



Centrum Informacji dla Cudzoziemców w Powiecie Polickim



We help foreigners on a large scale

Coming to a new country always raises uncertainty – language barrier, not knowing that country's law, difficult access to offices, great unknown and fear for the future resulting from the lack of livelihoods. What to do? Who to contact? There are many assistance programs aimed at foreigners, such as a wide range of Polish language courses at various levels, or integration programs, bringing Polish values and culture to Ukrainians, and many others.

Also, in the Police County, projects aimed at citizens from Ukraine, who gain from them knowledge necessary for everyday functioning in our country are implemented. For people affected by a crisis such as war, it is important to build and consolidate national identity. The West Pomeranian Folk High School (ZUL) in Mierzyn is also helping Ukrainian refugees to find themselves in a foreign country easier and to assimilate with the new environment. It is the only institution of civic education in Western Pomerania, the principles of which are based on Scandinavian, mainly Grundtvigian traditions. The organization's activity program focuses to a large extent on intergenerational integration. ZUL helps both older people, who often do not keep up with rapidly progressing social changes, as well as young adults, preparing them to function responsibly in a reality that is not always easy.

The West Pomeranian Folk High School in Mierzyn was established in 2017 and works as a private educational institution with a boarding base mainly for adults in rural and small-town environments. The main goal of ZUL's activity is to prepare modern people to function responsibly in the constantly changing social reality. Hence the great involvement of ZUL in helping people from Ukraine and supporting migrants through various training and integration activities. These undertakings are implemented mainly as part of projects co-financed from external sources – from numerous Polish language





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courses for both adults and children, through psychological assistance and translation services, to “Helping Ukrainian citizens with disabilities”. The purpose of the latter, organized by PFRON, is to aid disabled refugees who came to Poland due to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. They have to learn life anew in Poland. Their exclusion and social isolation constitute a very demanding and difficult challenge. Recognition of the needs and individual support of people with disabilities is often the threshold condition for even minimal social integration. They receive free forms of support that will definitely make it easier for them to find themselves in Polish reality. Each participant takes part in a comprehensive integration path, including: individual psychological therapy, individual exercise and rehabilitation therapy, legal counseling, career counseling and job placement.

As part of the project implemented by Agency of Regional Development in Koszalin of the “Social Worker” program, the West Pomeranian Folk High School in Mierzyn came out with the initiative to organize Polish-Ukrainian language tandems and courses on writing icons. In the “Summer School of Icon-Writing”, the community of the Police County learned about the elements of Ukrainian tradition and culture that are far away, but close to us spiritually. People interested in the liturgical tradition of Eastern Christianity learned how to create sacred images venerated in Orthodox churches and learned what an icon is and why it is written rather than painted. On the other hand, “Youth integration language tandems”, i.e., meetings of Ukrainian and Polish youth, were aimed at helping people from Ukraine in practical learning of the Polish language and Polish-Ukrainian integration. The tandems were a unique opportunity to exchange views, interests and learn about culture. Both projects expressed a desire to strengthen social ties and enjoyed great popularity and interest. Interestingly, the vast majority of participants in both courses were Polish citizens who wanted to learn about Ukrainian values and culture, which is why the projects played an important integration role.



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Since learning a language is the beginning for refugees in a foreign country, Polish language courses were the highest priority for Ukrainian students at the West Pomeranian Folk High School in Mierzyn. Dozens of refugees (adults, adolescents and children) learned the basics of the Polish language and elements of Polish culture during free language courses carried out both under voluntary agreements as well as projects financed from external sources. Activities in this area were carried out, inter alia, in cooperation with the Employment Office in Police implementing “Learning Polish – basic levels”. The course was addressed to Ukrainian citizens residing in the Police County, registered in the County Labor Office in Police and included two editions. On the other hand, the 120-hour course entitled “The Polish language is not that difficult” and the Polish-Ukrainian language tandems were financed by the Visegrad Fund.

Students are very willing, regularly and actively participate in classes organized by the West Pomeranian Folk High School in Mierzyn. They are very committed and determined to learn the Polish language. Probably because getting to know it makes their daily life easier and allows them to get a better paid job. The County Labor Office in Police initiated the creation of the Information Center for Foreigners (CIC), implementing comprehensive activities for foreigners residing in the Police County. The task of the Center is to help foreigners adapt to Poland in the social and professional dimension. It is extremely important to build understanding for the needs and problems of refugees as well as build willingness and readiness both among residents and foreigners for mutual integration. As part of this project, four times a month, office hours are carried out in the building of the County Office at Plac Bolesława Chrobrego 8 in Police and at the seat of the West Pomeranian Folk High School at Welecka 13B in Mierzyn, during which a group of specialists helps Ukrainian and Polish visitors. Experts in the field of law, labor market, economic and psycho-social counseling and HR provide consultations on topics and problems that foreigners



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most often encounter. They concern, for example, the legalization of stay, access to public services, culture and recreation, social assistance, official procedures, or navigating the labor market. Every citizen of Ukraine who reports to the Information Center for Foreigners can be sure that they will receive support and help. Many refugees declare that they want to start working in Poland as soon as possible. Currently, every citizen of Ukraine can work on the same terms as every Pole. Unemployed refugees have the opportunity to register with the employment office. They can count on comprehensive support at every stage of job search, assistance in legalizing their stay, as well as legal protection. A translator helps with filling in documents, preparing a CV and dealing with all necessary matters related to employment.

It is worth reminding that since July it is possible to find a job without leaving your home. Foreigners who have a problem with finding a job will be helped by a new website: pracawpolsce.gov.pl, to which you need to sign up. The website is friendly, intuitive and will easily guide you through the entire login sequence. It is worth having a NIP (Tax Identification Number) number and a Trusted Profile set up. If a person does not have them, the system will tell you how to set them up. After logging in and providing information on competences and education, the jobseeker will receive information about the offers and contact the tenderer.

Every unemployed person from Ukraine can use the so-called Green Line, i.e., the hotline of employment offices. You can call 19524 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and obtain free advice from consultants on substantive matters related to job search. You can also contact the Green Line on Facebook: www.facebook.com/zielona.linia19524, on their website: www.zielonalinia.gov.pl, or by e-mail: kontakt@zielonalinia.gov.pl.

We recommend with all our hearts and wish you success in finding a satisfying job!

