

ZPP appeal to launch the EU fund to help refugees

As a result of Russian aggression, part of the Ukrainian population has to flee outside the country to save itself. The natural first choice for many is Poland. Figures illustrate the scale of migration. According to data from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, more than 3.2 million people have left Ukraine since the beginning of the war.¹ In turn, the Polish Border Guard data indicate that 2.141 million refugees have crossed the Polish-Ukrainian border since 24 February 2022.² Taking into account migration data provided by the French (Interior Ministry), German (Federal Police) and British (Home Office) services, it is expected that most refugees will remain on the territory of Poland.

Faced with the influx of refugees, Poles have shown extraordinary hospitality and willingness to help. Many people have not only provided financial aid or organised collections of goods but have also made their own private homes available to refugees. However, even the most remarkable social stir will not be able to meet all the needs that arise.

Children and young people arriving from Ukraine must be able to continue their education, and all refugees must have access to health care. According to the adopted legal provisions, refugees can take up gainful employment as soon as they cross the border - this is the right direction. Still, even on commercial terms, housing availability may prove to be a problem.

All these challenges imply substantial budgetary expenditures. Currently, the financial cost of helping refugees is covered by Poland from its resources. However, considering the pan-European nature of this humanitarian crisis, it is reasonable to assign additional financing on the EU level. Therefore, the Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers calls on the European institutions to provide adequate financial support to the countries hosting refugees from Ukraine.

It should be recalled here that the European Union has already allocated significant resources for migration management. The refugee aid instrument transferred to Turkey will amount to EUR 9 billion in 2016 - 2024.³ ⁴ The current situation requires redirecting funds from the south of Europe to the countries neighbouring Ukraine following the scale of migration.

President of Poland Andrzej Duda, during his recent visit to Turkey, and his wife Agata Kornhauser-Duda, during her meeting with Joyce Msuya in New York, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, both called the international community to join the aid for Ukrainian refugees in Poland. We welcome the declarations of the President of the European Commission, Ursula Von der Leyen, and Commissioner Dubravka Šuica on further assistance for Poland. Still, assistance measures are needed immediately, and their implementation must follow political declarations. This is why we are calling for the funds necessary to help the refugees from Ukraine to be transferred to Poland without delay.

¹ <https://www.unhcr.org/pl/13653-polska-przyjela-ponad-dwa-miliony-uchodzcow-z-ukrainy-komunikat-prasowy.html>

² https://twitter.com/Straz_Graniczna/status/1506167933982187525

³ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_2487

⁴ <https://apnews.com/article/lebanon-middle-east-turkey-europe-migration-e9395d4a3376e8d53cd8a51508fc4a61>