**Poland's contribution: cultural rights and migration**

Under the care of the Office for Foreigners a foreigner is provided with access to **information concerning laws and regulations, programmes and measures, services and practices** in accordance with the scope of social assistance regulated by:

* the Act of June 13, 2003 on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of the Republic of Poland,
* the Ordinance of the Minister of Internal Affairs of October 23, 2015 on the rules and regulations of stay in the centre for foreigners
* the Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of February 19, 2016 on the amount of assistance for foreigners applying for international protection,
* the Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of October 6, 2022 amending the Regulation on the amount of assistance for foreigners applying for international protection.

According to the Act on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of the Republic of Poland, a foreigner applying for international protection who is admitted to a centre has the right, among others, to: maintain customs, national and cultural traditions and to perform religious practices, access to information about non-governmental or international organizations which statutory tasks include refugee matters.

In the scope of **access to the cultural institutions and services of the host society, including undocumented migrants, asylum seekers and refugees**, according to §16 of the Ordinance of the Minister of Internal Affairs of October 23, 2015 on the rules and regulations of stay in each of the 9 Polish centres for foreigners there is a possibility of participation of minors in recreational activities and possibility of organizing cultural and educational or sports activities with the participation of institutions, organizations, associations and other entities as well as natural persons. In addition, pursuant to § 3 sec. 1 of the mentioned regulation, a foreigner admitted to the centre receives in writing or in the form of an electronic document, in a language understandable to him/her, information about non-governmental or international organizations which statutory tasks include refugee matters.

The Office for Foreigners pays particular attention to criteria aimed at improving the standard of foreigners’ stay in the centres. A number of elements have been introduced into the criteria of accommodation conditions which all facilities must fulfil e.g. have common rooms for men and women, kindergartens, a room enabling the maintenance of religious practices, recreational areas, school rooms, meeting rooms. All centres for foreigners run by the Office are open institutions. Foreigners who have been granted social assistance are accommodated in double, quadruple and multi-bed rooms, depending on their family situation.

The diversity of religions, cultures, traditions and historical conditions of the countries of origin of applicants for international protection means that the Office, in addition to carrying out tasks aimed at providing foreigners with decent social and living conditions, pays a lot of attention to the issue of respect for religion and cultural distinctiveness, and - in cooperation with other authorities - takes care to ensure security and public order in the centres and in their immediate vicinity.

Day care for school-aged children were conducted in the centres. During classes there were organised trips to places of cultural and entertainment value, e.g. to a cinema or a theatre. These activities allowed children to actively use their free time, and their free time from school space or the lesson system, created an atmosphere conducive to the proper development of the child's new competences.

In each of the centres, Polish language classes are conducted for both children and adults who are under the care of the Office for Foreigners. Teaching Polish for children is conducted taking into account the specific needs of the language of school education as well as the realities and socio-cultural aspects related to Polish culture and customs. Children starting their education in Poland can participate in preparatory classes aimed at facilitating their adaptation to the school community. A teaching program has been developed for this group, taking into account their specific communication needs and including e.g. simulations of communication situations at school. It puts emphasis on acquiring and consolidating knowledge about the basics of communication and rules in force in Polish schools. Learning Polish for adults is conducted on the basis of developed didactic materials, the programs of which take into account the specific communication needs of persons applying for international protection in Poland, including real-life and socio-cultural content, and also include simulations of communication situations. In addition, they allow to enrich vocabulary in the above-mentioned scope, getting acquainted with the customs and traditions, administrative division of Poland and tourist regions.

In the scope of **artefacts belonging to migrants protected by the state**, § 13 of the Regulation on the regulations of staying in the centre for foreigners, it is stated that on the premises of the centre it is not allowed to destroy the property of the centre and the property of other foreigners staying in the centre. In addition, pursuant to § 3 sec. 1 of the mentioned regulations, a foreigner admitted to the centre receives in writing or in the form of an electronic document, in a language understandable to him/her, information about the lack of responsibility of the centre for money or other items stored by the foreigner.

Children benefiting from education in educational institutions, in accordance with the Act of 14 December 2016 Education Law, art. 165 sec. 15, may participate in classes in learning the language and culture of the country of origin organized at school by the diplomatic or consular missions of their country of origin operating in Poland or a cultural and educational association of a given nationality, in consultation with the school principal and with the consent of the governing body.

**Good practices in protecting the cultural rights of migrants to access cultural resources and services, to enjoy their heritage and that of others, to use their language in private and in public, to participate in cultural life, to freedom of artistic expression and to take part in decisions that impact their cultural life** are defined in the Regulation on the regulations of staying in the centre.

According to the regulations, all materials regarding social assistance, rights and obligations, regulations governing the provision of assistance to foreigners applying for international protection, including the regulations governing the stay in the centre, the application of procedures in the centre for preventing all cases of violence and responding to them, with particular emphasis on violence against minor foreigners, education matters, as well as application templates and information - are made available in languages understandable to foreigners.

All centres of the Office for Foreigners are open facilities, thanks to which foreigners can take advantage of resources and services in the field of culture, as well as events and organized activities in which they would like to participate.

According to Art. 71 sec. 1 point 1 lit. h and sec. 4 points 3 of the Act on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of the Republic of Poland, social assistance includes, among others: covering, as far as possible, the costs of children's extracurricular and recreational and sports activities.