **ING Children's Foundation**, we were able to support the educational integration of children and young people with a migration experience through the involvement of our intercultural assistants in Warsaw schools.
Thanks to the **Biedronka Foundation**, we were able to support the most vulnerable people, especially those at risk of homelessness.
BNP Paribas Foundation supported the implementation of our integration and mental resilience workshops for children with migrant and refugee experience in schools.
In 2025, as part of our partnership with the Centre for Public Impact through the **Google AI Opportunity Fund** programme, we will be funding training and workshops to improve digital skills, particularly related to artificial intelligence.

International project partnerships

Last year we continued to work on projects as part of international partnerships. Through this cooperation we were able to exchange experiences with other organisations working for the benefit of people with migration experience over the years and to develop our competences in new areas of support. Thank you for the successful cooperation:

Diesis Network – Belgium
Austrian Association of Inclusive Society (AIS) – Austria
Symplexis – Greece
BK Consult – Germany
Hub for Innovation Policy (HIP) – Romania
Greek Forum of Migrants (EFM) – Greece
Solidarity Now – Greece
Mental Health Europe – Belgium
Prolepsis Institute – Greece
Liga za duševné zdravie – Slovakia
Elliniko Forum Metanaston – Greece
Eurohealthnet ASBL – Belgium
Fundatia Estuar – Romania
Liga Za Dusevne Zdravie Sr,League For Mental Health – Slovakia
Riga City Council – Latvia

Nationwide networks

We are co-founders of the Migration Consortium, the Cooperation and Integration Forum, we attend meetings of the "Razem" Forum, the Migration Network and others.

International networks

PMF is a member of several international networks of human rights organisations: International Detention Coalition and the European Network for Migrant Women.

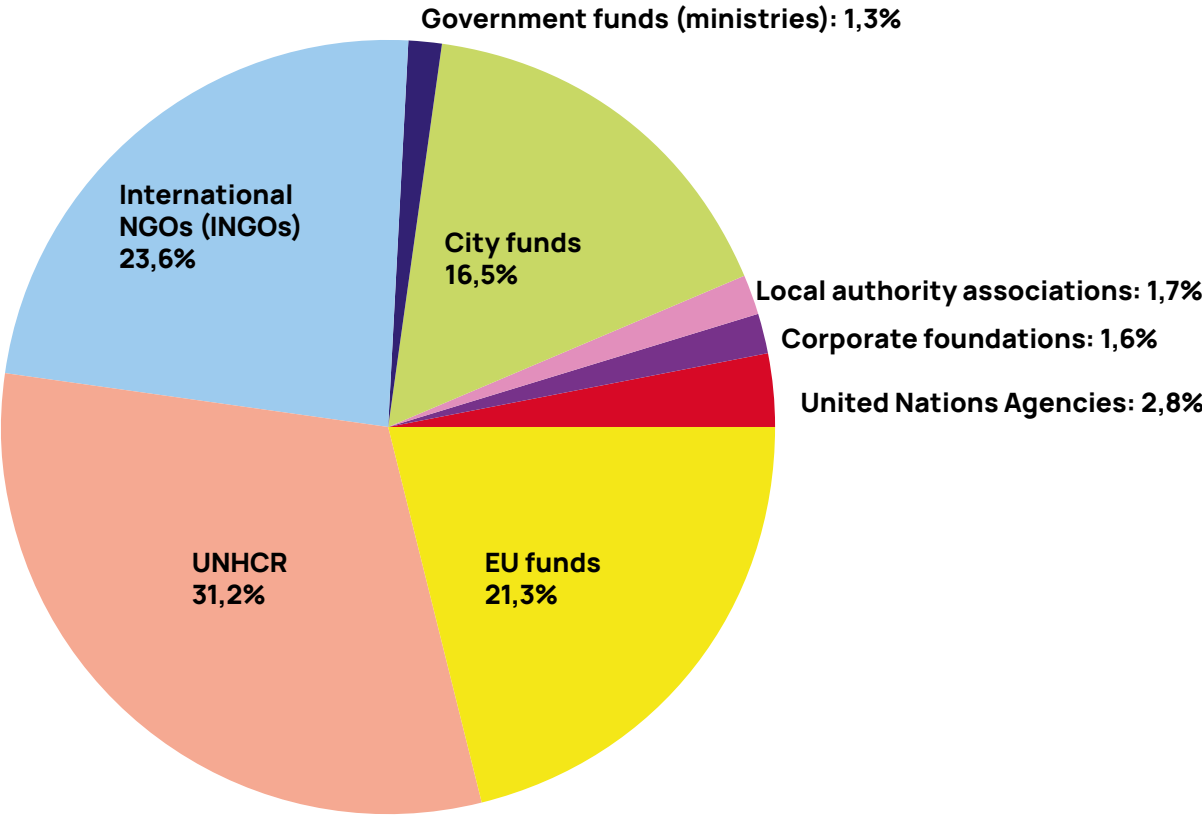
International NGOs and UNHCR

In 2024, more than 23% of the budget for PMF activities came from grants from international non-governmental organisations (INGOs). Most projects were a continuation of successful and fruitful partnerships from previous years. Thank you very much for your cooperation and trust:
Plan International
International Rescue Committee
Ashoka
Save the Children
Care International Polska
Pathways International
Open Society Foundation

Our largest and most important partner in 2024 remained UNHCR, funding over 31% of our activities. We write about our cooperation with the United Nations Refugee Agency on page 34. Whereas Agnieszka Kosowicz talks about the 'earthquake' caused by Donald Trump's decision on withholding humanitarian and development aid in the introduction.

*Dziękujemy,
że jesteście*

Project budgets - breakdown by source of funding*.
*the figures do not include expenses raised through donations, 1.5% tax for public benefit organisations in Poland and our own funds.





**The future –
working contexts, challenges,
plans and demands**

Contexts. Determinants of our work and future challenges

Agnieszka Kosowicz

“The Only Constant in Life Is Change” said Heraclitus of Ephesus 500 years BC – this philosophical thought sums up both the context of our work over the past year and our expectations for the future. Another proverb goes “sow the wind, reap the whirlwind”, which explains our perception of the challenges in the near future – some processes and phenomena have already started and will be difficult to stop.

Political circumstances

The next presidential election in Poland is scheduled for 18 May. For many weeks, the topic of migration has been an important element of the election campaign, with migrants being portrayed in a bad light. We are seeing a radicalisation of the discourse around migration, a rise in anti-migrant sentiment, criminalisation of humanitarian aid, hate language in public spaces, a rise in populism and a strong bias among society – and we unfortunately expect these phenomena to grow. Similar processes are taking place in other countries. At the same time, we are seeing politicians moving away from the principles of human rights and humanitarian values. We therefore expect tensions around our area of work, an increase in anti-migration rhetoric, and a widening gap between the political narrative and the social and economic needs of our country. The reality of our work will, of course, be affected by the decisions of the new US administration. The suspension of humanitarian aid around the world in January 2025 has shaken our reality. We expect the US to be guided by its own country's interests, also at the expense of others. We therefore expect further difficult US decisions that will significantly affect the geopolitical situation of the whole world.

Economic context

Economic and demographic trends mean that Poland needs and will continue to need workers from abroad. Many areas of the economy cannot develop without additional workers, so the number of foreign workers in Poland will increase. We expect migrants from non-European countries (Philippines, Nepal, Bangladesh, Colombia and other South American countries) to move to Poland. Due to the unfavourable image of migrants, we fear abuse of these workers in the labour market and an increase in the number of people operating in the Polish grey economy. We will probably be supporting more people experiencing exploitation on the Polish labour market.

Legal context

When we look at the new legislation currently being introduced, we see a tightening of migration rules, depriving migrants of various opportunities and rights. This will result in an increase in the number of people who will not be able to count on support and protection from the state in Poland, who will be at risk of social exclusion. There will be an increase in the number of people with an unregulated legal status, as not everyone will be able to meet the more stringent requirements needed for legalisation. We also expect increased scrutiny and restrictions on human rights activities.

Social context

Analyses of social attitudes towards migrants indicate declining friendliness. "Compassion fatigue" is fuelled by political statements, so we expect that the number of people who are positive about people with a different identity will continue to drop. Anti-migrant sentiment will also be exacerbated by decisions made in other countries that will affect migrant Poles (in the USA, in European countries). We therefore expect conflicts in local communities, including incidents of physical violence against people with migration experience. Public support for our work will probably diminish and the media unfavourable to migration will report our activities in an unfavourable light. At the same time, we anticipate that a reverse process will also take place: some Poles will feel dissatisfied with the dehumanisation of migrants, as over recent years people have built personal relationships with them. We also see that there is a growing group of people in Poland, especially from the Ukraine, who will never be independent: they are elderly people, sick people, people with disabilities. The lack of systemic solutions for these people will result in some of them being affected by the homelessness crisis. This will reflect negatively on the image of migrants in the public eye.

Artificial intelligence and technology development

The fate of the war in Ukraine at the time of writing this publication is difficult to predict. The US President is taking steps to end the conflict, however, the voice and interest of Ukraine in this process is not taken into account. It is possible that the war will end quickly, without accounting for the wider interests of Ukraine. It is also possible that, despite US efforts, the conflict will continue, even if a formal end to the war is declared. It is difficult to predict future developments right now, but we expect:

- people returning to Ukraine, if the war ends. Pressure is expected on refugees to make quick decisions about return. The tension between the interests of states and the interests of individuals is likely to lead to many human dilemmas.
- people leaving Ukraine. If the war ends, it is likely that some of the men will want to join their families living in other countries. If the war goes on, more refugees may be forced to flee.
- political tensions between Poland and Ukraine over issues where the countries have different interests. Returns will be a certain area of conflict. Another area will be the future of people who cannot independently take care of themselves: the elderly, people with disabilities, whose presence will be seen as a burden by these countries.
- breakdown of the Polish support system for people in crisis – there will be more people in crisis. The Polish crisis intervention system will not be able to provide them with even elementary support.
- growing mental health needs – both people with experience of migration and Polish men and women struggle to cope with an emotionally demanding reality: war, the omnipresent sense of danger and insecurity. These fears are fuelled by political leaders. There is a growing group of people who require professional help to achieve emotional and mental stability.
- abuse, domestic violence – all of the above will lead to an increase in aggression, both in social and family life.

What we are seeking

The statutory tasks of the Polish Migration Forum Foundation include safeguarding the rights of people with migration experience and creating a diverse community living in peace and maintaining dialogue in Poland. These are our goals for the next year of work.

In 2025, our particularly important tasks include:

Humanising migration – we want to talk about people

We want decision-makers to remember that they are talking about real people when they talk about migration. About people who have resources and dreams, needs but also aspirations. Every person has human rights.

We will fight to ensure that other people are respected. We will support a knowledge-based, solution-oriented, constructive dialogue on migration.

Migration Strategy for Poland – security means a strong community

We will encourage security by building relationships between Polish people and their neighbours, with different backgrounds and origins. We will also demand cooperation and dialogue in the implementation of the strategy. We are all the recipients of this strategy – it should respond not to the political but to the social needs of our country.

We will strive to ensure that the Polish authorities take responsibility for all people who live in Poland – regardless of their origin or legal status.

Social control

The coming year will see the need to implement the European Migration Pact. We want Poland's actions to be monitored by the established mechanisms, with the involvement of social actors.

Return of values

We will remind people that every human life is of value, everyone has dignity, and that justice, equality, peace, empathy, solidarity and simple kindness are values that improve our quality of life.

Support for system solutions

After three years of responding to the crisis, we want to share our knowledge and experience with local government and government partners. We want to expand systemic solutions in areas of support for people with migration experience, for which the state should be responsible. Supporting people in the labour market, helping people in crisis of homelessness, the aforementioned crisis interventions and access to healthcare – these are tasks in which all residents should be able to count on the state as a system.

Safe space

We can see that in a turbulent world, people just need a quiet, safe place. We want to offer such a space: for Polish women and men, for people with a migration experience. We will testify that kindness between people is possible.

Projects implemented in 2024

	Project title	Scope		Duration	Budget - executed in 2024	Source of funding	Tags
1	On the road to empowerment. Access to rights, integration and strengthening refugee resilience in Poland.	A multi-faceted project, at the heart of which was our beneficiary support centre in ul. Górczewska 137 in Warsaw. It offered the following forms of support: case working, legal assistance, career counselling, psychological support, a helpline, advice on legalisation of stay, community building activities (including supporting refugees), advice on setting up a business and a mobile support point in collective accommodation centres in Mazovia.		01.01.2024-31.12.2024	6204160	UNHCR	Case working Psychological support Integration Professional activation Legal aid Social support Access to information
2	Intercultural assistantship in Warsaw schools - 2023/2024 and 2024/2025	The aim of the project was to equalise the educational opportunities of children with migration experience through the support provided to them by intercultural assistants in Warsaw primary schools. We also strengthened the competences of assistants by organising workshops and training sessions for them. The project also resulted in leaflets and information brochures prepared for parents of pupils with migration experience.		1.01.2024-30.06.2024 and 1.09.2024-31.12.2024 (continued until 30.06.2025)	339 675,00	Office of Education of the capital city of Warsaw	Formal education Strengthening systemic competences
3	Support programme for refugees from Ukraine - 3rd edition	The aim of the project was to build the competences of male and female teachers in working with students with refugee and migration experience. As part of the project, we delivered a series of on-site training sessions and webinars and published teaching materials for teachers on preventing violence at school. The project also included a psychological support component for children and adolescents, combining a variety of activities to support children and families who have found refuge in Poland from the war in Ukraine. In addition, we provided case worker support.		1.01.2024-31.12.2024	2032460,88	PLAN International oraz Disasters Emergency Committee	Psychological support Strengthening systemic competences Non-formal education
4	Improving access to education for children and young people affected by the war in Ukraine	Intercultural assistantship in Warsaw schools. The aim of the project was to build the competences of intercultural assistants employed by a variety of entities (NGOs, schools, local authorities) and to organise networking meetings. The project also included the promotion and dissemination of an e-learning course created for the website: szkoła-rożnorodnosci.org.		1.01.2024-31.07.2024	453396	International Rescue Committee	Formal education Non-formal education Strengthening systemic competences
5	Perinatal support for refugee women	Support for mothers with the experience of forced migration, including: running intercultural antenatal classes, midwifery consultations, health education, first aid training and relaxation classes. Midwives were a particular target group of the project – we trained them and shared our experiences, especially from working in culturally diverse environments and with women who had experienced trauma or violence.		1.10.2024-31.12.2024	137657,94	United Nations Population Fund UNFPA	Perinatal support Psychological support Strengthening systemic competences
6	Mates! Polish-migrant multigenerational club	Mates! was a project aimed to promote integration and cultural education in an intergenerational and international setting. The activities were based on positive interactions and meetings organised around cooking, designing, handicrafts, dancing and singing, walking and celebrating holidays together, learning about and cultivating different traditions. More than 100 people of different nationalities, including Polish women and men, took part in the project.		18.03.2024-31.12.2024	125000	Ministry of Culture and National Heritage	Integration

	Project title	Scope		Duration	Budget - executed in 2024	Source of funding	Tags
7	Working for change	The project supported PMF's advocacy activities, as well as an internal training programme on advocacy for the team. The grant also enabled us to audit the Foundation's finances.		1.02.2024-31.08.2024	115029	Ashoka	Advocacy
8	Intercultural Academy for Women's Initiatives	Supporting entrepreneurship and professional activation of refugee women potentially at risk of discrimination. We primarily invited women from Central Asia and the Middle East to the programme.		1.01.2024-30.10.2024	116206,8	Ashoka	Professional activation
9	Come Have a Word - language support for volunteers teaching migrants Polish as a foreign language	The "Come Have a word" volunteer programme supported migrants in learning the Polish language. As part of the project, we published materials for learning Polish as a foreign language, organised a discussion club and a long-awaited get-together of participants in the "Come Have a Word" programme. We also trained volunteers, helping prepare them comprehensively to support migrants with learning.		1.04.2024-31.10.2024	63225,44	National Centre for Culture	Integration
10	Psychological support for persons in detention (guarded centres for foreigners)	Psychological support and crisis intervention for people in detention, often after experiencing violence at the Polish-Belarusian border. As part of the project, we compiled our experiences into a report.		1.01.2024-30.06.2024	45200	Save The Children	Psychological support
11	Humanitarian assistance to refugees from Ukraine	The project was implemented by a consortium of organisations supporting migrants and refugees in various Polish cities (Lublin, Poznań, Przemyśl, Warsaw, Wrocław). The leader of the consortium was the Association for Legal Intervention and PMF provided psychological support, including referrals to specialist psychiatric support organisations.		01.01.2024-30.06.2024	600000	The Tides Foundation (Google.org)	Psychological support
12	DIGITS. Building digital soft skills of migrant women	The aim of the project was to develop a common understanding of the needs of modern digital integration of migrant women in Europe. As part of the project, we piloted an online platform, which helps build digital competences among women with experience of migration. Project partners: Symplexis (Greece) HIP - Hub for Innovation Policy (Romania) Diesis Coop (Belgium) Austrian Association of Inclusive Society (Austria) BK Consult (Germany) Elliniko Forum Metanaston (Greece)		1.01.2024 - 30.09.2024	199723,11	Project funded by the programme Erasmus+	Professional activation Strengthening systemic competences
13	The whole world in our classroom / ReSET. Strengthening intercultural competences and mental wellbeing of children and adolescents from Warsaw schools - 2023/2024 and 2024/2025	Conducting classes in Warsaw schools: 1) on intercultural education and preventing discrimination; 2) strengthening the psychological resilience of children and young people with experience of migration. As part of the project, we also trained school psychologists on how to work with children with a migration experience.		1.01.2024-30.06.2024 and 1.09.2024-31.12.2024	59 600	Office of Education of the capital city of Warsaw	Non-formal education Psychological support Integration
14	MENTALITY - Implementing Mental Health Quality Practices	Implementation of good practices in the area of mental health. Project implemented in partnership with leading European organisations dealing with mental health support.		1.01.2024-31.12.2024 (continued until 28.02.2025)	103843,89	European Commission, Health and Digitisation Executive Agency (HaDEA)	Psychological support Strengthening systemic competences

	Project title	Scope		Duration	Budget - executed in 2024	Source of funding	Tags
15	POP Fund "pathways to success"	<p>The project aimed to improve the situation of Ukrainian refugee women by increasing their chances on the Polish labour market. The project's target group was people without specialised skills, experiencing difficulties entering the labour market or working below their skills and qualifications. The long-term goal was to strengthen the self-reliance of refugee women and to build their economic resilience and agency.</p> <p>As part of the project, we carried out the following activities:</p> <p>1) Development of basic digital competences, facilitating independent job searching and computer use skills for positions such as registrar, receptionist or salesperson.</p> <p>2) Focusing on specific sectors of the Polish labour market, especially those in which refugee women were most often employed.</p> <p>3) Individual career counselling, supported by educational vouchers for further training.</p>		1.08.2024-31.12.2024	200000	Polish Centre for International Aid Foundation	Professional activation
16	Academy of Migrant Arts	<p>The project consisted of building a multi-generational Polish-migrant community in Warsaw. It consisted of two components:</p> <p>1) Academy of Migrant Arts – a series of monthly artistic, multicultural and handicraft workshops led by migrants of different nationalities living in Warsaw, gathered around the Polish Migration Forum Foundation, preceded by lectures on culture and everyday life in their countries of origin. The Warsaw Museum was a partner and meeting venue.</p> <p>2) Polish-Migrant Multigenerational Club – an initiative to integrate a multigenerational Polish-migrant group, originating from a grassroots initiative of a group of migrant senior women.</p>		01.01.2024-31.12.2024	145660	Office of Culture of the capital city of Warsaw	Integration
17	Community sponsorship	<p>The project was carried out in cooperation with other organisations supporting the dissemination of the community sponsorship model in Poland. As part of the project, PMF comprehensively supported two families with refugee experience in Poland. Work was also undertaken on a publication on the community patronage model. A project was also carried out to engage people with migration and refugee experience in cooperation with cultural institutions, specifically the Museum of Warsaw. Together with the Museum, we organised a series of multicultural breakfasts and musical gatherings.</p>		01.01.2024-31.12.2024	170042	Pathways International	Integration
18	Cross-cultural mediators for children affected by the war in Ukraine	<p>Thanks to the Embassy's support, our team of intercultural assistants were able to support refugee children from Ukraine attending schools in Warsaw.</p>		1.01.2024-31.03.2024	66901	Embassy of the United Kingdom	Formal education Strengthening systemic competences
19	Step into the future. Vocational activation of people with refugee and migration experience	<p>Support for the labour activation of refugees and migrants who speak rare languages (Sorani, Arabic, Tajik and others). Project implemented in cooperation with the MOVA Association.</p>		1.01.2024-30.04.2024	9734	Mova Association - Language without Barriers	Professional activation
20	Development of the volunteer programme of the Polish Migration Forum Foundation	<p>A three-year project to develop systematic volunteering, which in PMF has become a key element to support the integration of migrants into the local community. Among other things, volunteers participated in the "Come Have a Word" programme, teaching Polish and English, organised intercultural workshops and carried out original initiatives under mini-grant, such as art and language workshops or integration meetings. Through study visits to international organisations and comprehensive training, the coordinators gained new skills and tools for volunteer management. Multilingual materials and documents were also developed to help with communication, and a Volunteer Service System was implemented to allow ongoing monitoring of activities.</p>		01.01.2024-31.12.2024 (continued until 31.12.2026)	126500	National Freedom Institute - Centre for Civil Society Development	Volunteering Integration

	Project title	Scope		Duration	Budget - executed in 2024	Source of funding	Tags
21	Multicultural Centre. We will all fit! - supporting local activities of Warsaw residents, including those with migration experience	<p>The Polish Migration Forum and its partners have been running the Multicultural Centre at Hallera Square since December 2024. We started by diagnosing local needs in the area of integration, education and cultural activities. The purpose of the Multicultural Centre is:</p> <p>a) integration and social inclusion of people with experience of migration, including refugees, in the development of their competences and skills in the area of intercultural cooperation, shaping attitudes based on empathy and respect and openness to others.</p> <p>b) promoting the intercultural competences of children and adults, as well as improving the psychological wellbeing of migrants and refugees through socio-cultural, educational, mental health and anti-violence and anti-aggression group activities. Activities will also be conducted in foreign languages to create a safe and comfortable space for male and female participants.</p> <p>c) carrying out activities promoting diversity and equal treatment among the residents of Warsaw by presenting the services of the Multicultural Centre in the city space, organising meetings, walks and activities aimed at the intercultural community (with particular emphasis on the local community)</p> <p>d) providing information services for migrants and refugees, building their self-advocacy competences and supporting self-organisation activities.</p> <p>e) networking with professional organisations and institutions around the theme of migration, interculturalism and advocacy.</p>		12.2024 (continued until 31.12.2026)	20000	Centre for Social Communication of the capital city of Warsaw	Community building Integration
22	Step into a career	<p>The project involved supporting the culturally-diverse migrant community in Warsaw with integration in the labour market. We carried out:</p> <p>1) General Polish language courses at various levels, offered to people from different language backgrounds. The task envisages 8 annual courses, benefiting 80 people over 2 years.</p> <p>2) Specialised Polish language courses aimed at specific professional groups among people with migration experience, e.g. medical, business or accounting language</p> <p>3) Specialised vocational and business support aimed at activating people with migration experience on the Polish labour market and language education support in the area of job searching in the form of individual consultations, workshops, adaptation courses and mini job fairs.</p>		1.07.2024-31.12.2024	57185	International Cooperation Office of the capital city of Warsaw	Professional activation
23	Supporting Warsaw's multicultural community in the prevention of domestic violence	<p>Start of a three-year project. Preparation of activities for Warsaw residents (with particular emphasis on foreigners) in the scope of counteracting domestic violence.</p> <p>1) Training for public servants: In Warsaw, there is a need for training for public servants such as the police or social workers from Social Welfare Centres on the specific needs of migrants and refugees. In addition to training, we would like to plan methodological consultations for employees of Social Welfare Centres.</p> <p>2) Psychological and legal support: victims of violence need access to professionals who understand their trauma and cultural situation. Within this area, we offer support groups for people who experience domestic violence, as well as individual counselling. Individual support in the area of family law will specifically address the issue of divorce and custody rights.</p> <p>3) Creating multilingual information material: information on rights, procedures for reporting violence and available forms of support must be available in different languages.</p> <p>The first step will be to carry out an audit/survey on how foreign nationals search for materials and what barriers and challenges they encounter in using the available forms of support and applications.</p>		12.2024 (continued until 31.12.2027)	4700	Office for Assistance and Social Projects of the capital city of Warsaw	Preventing domestic violence Legal support Psychological support Strengthening systemic competences

	Project title	Scope		Duration	Budget - executed in 2024	Source of funding	Tags
24	Taiwanese project - "I have the power! Strengthening resilience and supporting the integration of children and young people experiencing the effects of war in Ukraine"	A key element of the project was the provision of comprehensive and regular psychological support to Ukrainian children and adolescents in Ukrainian. In addition, educational activities were carried out for child psychologists working in Warsaw's psychological-educational clinics, schools, preschools and social welfare centres.		01.07.2024-31.12.2024 (continued until 30.06.2025)	55683,01	Union of Polish Metropolises	Psychological support Strengthening systemic competences
25	Perinatal support for pregnant women Local response to the refugee crisis in Warsaw and the metropolitan region	The project provided support for mothers with migration experience by: running intercultural antenatal classes, midwifery consultations, health promotion education, support groups for mothers of young children. It also included activities aimed at countering violence against women and girls. Midwives were a particular target group of the project - we trained them and shared our experiences, especially from working in culturally diverse environments and with women who had experienced trauma or violence. One of the project activities was running a volunteer programme.		1.01.2024-31.03.2024	279798	CARE	Perinatal support Psychological support Strengthening systemic competences Volunteering
26	Cash for Rent and MCPA	Project for persons who have been granted international protection in Poland. The aim was to help participants become more independent by subsidising housing rental and supporting PMF case workers helping satisfy basic needs (including finding rental housing, accessing the health system, education for children, social support). The project provided support to 12 refugee families. Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) - a financial support project aimed at vulnerable groups in the process of obtaining international protection, living in the centres for foreigners in Dębak and Linin. Support with meeting the basic needs was provided to 191 people.		1.04.2024-31.12.2024	191900	Save The Children	Caseworking
27	Carrying out a survey of the needs of people with refugee experience who have been granted or applied for international protection.	The most important objective of our study was a participatory needs assessment to obtain up-to-date information on the needs of residents of detention centres for foreigners and people who have left such centres.		1.10.2024-31.12.2024 (continued until 31.01.2025)	10950,26	Batory Foundation	Needs survey
28	KOMPLEKS	The project supported cooperation between public institutions and NGOs and strengthened the capacity of Polish institutions (e.g. Warsaw Family Support Centre, the Office for Foreigners and the Border Guard Service) in the context of working with vulnerable groups. The project was carried out in partnership with the ICMPSD, the Office for Foreigners and the Association for Legal Intervention. As part of the project, we organised a series of networking meetings, took part in study visits and co-created international seminars. An important part of the project was direct support provided by a case worker and psychologist for migrants with special needs.		1.01.2024-29.02.2024	35792,27	Project co-financed from funds from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021, "Internal Affairs" programme, "Asylum and Migration" thematic area	Case working Psychological support Strengthening systemic competences
29	Stronger together	Intervention project, implemented by organisations affiliated with the Migration Consortium. Under the project, PMF provided psychological assistance, including referrals to specialist psychiatric services.		1.04.2024-31.12.2024	345751,89	OSF	Psychological support
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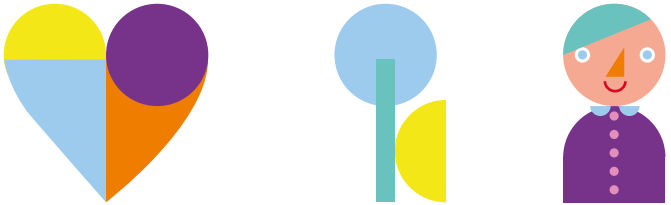
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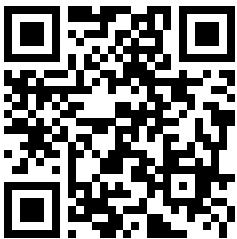


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Warsaw, March 2025

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