

May 13, 2022



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FAMILY IN THE CENTER – Regional partnership for Family

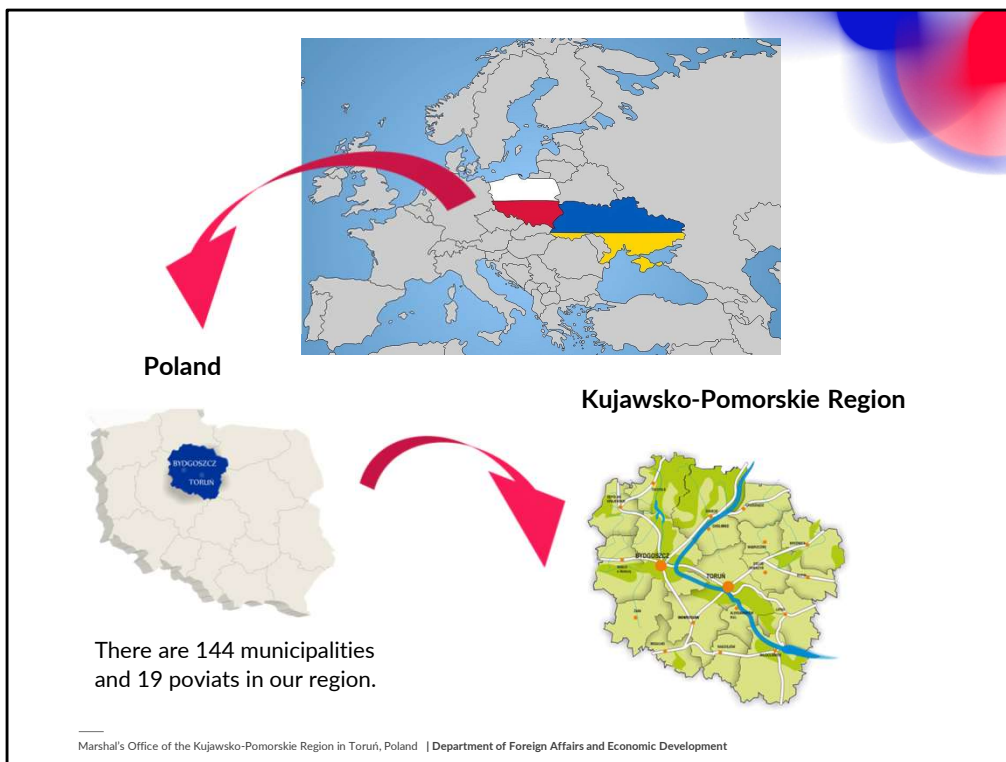
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Today Kujawsko-Pomorskie is celebrating the World Day of Families together with you, which is an excellent opportunity to present the Venice Declaration and the involvement of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship in shaping social and family policy, which in recent weeks has been focused on urgent solutions to problems resulting from Russia's invasion on Ukraine. I would like to underline that all our work is carried out with a great respect towards UN Sustainable Development Goals and the aims of the Venice Declaration.

I am going to tell you about one of the flagship social projects implemented by the regional government of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Region.

Family in the Center- Regional partnership for Family

Both parts of the name of the project are equally important and have essentially fundamental meaning. The project „Family in the centre” is a system of a complex support for all families in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Region. Including natural and foster families struggling with different kinds of problems. The project has been on since 2016



this is a map of Europe with Poland and a map of Poland with the location of our region is visible on it. Poland has 16 regions - voivodships. Our region has 2 million inhabitants. Kujawsko-Pomorskie Region administratively has 19 poviats + 4 cities with poviat status and 144 municipalities.

It is not without a reason that on the map of Europe, next to Poland, I also show Ukraine, which is our immediate neighbor.

We are a unique region because we have two capitals: Toruń and Bydgoszcz. Bydgoszcz is the seat of the voivode - that is, the representative of the government in the region. Toruń is the seat of the regional government, here is the seat of the regional parliament, and here the most important decisions concerning the directions of the region's development are made, so this is the place where the real power is. The President, present with us, is the head of the Governing Board.

„FAMILY IN THE CENTER”



Main aim of the project: Increasing and availing access to support services for natural and foster families in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship

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The family is a space where various conflicts and problems occur, sometimes minor, internal but sometimes bigger, requiring wider intervention.

In order to help families with educational and caring problems, the Family in the Center project was created.

Of course, in the project reality we have to face many barriers and fit into frames, which mean that we often have to modify the planned activities we want to do.



The support we have provided as a part of the project includes: slajd

Recipients of the project:

- people staying in foster care
- people leaving the foster care
- people exercising family foster care
- candidates for becoming foster family
- people running family children's homes
- people in families experiencing difficulties in fulfilling care and educational functions

FAMILY IN THE CENTER – ACTIONS



- Complex support of families by establishing

THE FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS

- Actions focused on EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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19 FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS were established in every poviát located in our region. Centers offer comprehensive and specialized support for families and foster families.

Actions focused on **EDUCATION AND TRAINING** are leading to the acquisition of qualifications, new skills and strengthening of competences.

We have managed to build a „total partnership” that includes all Poviát Family Support Centres from the region, 3 City Family Support Centres, City Social Welfare Center in Bydgoszcz City and Regional Social Policy Center that is a separate unit of the our regional government to conduct social policy in the region.

It allows a wholesome cooperation so the outcomes of the project reach all the families in the region.

as we said at the beginning "Family in the Center - Regional Partnership for Family”



In the last months Kujawsko-Pomorskie Region won two very important awards for its efforts in implementing and realizing family projects. We have been granted one of the 2022 IFFD Awards for the establishment of Family Support Centers that offer comprehensive and specialized support for families, allowing parents and other carers to strengthen their competencies, and through the follow up of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Venice Declaration, especially during this challenging time of the coronavirus pandemic.

Second award is a Special Award of the Minister of Family and Social Policy for outstanding, innovative solutions in the field of social assistance, including the implementation of the partnership project "Family in the Center".

NEW CHALLENGES ... February 24, 2022



Age structure and gender of refugees from Ukraine:

- Minors: 47.9%
- Women aged 18-65: 44.9%
- Men aged 18-65: 3.8%
- People over 65: 3.4%

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February 24 this year became an unexpected day that set the priorities for action for the coming weeks, months and maybe even years.

We have updated our project to the current situation requiring quick intervention. During the last two months, the Polish border with Ukraine was crossed by 3.3 million people, the vast majority were mothers with children, women of all ages, few men over 60 years of age.

As you know, all men between 18-60 years old had to stay in their country to fight the war, although it is difficult to agree, especially when you have your own children, that a boy at the age of 18 is already a man to fight in the war.

NEW CHALLENGES ... February 24, 2022



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Ukrainians very often fled their homes as they stood, often with a small suitcase in their hand or even a plastic bag. What became a phenomenon thanks to the Poles was a mass mobilization, where the society immediately organized itself, on the one hand opening its homes to refugees, and on the other, bringing its own cars from the border. In this way, the relocation of refugees deep into Poland took place.

It should be added that among Poles who wanted to provide refugees with a safe home there are also those who are not wealthy and have a small two or three-room apartment. Poles immediately began to collect food, clothes and necessary items.

NEW CHALLENGES ... February 24, 2022



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The photo you can see is prams left by Polish mothers at the train station, for Ukrainian women coming by train from the border to Warsaw.

NEW CHALLENGES ... February 24, 2022



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Thus, the wave of refugees was growing very fast in our region every day. As the authorities of the region, we undertook a number of activities and initiatives that were dedicated both to the people who came to us.

As part of the project, we have created in 3 main cities of the region: Bydgoszcz, Toruń, Włocławek, information and advisory points acting as a coordinator, "command" points - providing substantive services for citizens from Ukraine, such as legal assistance, assistance in finding accommodation, employment, placing the child in school, psychological assistance, as well as providing the necessary basic sanitary items, clothes, food, etc.

NEW CHALLENGES ... February 24, 2022



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In the first days of the war, our help mainly concerned the supply of the most basic items. But refugees also came with the most basic question: What next?

I would add that most of them do not speak any foreign language, so the help of translators from people who speak their native language was necessary. Everyone asked first how to legalize a stay in Poland, where to find a job, how to enroll children in school? Later it turned out that the help of representatives of Ukrainian diplomatic missions was needed immediately, because often the refugees had no documents or someone had to confirm their authenticity.

The photos on this slide show the queue of people 2 hours before the opening of the point for a meeting with the Ukrainian consul from Gdańsk, who came to Toruń and two other cities to help refugees. During one day, 200 people received help

NEW CHALLENGES ... February 24, 2022



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Having experience with the pandemic, we immediately launched an e-school in Ukrainian, not only for children to attract their attention, but also for adults, offering Polish language lessons.

In addition, we launched a free lunch point for refugees from the very beginning, where we spent over 2,000 meals by the end of March only. Simultaneously with the Employment Office, we registered the professions of refugees and recruited companies from the region to immediately offer jobs.

From our partner district of Khmelnytsky Oblast we hosted the entire care center, i.e. 60 people of all ages, deeply handicapped, with 6 staff members and their families, i.e. 100 people in total.

The level of disability forced us to set up a psychiatric hospital with 24-hour professional care and, in addition, with the Ukrainian language.

NEW CHALLENGES ... February 24, 2022



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At the same time, we were able to obtain gifts from many foreign partners and companies from the region, starting with clothes, cleaning products, sanitary articles, medicines or food.

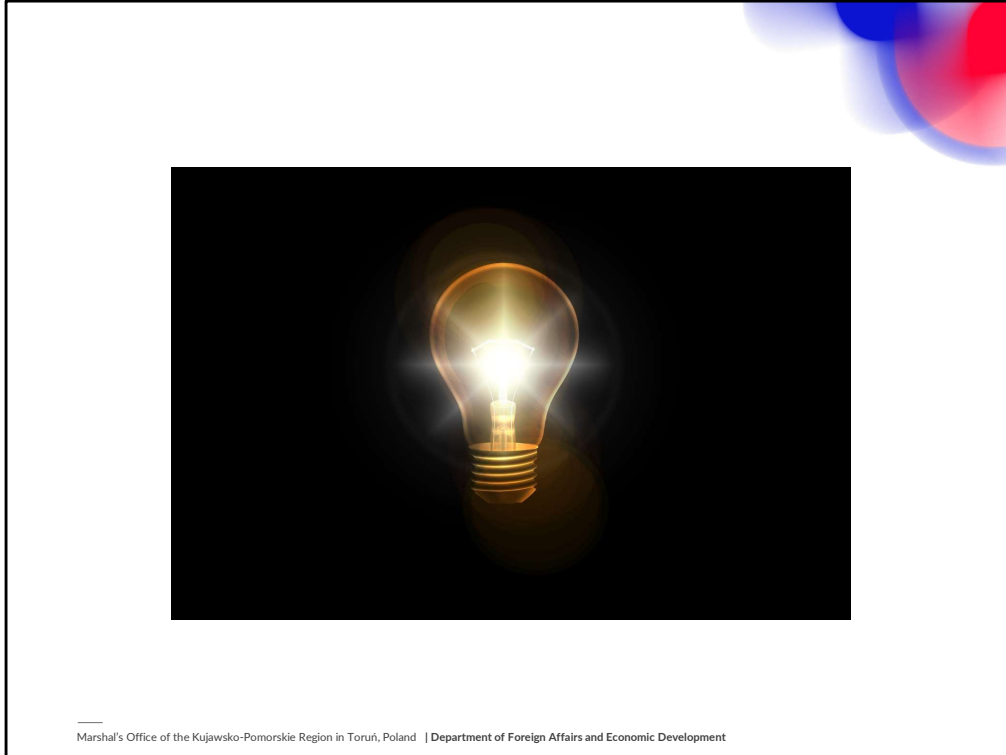
At that time, we used three warehouses where our employees - 60 officials who came from behind the desks, segregated products to prepare the shipment of humanitarian aid. As a result, over 100 points in our region serving refugees or host families receive the necessary products on an ongoing basis.

What is most touching for us are the requests from our partners. So far, we have sent 30 transports of humanitarian aid to Ukraine.



What is the most important value of this project?

We are developing the model of interinstitutional cooperation with the holistic approach of specialists from many sectors to support people, families and groups both in the institution and their social environment. We do believe that combining forces of various institutions can help the family more effectively and efficiently, especially because more complete diagnosis allows for a more accurate recognition of needs, limitations, expectations and opportunities, as well as helps to identify the causes of problems for individuals and families.



I strongly believe that each of you would do the same as we would if your one neighbor was Ukraine and the other one was Russia.

Today **Family in the center** is more than just a project, it is a new beginning.

We have become a well-oiled machine that can take up challenges not only for families from the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region but also for the social inclusion of our new Ukrainian families.

Thank you for attention.

Sylwia Tubielewicz-Olejnik | Director, Department of Foreign Affairs and
Economic Development, Marshal's Office of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Region