Information provision - Poland

Overview

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Relevant EU legislation

Poland is bound by the recast Asylum Procedures Regulation, the recast Qualification Directive and the Dublin III Regulation.

National legislation

Poland transposed relevant EU law provisions through the Act of 13 June 2003 on granting protection to foreigners on the territory of the Republic of Poland | Ustawa z dnia 13 czerwca 2003 r. o udzielaniu cudzoziemcom ochrony na terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Dz.U. 2025 poz. 223 z późn.zm.

Competent authority and other stakeholders

Area/stage of the asylum procedure	Competent authority
Reception	Office for Foreigners | Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców (UdSC)
Registration of application	Border Guard | Straż Graniczna
Lodging of application	Border Guard | Straż Graniczna

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Area/stage of the asylum procedure	Competent authority
Dublin procedure	Office for Foreigners | Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców (UdSC) – responsible for the examination of the criteria for determining the Member State responsible for the examination of an asylum application Border Guard | Straż Graniczna - responsible for conducting personal / Dublin interview with the applicant
Assessment of application	Office for Foreigners (Department for Refugees Procedures | Departament Postępowań Uchodźczych)
Communication of first instance decision	Office for Foreigners (Department for Refugees Procedures | Departament Postępowań Uchodźczych)
Content of protection	Office for Foreigners | Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców (UdSC)
Appeal procedure	Office for Foreigners | Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców (UdSC)
Communication of second instance decision	Office for Foreigners | Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców (UdSC)
Resettlement	n/a

Provision of information in the asylum procedure

Access to procedure

In Poland, third-country nationals seeking international protection receive asylum-related information through the Border Guard and the Office for Foreigners, as outlined in various legal provisions. According to Article 29(1) of the Act of 13 June 2003 on granting protection to foreigners, the Border Guard is required to provide information in languages understandable to applicants at

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border crossings and detention centres for foreigners. This information covers the possibility of submitting an application for international protection and includes the use of an interpreter, as specified in Article 29(1). Furthermore, Article 30(1)(5) of the Act mandates the provision of comprehensive information when submitting an application, including details about the procedure, rights, obligations, consequences of withdrawing an application, and contacts with organizations like UNHCR and those offering legal or social assistance.

This information is provided at various stages of the asylum process, beginning when the applicant submits their application for international protection. Article 27(3) ensures that the applicant's spouse is informed before giving consent to be included in the application. Applicants also receive specific information as outlined in Article 32(3) before undergoing a medical examination to verify claims of being a minor.

The Border Guard provides written information through leaflets and brochures at border crossings and detention centres. This includes information about the legal basis for granting protection, the procedures for submitting an application, the EURODAC and Dublin regulations, social and medical assistance, free legal assistance, and detention. The authority conducting proceedings concerning the return of a foreigner shall inform the foreigner of the possibility of applying for international protection as described in Art 304 of the Act on Foreigners of 12 December 2013.

Additionally, information is provided online via the Border Guard and the Office for Foreigners' websites and through a mobile app (PWA) made available after submitting an application. Written materials are available in languages such as Polish, English, Russian, Arabic, Armenian, Pashto, Persian, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Georgian, Bengali, Belarusian, Chinese, Urdu, French, Turkish, Hindi, Kazakh, Tajik, Sorani, Tigrinya, Sorani, Kyrgyz, Amharic, Punjabi, Spanish, Dari while the app and website also offer information in Polish, English, Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian. The materials are designed to be accessible to applicants, including vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors and potential victims of human trafficking. For unaccompanied minors, information is provided in line with Article 4 of EU No 604/2013 and the Handbook for frontline staff, How to communicate information to children in the migration process in a child-friendly way.

For further information and publicly available resources, the Polish government's official websites and materials can be accessed at International Protection Procedure – UDSC, Materials on International Protection – UDSC, and Refugees –

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UDSC.

Dublin procedure

Applicants in Poland receive information regarding the Dublin III Regulation at the moment they lodge their application for international protection, which is integrated with their registration process. According to Annexes X and XI of the Implementing Regulation (118/2014), the Border Guard informs the applicant about the Dublin procedure at this stage. The foreigner receives a leaflet that outlines the various aspects of the Dublin procedure, including the obligations and rights of the foreigner, the countries involved in the Dublin system, and the requirement for fingerprints. It also covers the importance of the personal interview and the authorities responsible for determining the country responsible for processing the application, including family reunification and medical care.

The Head of the Office for Foreigners is responsible for informing the applicant when the Dublin procedure is initiated. Information is generally provided in written form, primarily through leaflets. These leaflets include details about the roles of different persons or authorities involved in the procedure, such as the Eurodac controller, the asylum authority, the national appealing authority, the UNHCR, legal aid providers, refugee and child support organizations, and the national authority responsible for children. For unaccompanied minors (UAMs), there is a separate leaflet providing tailored information for applicants in this category, as per Article 4 of the Dublin III Regulation.

The information is available in various languages, ensuring that applicants understand the procedure. The media used for providing this information are primarily written leaflets, though other formats may also be used depending on the setting.

When a transfer decision is made, the applicant is notified about legal remedies. However, the information about legal assistance is provided in the decision itself, including links to more detailed resources. The transfer decision will mention the relevant legal provisions but does not typically list specific persons or entities able to provide legal assistance.

For further publicly available resources, applicants can access the following official materials:

Dublin Procedure – UDSC

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First instance determination

Applicants in Poland are informed about the possibility of an admissibility interview through the mobile app, which provides written information about the procedure, including the potential lack of a hearing for subsequent applications, with the possibility of a hearing should new circumstances arise. This information is made available by the Head of the Office for Foreigners through the app, and the relevant details can be accessed via a QR code and a link that directs applicants to the Office's website, which contains multiple language options.

Regarding the personal interview, applicants are notified about the date of the interview and time through a written notification and an SMS message (if the applicant has provided a phone number). The information shared includes the legal basis for the interview, its purpose, the responsible interviewers, and the effects in case of absence. It also outlines the confidentiality principles, the obligations of the applicant during the interview, and the significance of the interview. Information on the possibility of supplementing statements and evidence after the interview is included, as well as the obligation to provide information about the place of residence (address) and the issuance of a decision after the interview. Additionally, applicants are informed about the next steps in the procedure.

Upon completion of the interview, applicants are notified about their right to submit further evidence and the applicable timelines for doing so. The information is provided orally during the interview, and it is included in the interview protocol, for which the applicant receives a printout. The oral information provided during the interview is also part of the printed documentation.

Following the decision, beneficiaries granted protection status are informed about their rights and obligations. Along with the positive decision, they receive a QR code and a link leading to the Office's website, which provides further guidance on the residence card and free legal assistance. These resources are available in multiple language versions.

In case of a negative decision, applicants are provided with information on legal remedies, including the possibility to lodge an appeal, as well as available legal assistance for filing an appeal. Additionally, they receive information on assisted voluntary return. This information is provided in writing as part of the decision, with a translation into a language that the applicant understands. Furthermore,

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applicants receive a QR code and a link to the Office's website, which offers information in multiple language versions on voluntary return and related topics.

Legal assistance and representation

Applicants are informed of their right to consult, at their own cost, a legal adviser or other counsellor on matters relating to their application at the time of lodging the application. This information is part of the information package provided at that stage. Additionally, the Office for Foreigners provides this information on their website and in the app.

Applicants also receive information on their right to free legal assistance and representation in the appeal procedure at the time of lodging the application and upon receipt of the decision. The Border Guard provides this information in writing at the time of application, while the Head of the Office for Foreigners provides the information on the website and through the app in written form.

Resettlement and humanitarian admissions

Poland does not implement resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes.

Content of protection

Beneficiaries of protection receive information on the rights and obligations associated with their protection status at the time of notification of the decision. This information covers the rights and obligations of beneficiaries, the procedure for obtaining residence permits, and the conditions for the termination or withdrawal of protection. The Head of the Office for Foreigners provides this information in written form on the Office’s websites and through the app.

While beneficiaries of protection do not receive information specifically on integration activities, they do receive information on important aspects such as employment, the labour market, education, and healthcare. Information regarding employment includes access to the labour market without additional permits, the possibility of taking up employment or running one's own business, and the right to protection against unemployment. This information is provided by the Head of the Office for Foreigners in written form on the Office's websites

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and in the app.

Beneficiaries are also informed about their access to the education system and healthcare benefits financed by public funds, with general information provided by the Head of the Office for Foreigners through written materials on websites and in the app.

Complete information about how to obtain or replace a residence permit is also shared. This includes details about where to submit the application, how to complete it, required attachments, and the cost of issuing or replacing the document. The Head of the Office for Foreigners ensures that this information is provided in written form on the websites and in the app as well.

Provision of information in reception

Reception conditions

Upon arrival at the reception centre, applicants are provided with comprehensive information about their rights, obligations, and the conditions of their stay in the reception centre. This information is given both in written and oral form, and its receipt is confirmed by the recipient's signature. During registration, applicants receive written materials on their rights and obligations, rules of stay, and reception conditions, which are handed individually by the staff at the reception building or hotel. Additionally, group oral briefings are provided, with translators available as needed.

In addition to this initial information, the Office for Foreigners offers further resources. Applicants can access the "First Steps in Poland" brochure, which provides essential information on the refugee procedure, social assistance, and general life in Poland, including education and employment rights. The brochure is available on the Office's website and in the app, in several languages such as Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, English, Arabic, French, Pashto, and Dari.

Furthermore, applicants participate in orientation courses where they receive information about daily life in Poland, including social assistance, medical care, safety rules, and employment. These courses are adapted for adults and children, with topics relevant to each group. Subjects in courses for adults include among others: rules of staying in a centre, basic safety rules, Polish norms and customs, history and culture, organisational and administrative system in Poland, family

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relations, customs and social forms, cuisine, access to medical care, legal protection, education and employment, as well as basic hygiene rules, including epidemic situations. Courses for children cover topics such as: rules of stay in a centre, basic safety rules, Polish traditions and customs, education, sports, literature, music, films and tales for children, basic hygiene rules, including epidemic conditions. The Office for Foreigners prepared and developed information material on education of foreign children, which is available in several languages.

The information material is developed by the Office for Foreigners in collaboration with external contractors. These materials are provided in various formats, including written leaflets, brochures, visual materials, and through the Refugeebook mobile application. There are also videos available to help applicants understand their rights and procedures.

Since April 2024, the Office for Foreigners has provided the Refugeebook application, available in 5 language versions: Polish, English, Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian, which contains content related to, among others, social assistance, the procedure for granting international protection, or basic information about Poland. This tool also allows for the provision of current information on asylum and reception that is important from the point of view of foreigners, by adding news and notifications.

As for healthcare, applicants are provided with detailed written information on how to access medical care, including the services available, emergency protocols, and helplines. This information is distributed by the staff at the reception centres during registration and is available in several languages.

Information on legal assistance and available services from non-governmental organizations is also provided during registration and in the orientation courses. These materials include details on how to access free legal assistance, the organisations that offer this support, and general guidance on employment, education, and healthcare rights.

For more detailed information, applicants can visit the official websites and resources:

- FAQ on Medical Assistance
- First Steps in Poland Brochure
- Educational Information for Foreign Children
- Information Materials by the Office for Foreigners
- Orientation Course Video

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- Refugeebook application

In detention

Third-country nationals detained in a guarded centre or detention centre for foreigners are provided with detailed and timely information about the reasons for their detention, the procedures for challenging the detention order, and their rights and obligations during their stay.

Detention may only be ordered under specific circumstances, such as when it is necessary to establish the identity of an individual, to collect information relevant to their application for international protection, or to prevent the individual from absconding if there is a significant probability of such behaviour. The decision to place an individual in a detention centre is made by the court based on a request from the Border Guard. Before issuing the decision, the court conducts a hearing where the applicant or the individual on whose behalf the application is made is present. During the hearing, the court informs the detainee, in a language they understand, about:

- The specific reasons for their detention.
- Their rights, including the right to challenge the detention order by lodging a complaint.
- The right to legal assistance from a lawyer or legal counsel at any stage of the detention process.

This process is regulated under the Act on Foreigners of 12 December 2013, which outlines the legal framework for detention and associated rights. Upon admission to a detention centre, detainees are instructed about their rights, obligations, and the rules governing their stay in these facilities, as outlined in Article 411 of the Act on Foreigners. Duty services in the detention centres are responsible for providing this information. The information is presented in a language understandable to the foreign national. Each detainee is assigned to a social guardian, who offers guidance and support during the detention period, and a return guardian, who provides assistance and information related to the individual’s potential return process or release.

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