Ombudsperson for Children raises concerns over new rules affecting collective accommodation for Ukrainian families and the Roma community

Following the Act gradually repealing several provisions of the Act on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine in Connection with the Armed Conflict on the Territory of Ukraine, Polish human rights watchdogs raised concerns about the restrictions on access to collective accommodation for most Ukrainian nationals in Poland, which entered into effect on 1 July 2026. These concerns prompted letters from the Office of the Ombudsperson and the Ombudsperson for Children (RPD) to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Subsequently, the RPD appealed to the Voivodes of the Lubuskie, Mazowieckie and the Lublin Voivodeships, emphasising that the loss of livelihood and the inability to meet basic living needs posed a risk of violations of children's rights. The RPD noted that the new rules had a significant impact on the Roma community, stating that, following the legislative changes, they had identified around 40 people of Roma origin in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship who had been deprived of their livelihood and place of residence. According to the RPD, the Ukrainian Roma population in Poland faces barriers linked to a very low level of education, a lack of qualifications, illiteracy in some cases, as well as possible prejudice against persons of their ethnic background, which may contribute to their inability to meet basic living needs.

Similar concerns have been raised by Polish civil society organisations, such as the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights and Homo Faber, which estimated that approximately 4,400 and 6,000 children, respectively, were living in collective accommodation centres as of 1 July 2026, when, under the new regulations, families with children over 12 months of age lost their entitlement to such accommodation.

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Related development(s)

Polish ombudspersons and civil society discuss the phase-out of support measures for Ukrainians

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