

IRC in Poland Country Program Update 2025



Who We Are

The IRC has been present in Poland since the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Over time, our role has evolved from direct humanitarian assistance to long-term economic empowerment and social integration of migrants and refugees from Ukraine of which 90 percent are women and children.

Today, we help refugees thrive through job readiness programs, vocational trainings, language courses, and support for microbusiness development. In women empowerment and child protection areas, we work in partnership with authorities, NGOs, refugees and communities to create inclusive, lasting solutions. We also work to ensure all refugees have access to their rights. To-date, some 180,000 clients have received our services.

Where We Work



At a Glance

In 2025, despite having to optimize its structure and scale down its activities due to financial cuts, IRC Poland's staff of some 30 served 39,930 clients (of whom 28,319 women) through 52 client-facing services. IRC Poland cooperated with 11 local non-governmental organisations – mostly in Warsaw, Wrocław, Katowice and Poznań. We provided 261 external individuals with training sessions.

Context Working in Country

Poland is a stable democracy, although it struggles with the growing influence of nationalist and xenophobic attitudes. Since February 2025, a law has been in effect that restricts the right to asylum for people who enter Poland from Belarusian territory. At the same time, however, the million-strong community of refugees from Ukraine can still enjoy full rights – incl. access to education, the labor market, and support programs.

Impact of funding cuts in FY25

Some of IRC Poland's partners were critically affected by the cuts. To ensure continuity of their services for our clients, we decided to cover their financial shortfalls under TR518. This applied to two Women's Protection and Empowerment partners and two Protection partners: Feminoteka, Martynka, Halina Nieć Legal Aid Center, and the Rule of Law Institute, respectively.

Programming in Country



1,980
clients
served

Child Protection

Implementation of Standards for the Protection of Minors and trauma-informed practices. IRC Poland helped schools create six „Peace Corners” – dedicated quiet spaces where children can rest and practise self-regulation techniques. Due to positive feedback we received, we plan to roll out the program in and around Warsaw. We also organized roundtables to improve risk identification and focus on integrating education and child protection systems for coordinated responses. Conflict management and prevention of peer violence remain our top priorities.



4,507
clients
served

Economic Empowerment

IRC Poland works to ensure migrants and refugees in Poland achieve financial independence. We organize job fairs, support microenterprise and business development and upskilling, conduct trainings for aspiring entrepreneurs, identify barriers in access to employment which stem from discrimination and socio-economic status. In 2025, our program to support microbusinesses was scaled up through cooperation with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Polish-Ukrainian Chamber of Commerce.



14,009
clients
served

Education

IRC Poland led sustained advocacy efforts focused on ensuring access to education for Ukrainian children in Poland. Additionally, new partnerships were created to promote inclusive education for refugee children. Other priorities, among others, were: data-informed dialogue on the needs of foreign students, including the release of a quantitative report, alongside programs promoting student participation, engagement, teamwork, and well-being.



19,434
clients
served

Protection

Main areas of focus: initiatives to counter hate speech and bias-motivated violence against refugees and migrants; GBV prevention and supporting GBV survivors, Women Protection and Rule of Law and strengthening state-supported protection frameworks, among others. IRC Poland focused its efforts on strengthening institutional and community capacity to prevent and respond to GBV through targeted trainings, practical tools, and partnerships with Polish organizations

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