

GOŚCINNA POLSKA 2022+

Jak mądrze wesprzeć
Polskę i Polaków w pomocy
osobom uciekającym
przed wojną w Ukrainie?

HOSPITABLE POLAND 2022+

How to wisely support
Poland and Poles in helping
people fleeing the war
in Ukraine?

ГОСТИННА ПОЛЬЩА 2022+

Як мудро підтримати
Польщу у прагненні
допомогти особам,
що тікають від війни
в Україні?

TEN KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE HOSPITABLE POLAND 2022+ REPORT

Poland faced the challenge of accommodating and potentially integrating Ukrainian citizens who arrived in Poland before 24 February 2022 as economic immigrants and people fleeing the war in Ukraine¹. We should also not forget about people from over 100 countries of the world who have decided to live in Poland. The following recommendations primarily concern the support and integration of Ukrainian citizens, more than 2.8 million of whom stay in Poland, but after a slight adjustment they may be the basis for the Polish policy on immigration and integration of foreigners. The implementation of the following recommendations will play a decisive role in whether immigration to Poland is a success, a missed opportunity or a failure.

1. The Polish government and local authorities should take into account the fact of **Poland's transformation into an immigrant and multi-ethnic country** with a high percentage of Ukrainian citizens.
2. **Poland needs foreigners on the labour market** to keep its economy competitive. Proper use of the potential of immigrants, including war refugees, on the labour market will require reduction of a number of barriers, including in particular a language barrier, information barrier and care responsibilities barrier, as well as demand qualification and a smooth process of recognition of professional qualifications.
3. The increased number of immigrants, including people fleeing the war in Ukraine, puts additional pressure on the housing market. A proper response to the challenge in the short term (identification of buildings that stand empty and letting people occupy them, liberalisation of lease regulations and construction of prefabricated housing estates) will provide a basis for improvement of the housing situation in Poland in the long term (reorganisation of the lease market and increasing its scale, a comprehensive review and deregulation of construction law and spatial planning regulations, making available the land blocked for the Mieszkanie Plus Housing Programme to private investors or transferring it to municipalities, improvement of the functioning of the Subsidy Fund) and make it possible to prepare for potential better handling of the effects of natural disasters.
4. In the present crisis situation, it is not possible to guarantee education to all Ukrainian students in the same form. Nor is it reasonable to do so. On the contrary, one should rather think of several complementary forms. It is crucial to temporarily allow all forms of learning: in Polish schools, in preparation classes, and also remote learning in the Ukrainian system, but **with the aim of ultimately reaching a system where all students attend classes taught face-to-face**.
5. The biggest health care challenges are caused by the increased demand for health care services in the health care system that has limited HR, financial and organisational capacity and is considerably weakened after the COVID-19 pandemic. **It is crucial to provide access to health care and meet the needs of Ukrainian patients**, particularly as far as primary health care and mental health is concerned, and to engage Ukrainian war refugees professionally in the health care and care delivery system. In the short term, it is necessary to launch an information system in Ukrainian for Ukrainian patients to give them information about medical and care services, to provide free remote interpretation services with interpreters interpreting conversations between

1 In this text, two terms are used interchangeably, which have methodological and legal grounds. They are: "people fleeing the war in Ukraine" and "war refugees". This approach will allow us to precisely refer to which category of people we refer to in the text.



doctors (or other medical staff) and patients who do not speak Polish fluently enough and to support employment of Ukrainians in the health care and social care sector, including recognition of their professional qualifications.

6. **Polish legislation should be reviewed for provisions that potentially discriminate against foreigners staying in Poland. In addition, it is necessary to reduce red tape in procedures for legalisation of employment and residence**, both for persons fleeing the war in Ukraine and for other migrants, to provide protection and support for people with special needs or at risk of exploitation, especially in terms of employment (also as far as the labour market is concerned) and to adapt all levels of public administration to serve migrants taking into account their needs, including by employing people with migration background in public administration.
7. **Transformation of Poland into an immigration country brings a completely new perspective on the functioning of Poland where relations between the government, local authorities and non-governmental organisations play a crucial role.** This cannot be achieved without adopting transparent rules for financing and refinancing in full the tasks commissioned by the government administration and all expenses related to accommodation and integration of immigrants, including war refugees, for local authorities and non-governmental organisations. It will also be very important to closely link local government institutions with civil society institutions in terms of transparent distribution of funds and organisation of aid (at the national, EU and international level) for immigrants, including war refugees, and to provide support for the countries of origin of immigrants, currently primarily Ukraine.
8. Ukraine and Poland are countries with similar cultures. This is a great advantage in the current situation, because cultural differences should not be a major obstacle to a possible integration. However, the fact that Ukraine and Poland are countries with similar cultures does not mean that there are no differences at all. There is an urgent need to prepare a coherent strategy for the possible integration of immigrants, including war refugees from Ukraine, in Poland. **A governmental multiculturalism management programme is needed to implement the integration policy. Without it all integration efforts will be dispersed and much less effective.** In accordance with the idea of integration, the policy should be developed in consultation with representatives of minorities so that it takes into account not only Polish needs, but also the needs of these groups. A clear and coherent programme would make it possible to prevent possible crises in the future.
9. Disinformation is used by Russia to weaken the internal cohesion of countries that are its enemies and their alliances. The refugee crisis has made the harmful mechanisms, processes and policies present before the war an even greater threat to the social cohesion and security of all groups living and staying in Poland. Therefore, **prevention and counter-narrative for attempts to fuel conflicts and divisions between nationalities living in Poland, currently especially between Poles and Ukrainians, is necessary.**
10. **It is urgent to develop a national strategy in the area of migration policy, taking into account the experience of membership of the European Union, two migration crises** experienced in recent months and forecasts for the future. Given the importance of migration in political, social and economic terms, this strategy should override the actions taken in many public policies. It must therefore be developed based on expertise and without ideological prejudices.

Project team:

Marek Balicki, Maria Baran, Jakub Bińkowski, Olga Bochkar, Michał Boni, Maciej Bukowski, Agnieszka Chłoń-Domińczak, Iwona Ciećwierz, Maciej Duszczak, Olgierd Roman Dziekoński, Tomasz Gajderowicz, Marta Gorczyńska, Halina Grzymała-Moszczyńska, Maciej Jakubowski, Paweł Kaczmarczyk, Witold Klaus, Adam Kozierkiewicz, Iuliia Lashchuk, Radomir Matczak, Jacek Michałowski, Jakub Michałowski, Ignacy Niemczycki, Robert Pater, Oleksandr Pustovyi, Michał Sęk, Filip Szulik-Szarecki, Rafał Trzeciakowski, Jędrzej Witkowski, Jerzy Wiśniewski, Jan Jakub Wygnański

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