



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONFERENCE DES OING DU
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION ISSUES

FIELD VISIT TO POLAND (February 10-14)

DAY 1



Meeting with Church representatives at Caritas

Fr. Janusz Majda - Director of Caritas Poland
Malgorzata Jarosz-Jarszewska - Deputy Director of Caritas Poland
Ireneusz Krause - Deputy Director of Caritas Poland
Michal Korzeniowski - Head of Migrant and Refugee Support Unit

5:00 pm

- Presentation of the Caritas Network
- Presentation of the Committee on Migration Issues and the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe
- Presentation of Caritas' actions in Poland, especially in welcoming and accommodating Ukrainian nationals
- Presentation of the 28 different Migrants and Refugees Assistance Centres supervised by Caritas Poland

6:30 pm



Dinner at the Belgian Embassy

Rik Van Droogenbroeck - Belgian ambassador in Poland
Kevin J. Allen - Refugee Coordinator UNHCR Representative in Poland
Arthur d'Anethan - Counsellor at the Belgian Embassy
Jannes Dewulf - 1st secretary at the Belgian Embassy

6:30 pm



- Presentation of the Committee on Migration Issues and the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe
- Discussions around the political situation in Poland and Polish position towards migration
- Discussions around the security prism of Polish migration politics
- Discussions about child detention and situation of unaccompanied minors
- Discussions around schooling obligation for Ukrainian nationals and integration politics
- Activism of field NGOs at the Belarus border
- Question of the criminalisation of NGOs and humanitarian workers

9:00 pm



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DAY 2



Meeting with representatives of public administrations

Bartłomiej Potocki - Director of the Department of Social Integration; Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy

Joanna Kocot - Ukrainian Foster Care Team; Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy

Małgorzata Jarosz-Jarszewska - Vice Director of Caritas Poland

Michał Korzeniowski - Head of Migrant and Refugee Support Unit, Caritas Poland

10:00 am

- Presentation of the Committee on Migration Issues of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe ; presentation of the areas of work of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy in the field of migration
- Main competences in the area of migration belong to the Ministry of Interior
- Highlighting the good management of Ukrainian refugees in Poland
- On the question of Unaccompanied Minors: accommodated in “mass accommodation centres” with a trend towards relocation to smaller units

11:30 am



Visit to Migrant and Refugee Assistance Center Towarowa

- Visit of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Center of Towarowa (Warsaw) run by Caritas Poland
- Actions and objectives evolving according to needs and situation
- Five areas of work : registration, material assistance, job placement, psychological assistance, playroom for children
- The centre offers free advice and social support, as well as language courses
- The Centre is one of the 28 Centers in the country supervised by Caritas Poland

12:00 pm

12:30 pm



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DAY 2



Picture by Caritas Poland

Meeting on migration with several NGOs

Ruch Focolari - Save the Children Poland - Konsorcjum Migracyjne- Fundacja Ocalenie - Fundacja Polskie Centrum Pomocy Międzynarodowej - Habitat of Humanity - Klub Inteligencji Katolickiej

12:30 pm

- Presentation of the work of the Council of Europe and the Committee on Migration Issues of the Conference of INGOs ; presentation of NGOs present at the table
- Introduction of the work and challenges faced by NGOs committed to migration issues
- Strong opposition to recent political decisions and draft legislation
- Discussion around the security approach to migration policy in Poland
- Highlighting funding cuts and reduced access to European and US-funds
- Highlighting government actions focused on dissuasion

3:00 pm

Meeting with Hanna Machinska

Hanna Machinska - Head of the Research Centre of the Acquis
of the Council of Europe

4:00 pm

- Academic and theoretical approach of migration situation in Poland
- Vocal opposition to draft legislation suspending asylum applications

5:30 pm





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DAY 3



Poland-Belarus Border - Czeremsze Border Crossing

Regional deputy commander
2nd Lieutenant - advisor on Human Rights to the commander
Head of foreigner department
Priest - chief line of the Podlaski Border Guard division
Commander of the Podlaski Border Guard division

11:00 am

- Meeting with the representatives of the Polish Border Guards
- Presentation by the Polish Border Guards on their views on the challenges at the border with Belarus
- Presentation of the border infrastructures - visit to the border area and the fences
- Highlighting the security dimension of border management in the field of migration, particularly in the context of the political crisis with Belarus
- Visit to the Foreigners Registration Centre

2:00 pm



Meeting with local NGOs

Egala Association ; ELEOS Orthodox Metropolitan Mercy Center ; The Association of Ukrainians in Podlasie Voivodship ; Polish radio de Białystok ; Dialog Foundation

- Presentation of the Committee on Migration Issues of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe
- Introduction of the work of NGOs working at the borders with Belarus and Ukraine
- Presentation of the challenges faced by field NGOs, especially regarding contacts with Polish border guards and criminalisation of Humanitarian workers
- Regarding the situation at the border with Belarus, highlighting human rights situations in violations

3:00 pm

5:00 pm





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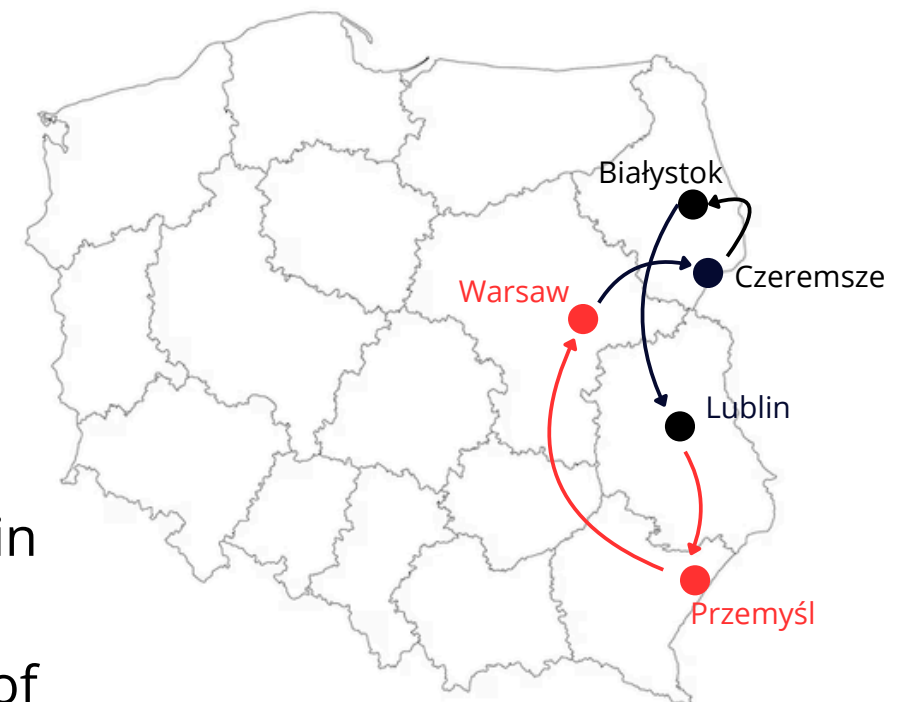
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FIELD VISIT TO POLAND (February 10-14)

DAY 4

Meeting with local NGOs

Alight Foundation Europe - PSAR - Caritas Rzeszów Migrant and Refugee Assistance Centre in Rzeszów - The Association of Ukrainians in Poland Przemyśl branch - Polish Red Cross



11:30 am

- Overview of NGO activities in response to the war in Ukraine and related to reception of Ukrainian refugees
- Emphasis on funding challenges, including the reduction of US financial support
- Rising discrimination issues faced by Ukrainian refugees as a growing challenge
- Shift of focus from emergency humanitarian assistance towards the issues related to long term integration

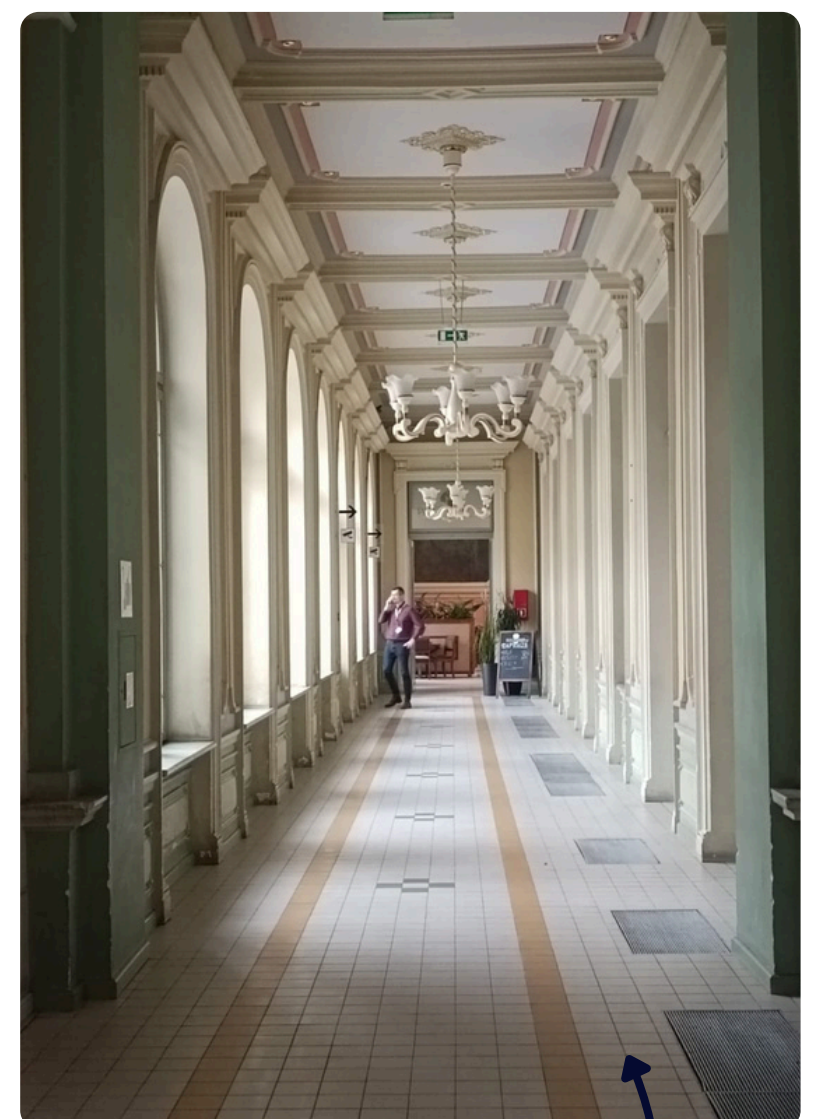
2:00 pm

Visit to Przemyśl train station w/ Caritas

- Visit to the train station, the sole railway entry point from Ukraine into Poland
- Overview of humanitarian assistance efforts during the initial months of the war in 2022
- Insight into the massive influx of refugees, with up to 50,000 people arriving daily by train

3:00 pm

4:30 pm



2025

2022



Picture by Caritas

Debriefing meeting with the Caritas team

4:30 pm

- Debriefing of the field visit, including key reflections and acknowledgments
- Presentation of main findings and preliminary conclusions

5:00 pm from the mission



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DAY 5



Meeting at the Belgian Embassy

Rik Van Droogenbroeck - Belgian ambassador in Poland
Arthur d'Anethan - Counsellor at the Belgian Embassy
Jannes Dewulf - 1st secretary at the Belgian Embassy
Representative of UNHCR

Representatives of the Embassies of France, Sweden, Norway, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Greece and Germany

10:00 am

- Presentation of the Committee on Migration Issues of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe
- Presentation of the work of the Committee and the objectives of the visit to Poland
- Exchange and discussion on the basis of the preliminary conclusions of the mission

12:00 pm

NEXT STEPS

At the end of its mission to Poland, the Committee sincerely thanks the main supporting organisation **Caritas Polska** and so many others who have contributed to a successful mission.

There is still work to be done in the coming days and weeks :

- The Committee will present the conclusions of the mission to:
 - the Head of the Division on Migrants and Refugees of the Human Rights Department of the Council of Europe
 - the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
 - the Office of the Commissioner on Human Rights
 - the Congress of Regional and Local Authorities
- The Committee will work on:
 - a communiqué
 - a report presenting its conclusions and recommendations
 - a general recommendation by the end of its mandate