

**NATIONAL ACTION PLAN**  
***for the implementation of Council  
Recommendation (EU) 2021/1004 of 14 June  
2021  
establishing a European Child Guarantee***

**WARSAW 2022**

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# **1. Context – diagnosis and description of the current situation, existing gaps and key challenges**

Family policy is one of the most important areas covered by actions of the Government of the Republic of Poland, therefore new initiatives are continuously taken to increase support for families, especially families with children.

The priority is to appreciate and emphasise the role of the family in society as a guarantor of children's upbringing – it is the family that is the natural environment in which children grow up, it is in the family that children receive knowledge and are enabled to develop their skills. Support for families through family policy instruments is an investment in human capital, which largely determines the condition of the state.

Alongside a number of actions for a strong economy, the responsible development policy pursued by the Government of the Republic of Poland assumes the parallel existence of robust, active, comprehensive and long-term family policy. The Government's actions in the area of family policy have resulted in the introduction of significant financial aid for families with dependent children.

Financial support for families bringing up children is implemented, in particular, under a number of universal programmes, such as: "Family 500+", "Good start", "Toddler+", Family Care Capital.

This wide-ranging policy of supporting all families with children is complemented by a range of actions targeting children that need additional support.

## ***1.1 Child poverty (AROPE)***

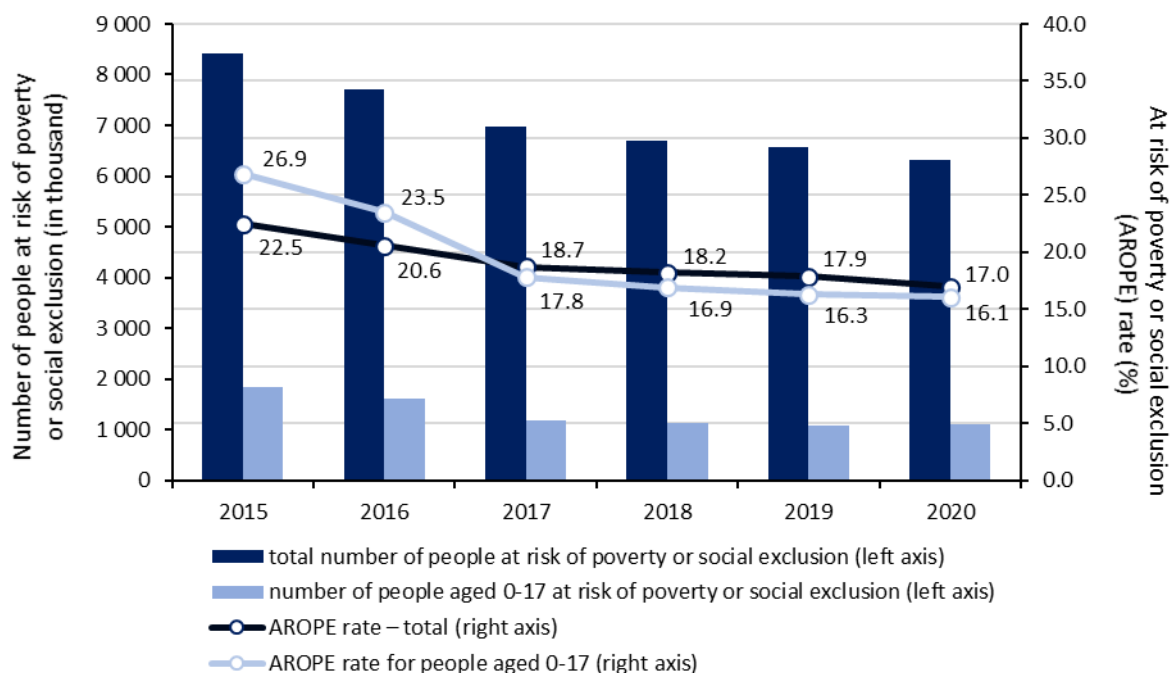
**Conclusions: in 2020, there was a significant decrease in the AROPE rate among children (by 10.8 pp) compared to 2015.**

Children and adolescents are a special group in society that requires support from adults. It is adults who must provide them with special protection so that they can learn, develop and gain experience. Being completely dependent, children rely on the knowledge and skills of adults, to get independent over time. The family is the best development environment for a child. If a child cannot grow up in a family, the state and public institutions are responsible for finding an appropriate solution to ensure the best protection of the child's interests.

Pursuant to point 15 of Council Recommendation (EU) 2021/1004 of 14 June 2021 establishing a European Child Guarantee, hereinafter referred to as the "Council Recommendation", its aim is to prevent and combat social exclusion by guaranteeing the access of children in need to a set of key services, including mainstreaming a gender perspective in order to take into consideration the different situations of girls and boys, by combating child poverty and fostering equal opportunities. "Children in need" means persons aged 0-17 who are at risk of poverty or social exclusion. This refers to children living in households at risk of poverty, or experiencing severe material and social deprivation, or with very low work intensity.

In 2020, the at risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE)<sup>1</sup> rate in Poland was 17.0%, compared to the EU average of 21.9%. In the case of children and adolescents aged 0-17, the AROPE rate was 16.1% and 24.2%, respectively. Compared to 2015, the total AROPE rate for Poland decreased by 5.5 pp, and in the case of children and adolescents aged 0-17 – by as much as 10.8 pp.

**Chart 1. The number of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion and the at risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE) rate in Poland in 2015–2020**



Source: own study based on EU-SILC data published by Eurostat (as at 17 November 2021)

In 2020, the at risk of poverty rate (AROP)<sup>2</sup> in Poland was 14.8%, while throughout EU this rate was estimated at 17.1%. In the case of children and adolescents aged 0-17, the AROP rate was 13.5% and 19.4%, respectively. Compared to 2015, the total AROP rate for Poland decreased by 2.8 pp, and in the case of children and adolescents aged 0-17– by as much as 8.9 pp.

In 2020, the severe material and social deprivation (SMSD)<sup>3</sup> rate in Poland was 2.6%, compared to the EU average of 6.8%. In the case of children and adolescents aged 0-17, this rate was 2.5% and 8.3%, respectively.

<sup>1</sup> **At risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE) rate** – a new definition – the percentage of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the entire population. A person at risk of poverty or social exclusion is a person who lives in a household experiencing at least one of the three forms of poverty or exclusion: at risk of poverty (AROP), severe material and social deprivation (SMSD) or very low work intensity (VLWI).

As a result of the revision of the AROPE rate, the severe material deprivation rate (SMD) rate has been replaced by the severe material and social deprivation rate (SMSD), and the very low work intensity rate (VLWI) has been extended to include people up to 64 years of age in the work intensity measurement (the previous age limit was 59 years).

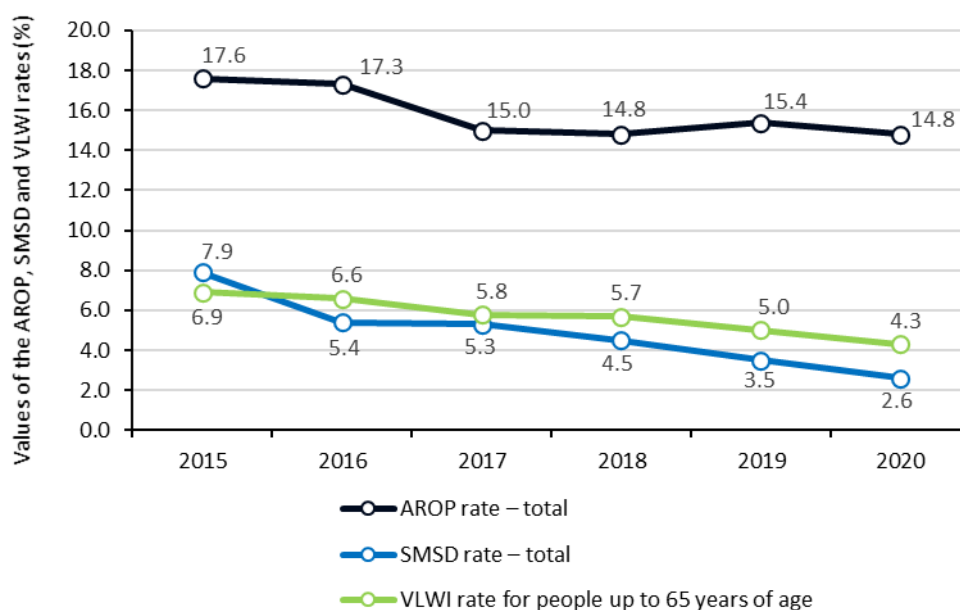
<sup>2</sup> **At risk of poverty (AROP) rate**– the percentage of people at risk of poverty defined as having low income that does not exceed 60% of the national median of annual equalised disposable income.

<sup>3</sup> **Severe material and social deprivation rate (SMSD)** – the percentage of people experiencing the inability to meet, for financial reasons, at least 7 out of 13 needs (6 related to the person and 7 related to the household ([https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Severe\\_material\\_and\\_social\\_deprivation\\_rate\\_\(SMSD\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Severe_material_and_social_deprivation_rate_(SMSD)))).

Compared to 2015, the total SMSD rate for Poland decreased by 5.3 pp, and in the case of children and adolescents aged 0-17 – by 6.4 pp.

In 2020, the very low work intensity (VLWI)<sup>4</sup> rate in Poland was 4.3%, compared to the EU average of 8.2%. In the case of children and adolescents aged 0-17, this rate<sup>5</sup> was 3.2% and 7.2%, respectively. Compared to 2015, the total VLWI rate for Poland decreased by 2.6 pp, and in the case of children and adolescents aged 0-17 – by 1.8 pp.

**Chart 2. The at risk of poverty (AROP), severe material and social deprivation (SMSD) and very low work intensity (VLWI) rates in Poland in 2015-2020**

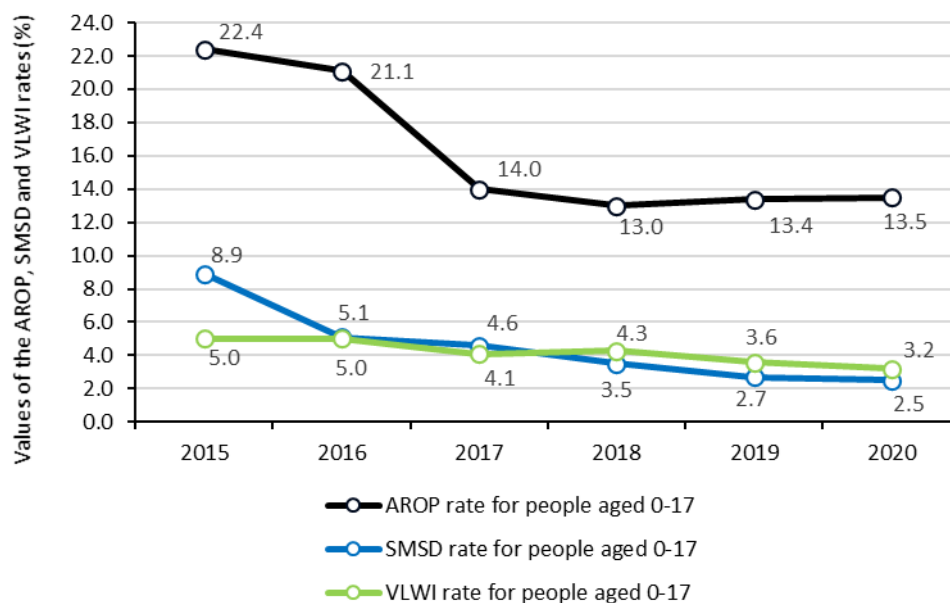


Source: own study based on EU-SILC data published by Eurostat (as at 17 November 2021)

<sup>4</sup> **Very low work intensity rate (VLWI)** – the percentage of people aged 0-64 whose households are characterised by very low work intensity, defined as working less than 20% of the total work potential by adults aged 18 - 64 years. Adults do not include: students aged 18–24; people who identify themselves as retired (self-determined economic status); people who receive old-age or disability pensions (except for survivors' pensions); people aged 60–64 who are economically inactive and live in households in which income consists mainly of old-age pensions (except for survivors' pensions).

<sup>5</sup> **Very low work intensity rate for children and adolescents aged 0-17** – the percentage of children and adolescents aged 0-17 who are members of households where adults aged 18-64 worked in the reference year for income less than 20% of their potential full-time work.

**Chart 3. The at risk of poverty (AROP), severe material and social deprivation (SMSD) and very low work intensity (VLWI) rates for children aged 0-17 in Poland in 2015-2020**



Source: own study based on EU-SILC data published by Eurostat (as at 17 November 2021)

## 1.2 Child poverty and its territorial differentiation

**Conclusions: in 2019, there was a significant decrease in the relative poverty rate among children compared to 2015 (the total rate for Poland decreased by 30.5%, the highest decrease (by 70.5%) was recorded in the Pomorskie Voivodeship);**

**in 2020, there was a significant decrease in the percentage of children for whom family allowance is received compared to 2015 (the total rate for Poland decreased by 15.3%, the highest decrease (by 18.5%) was recorded in the Lubuskie Voivodeship);**

Several measures of the poverty scale can be identified in literature, with both family income and expenses as a starting point. The relative poverty rate, calculated by Statistics Poland based on household expenses, is one of them. The relative poverty line is equal to half of the average equivalent expenditure<sup>6</sup> per person in a given quarter. In 2015 and 2019, the annual average of these values was PLN 702.11 and PLN 812.28, respectively.

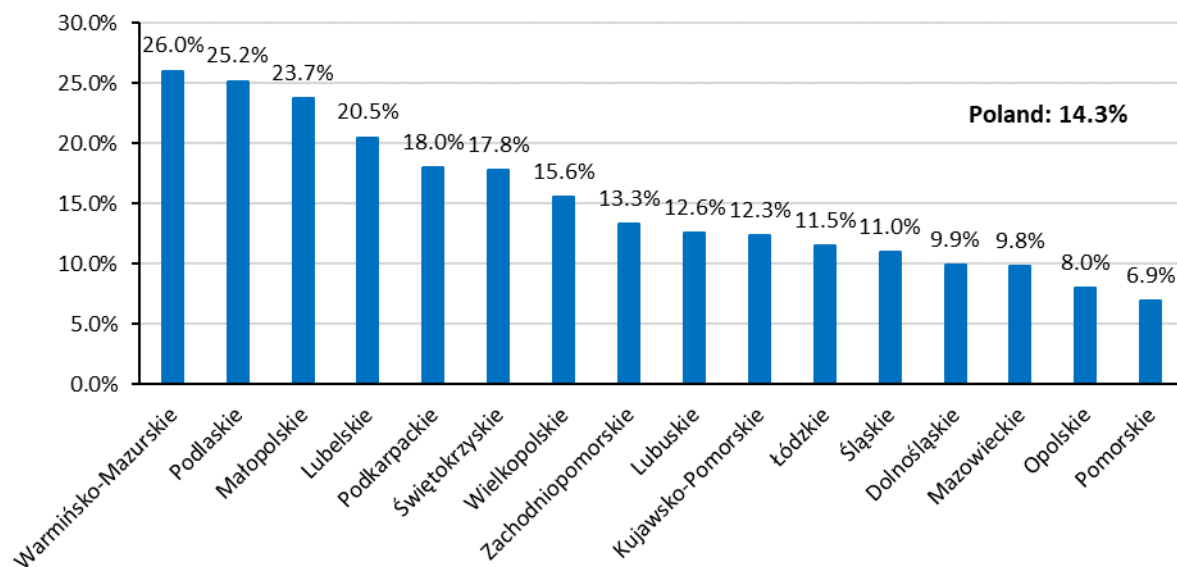
The relative poverty rate among children<sup>7</sup> in 2019<sup>8</sup> in Poland was 14.3%. The highest rate was recorded in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship (26%), while the lowest – in the Pomorskie Voivodeship (6.9%).

<sup>6</sup> When calculating the equivalent expenses, the original OECD equivalence scale is used. This scale assigns a value of 1 to the first household member, 0.7 to each additional adult defined as a person aged 14 or more, and 0.5 to each child aged 13 or less.

<sup>7</sup> For the purposes of analyses, children are defined as persons aged 0-17.

<sup>8</sup> Despite the availability of microdata from the household budget survey for 2020, the poverty rate was not calculated by voivodship – for that year, Statistics Poland provides the values of the poverty rate only in the macro-regional breakdown.

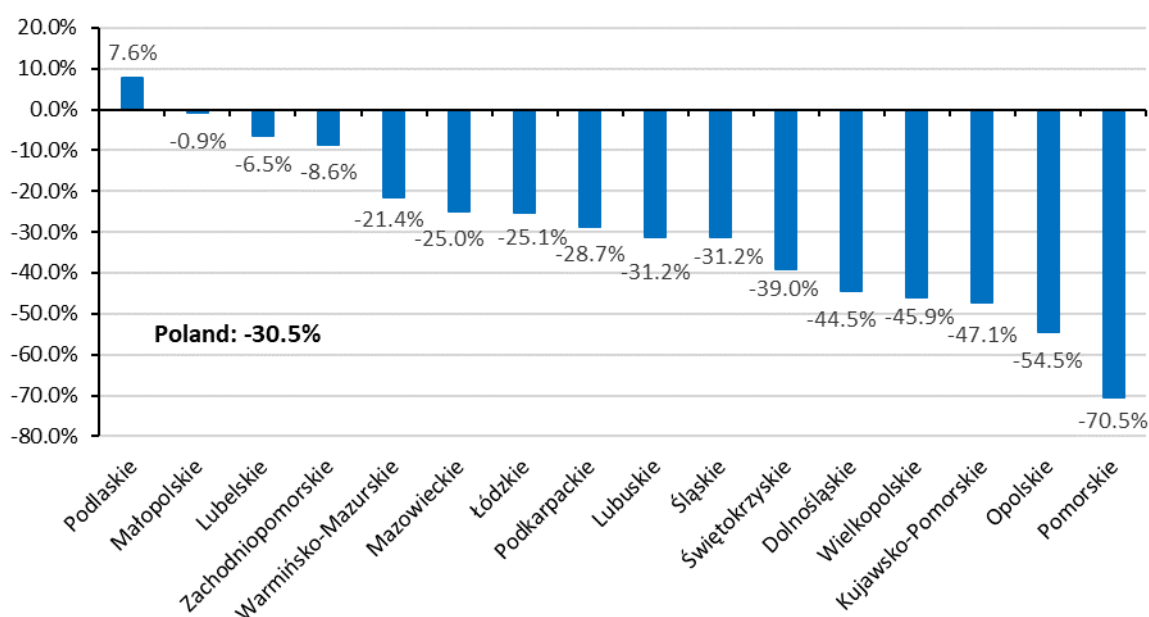
**Chart 4. The relative poverty rate among children in 2019**



Source: own study based on microdata from the household budget survey carried out by Statistics Poland

In 2019, the greatest decrease in the relative poverty rate compared to 2015 was recorded also in the Pomorskie Voivodeship (by 70.5%). The Podlaskie Voivodeship was the only voivodeship where the relative poverty rate increased in this period (by 7.6%). Throughout Poland, the average decrease in the relative poverty rate was 30.5%.

**Chart 5. Percentage change in the relative poverty rate among children in 2015–2019**

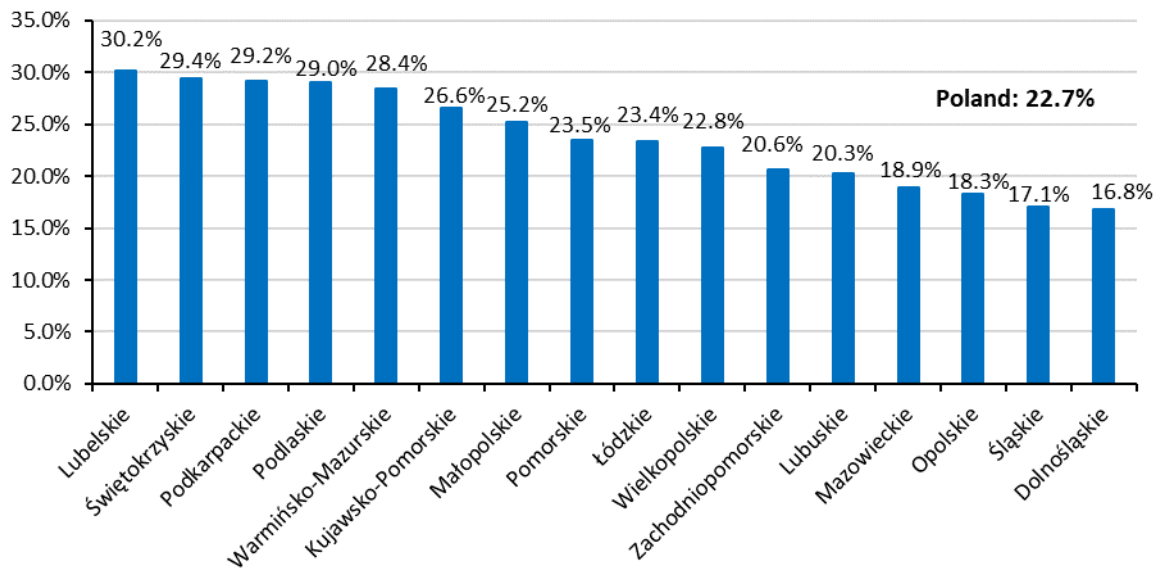


Source: own study based on microdata from the household budget survey carried out by Statistics Poland

As for the income measure of poverty, this may be the percentage of the number of children for whom family allowances are received in the total number of children. Throughout the analysed period (2015-2020), the maximum amount of income per person entitling to family allowance was PLN 674 or PLN 764 in the case of a child with disabilities. Where these amounts are exceeded, the PLN-for-PLN mechanism is applied.

The average percentage of the number of children for whom parents receive family allowances in the total number of children in 2020 was 22.7%. This highest value of this rate was recorded in the Lubelskie Voivodeship (30.2%), and the lowest – in the Dolnośląskie Voivodeship (16.8%).

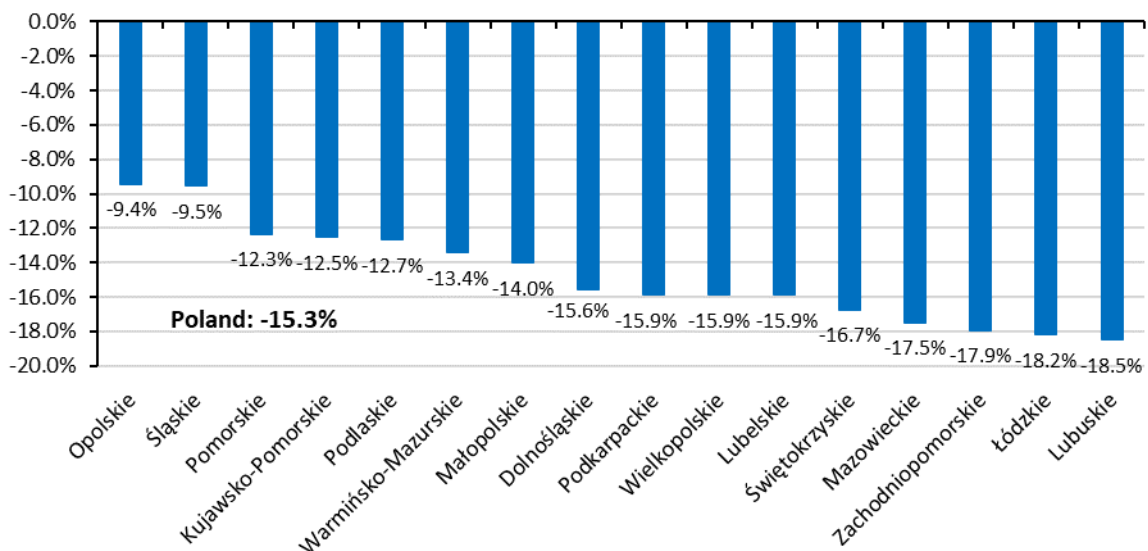
**Chart 6. The percentage of children for whom parents receive family allowances in the total number of children in 2020**



Source: own study based on Statistics Poland data (Local Data Bank)

Taking into account the change in the percentage of children for whom family allowances are received in the total number of children, between 2015 and 2020, a decrease in this ratio was recorded in all voivodships. The largest decrease was recorded in the Lubuskie Voivodeship (by 18.5% compared to 2015), and the lowest – in the Opolskie Voivodeship (by 9.4% compared to 2015). The average decrease for Poland was 15.3%.

**Chart 7. Change in the percentage of children for whom parents receive family allowances in the total number of children in 2015–2020**



Source: own study based on Statistics Poland data (Local Data Bank)



### ***1.3 Identification of groups of children in need and the barriers they experience accessing services***

Particular protection in preventing social exclusion and poverty should be provided to children:

- with disabilities;
- in alternative institutional care;
- with a migrant background or minority ethnic origin;
- with mental health issues;
- in a precarious family situation (e.g. resulting from addictions, experiencing domestic violence);
- exposed to homelessness, experiencing severe housing deprivation.

#### **1.3.1 Children who are homeless or experience severe housing deprivation**

**Conclusions: in 2019, the number of children experiencing homelessness decreased (by approx. 17%) compared to 2017, the majority of such children stayed in homes for mothers with children and pregnant women (36.2%);**

**in 2019, the largest number of children exposed to homelessness stayed in the Dolnośląskie Voivodeship (approx. 21%);**

**in 2020, the severe housing deprivation rate for households with dependent children decreased by 6.9% compared to 2015.**

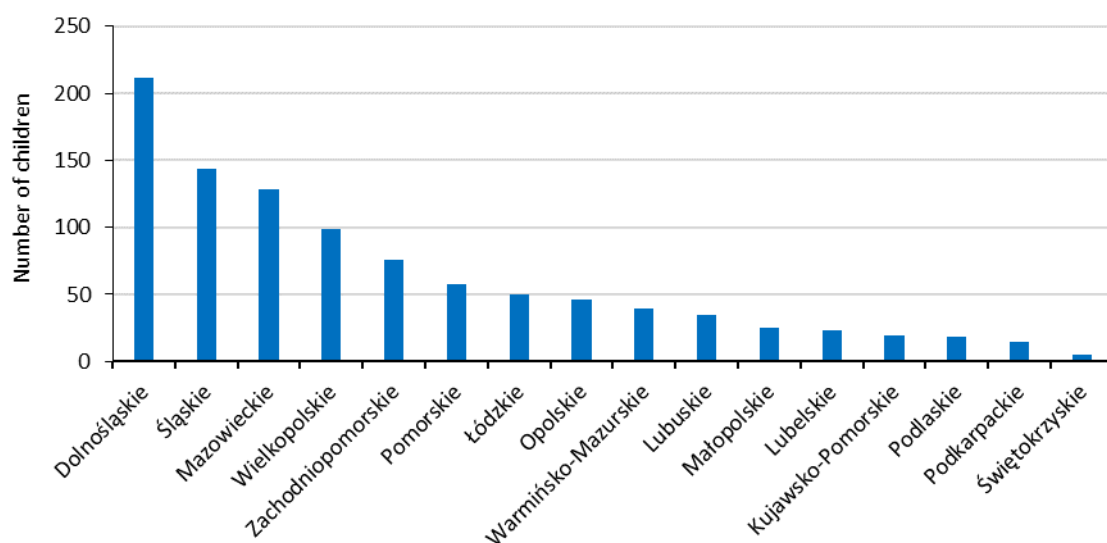
In 2019, 30.3 thousand people in Poland were experiencing homelessness, including almost 1 thousand children<sup>9</sup>, compared to 33.4 thousand homeless people in 2017 (including 1.2 thousand children) and 36.3 thousand homeless people in 2015 (including 1.9 thousand children).

In 2019, at the time of the survey, the largest number of people exposed to homelessness stayed in various types of shelters (80.2%), mainly in shelters for the homeless (39.3%). 19.8% of them stayed in non-residential places, mainly in vacant buildings as well as summer houses and chalets in allotment gardens (11.4%). In the case of children exposed to homelessness, most of them stayed in homes for mothers with underage children and pregnant women (36.2%) and in shelters for the homeless (22.8%). Almost half of the homeless children (48.8%) stayed in the following voivodships: Dolnośląskie, Śląskie and Mazowieckie.

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<sup>9</sup> Based on the All-Poland Homeless Population Census conducted at night from 13 to 14 February 2019.

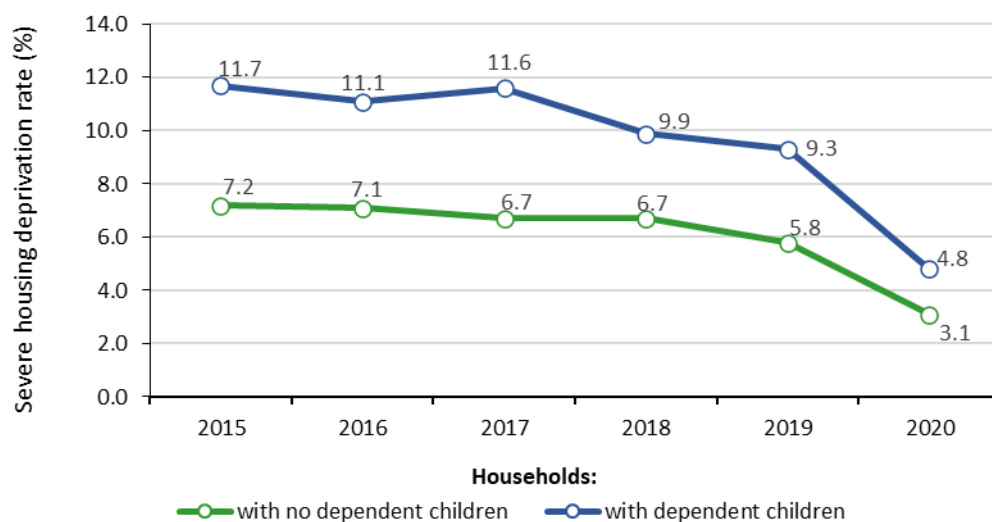
**Chart 8. Children exposed to homelessness in 2019 by voivodship**



Source: own study based on data from the All-Poland Homeless Population Census conducted at night from 13 to 14 February 2019

Apart from homeless children, attention should also be paid to children who live in very poor conditions. In 2020, the severe housing deprivation rate<sup>10</sup> for households with dependent children was 4.8% and was 4.1 pp lower than in 2015. However, compared to this rate in 2020 for households without dependent children, it was higher by 1.7 pp.

**Chart 9. Severe housing deprivation rate by household type in 2015–2020**



Source: own study based on data from the Eurostat database

<sup>10</sup> The severe housing deprivation rate is defined as the proportion of the population living in premises that are considered overcrowded, while showing at least one housing deprivation measure. Housing deprivation is a measure of poor amenities and is calculated by reference to households that live in very poor conditions, e.g. with a leaky roof in the flat, no bathtub/shower and toilet in the premises or live in a flat that is considered too dark.

### 1.3.2 Children with disabilities

**Conclusions: in 2020, there was a slight increase (by 5.9%) in the number of children compared to 2015;**

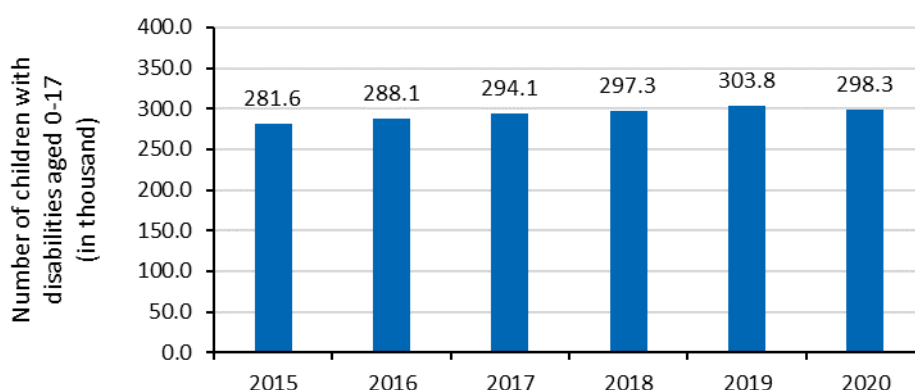
**in 2020, there was a significant increase in income and expenses in families with children with disabilities – greater than in families without children with disabilities – compared to 2015 (income increased by 50.6%, expenses increased by 30.9%);**

**in 2020, the level of income and expenses was still lower in families with children with disabilities than in families without children with disabilities;**

**in 2020, among households with at least one child with disabilities under 16 holding a certificate of disability, there was a decrease in the extreme poverty rate by 3.7 pp compared to 2015, and a decrease in the relative poverty rate by 7.7 pp.**

In 2020, 298.3 thousand children in Poland aged 0-17 held a certificate of disability/certificate of disability degree. Compared to 2015, this figure increased by almost 16.8 thousand. In 2020, children holding a certificate of disability accounted for 4.3% of all children (0.2 pp more than in 2015)<sup>11</sup>.

**Chart 10. Children with a certificate of disability in 2015–2020**



*Source: own study based on data from the Electronic National System for Disability Assessment Monitoring (EKSMOoN)*

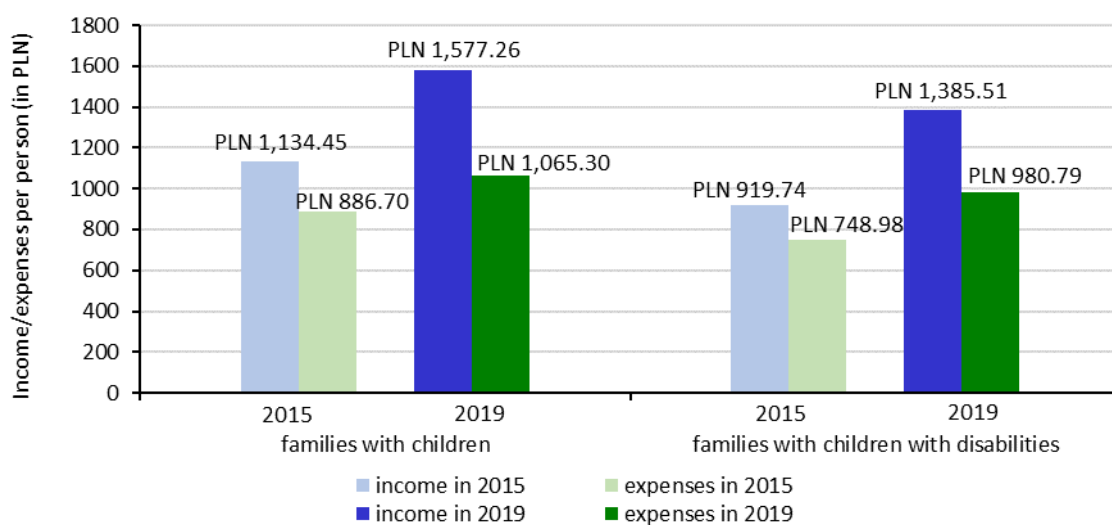
In 2015–2019, income per person in families with children increased on average from PLN 1,134.45 to PLN 1,577.26 (by 39%), while expenses increased from PLN 886.70 to PLN 1,065.30 (by PLN 20, 1%). In 2015–2019, income in families with at least one child with a disability increased from PLN 919.74 to PLN 1,385.51 (by 50.6%), and expenses increased from PLN 748.98 to PLN 980.79 (by 30.9%). In both cases, there was a higher increase in income than in expenses. It is worth noting, however, that in families with at least one child with a disability, the growth rate was higher both as regards income and expenses per person.

Despite the narrowing gap between the analysed types of families, the income and expenditure situation of families with at least one child with a disability is still worse than in the case of all families with children.

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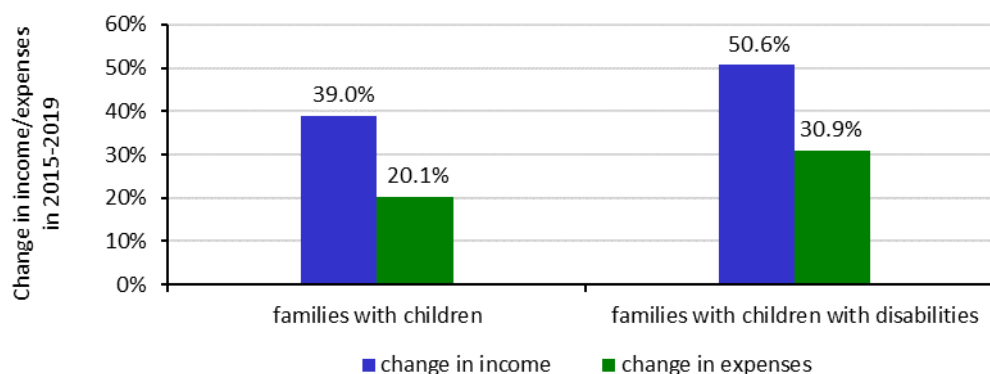
<sup>11</sup> Based on data from the Electronic National System for Disability Assessment Monitoring (EKSMOoN)

**Chart 11. Income and expenses per person in families with children in 2015 and 2019**



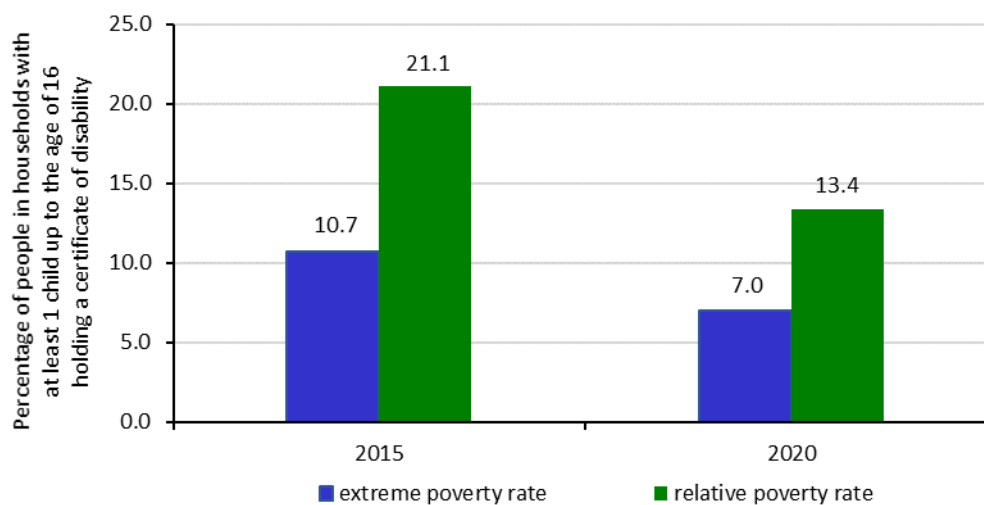
Source: own study of the Economic Analysis Department based on microdata from the household budget survey carried out by Statistics Poland

**Chart 12. Change in income and expenses per person in families with children in 2015 and 2019**



Source: own study based on microdata from the household budget survey carried out by Statistics Poland

**Chart 13. The extreme and relative poverty rates among households with at least one child under 16 with a disability holding a certificate of disability in 2015 and 2020**



Source: own study based on Statistics Poland data

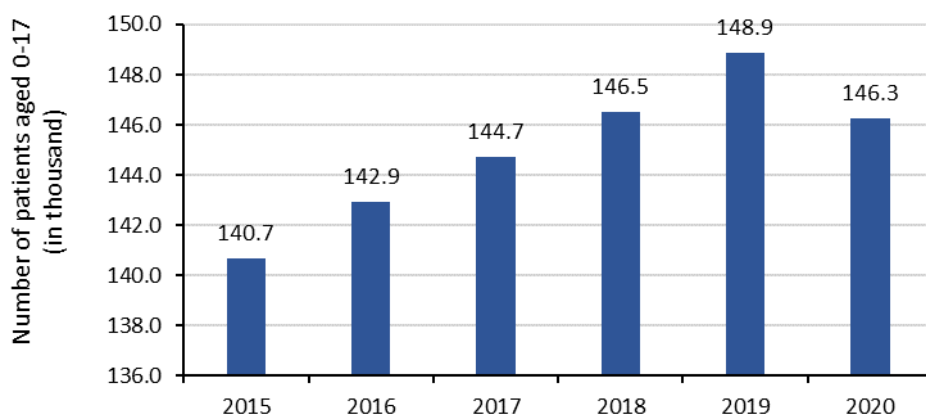
In 2020, the extreme poverty rate<sup>12</sup> among households with at least one child under 16 holding a certificate of disability was 7.0%, i.e. 3.7 pp less than in 2015. In 2020, the relative poverty rate<sup>13</sup> for the same group of households was 13.4%, which was 7.7 pp less than in 2015.

### 1.3.3 Children with mental health issues

**Conclusions: in 2019, 148.9 thousand children aged 0-17 were treated for mental disorders, i.e. 5.8% more than in 2015, with the largest number of such children living in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship (25.1 thousand in 2020).**

In 2015–2019, the number of children aged 0-17 treated for mental disorders was systematically increasing. In 2019, the number of such patients aged 0-17 in Poland was 148.9 thousand, which was 5.8% more than in 2015. In 2020, there was a decrease in the number of children aged 0-17 treated for mental health issues (146.3 thousand), which was caused by, among others, limited access to medical care due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The largest numbers of underage patients treated for mental disorders were recorded in the following voivodships: Mazowieckie – 25.1 thousand, Śląskie – 14.8 thousand, and Wielkopolskie – 14.3 thousand.

Chart 14. Children aged 0-17 treated for mental disorders in 2015–2020

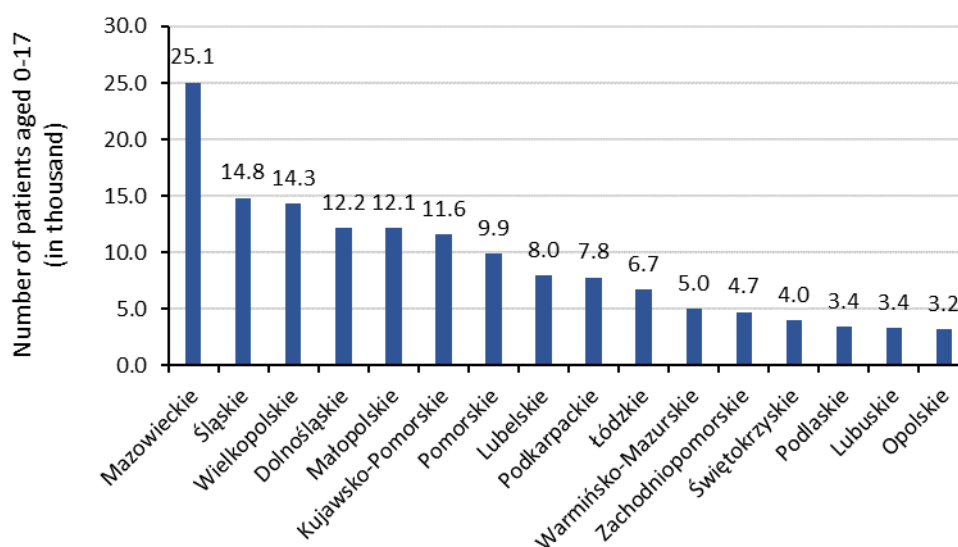


Source: own study based on data from the Ministry of Health regarding services reported by the National Health Fund

<sup>12</sup> The percentage of people in households where the level of expenses (including the value of products received free of charge and the value of natural consumption) was lower than the extreme poverty line (minimum existence) that determines the level of satisfaction of needs, below which there is a biological threat to human life and psychophysical development.

<sup>13</sup> The percentage of people in households where the level of expenses (including the value of products received free of charge and the value of natural consumption) was lower than the relative poverty line assumed at the level of 50% of the average monthly expenses determined for all households, taking into account the (old) OECD equivalence scale.

Chart 15. Children aged 0-17 treated for mental disorders in 2020 – by voivodeship



Source: own study based on data from the Ministry of Health regarding services reported by the National Health Fund

### 1.3.4 Children with a migrant background or minority ethnic origin (particularly Roma) and children of refugees from Ukraine

**Conclusions: in 2020, minor citizens of Ukraine, who lived mainly in the Mazowieckie, Małopolskie, Wielkopolskie and Dolnośląskie Voivodships, accounted for the greatest group of children with a migrant background (61.1%);**

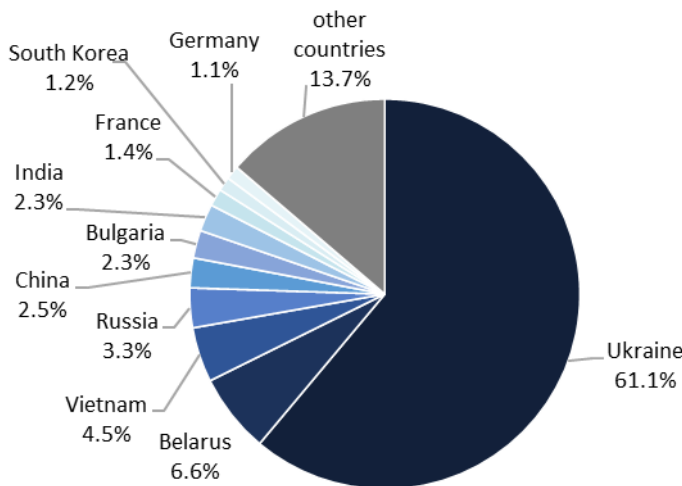
**in 2020, the most numerous groups of children of migrants who met the criteria for receiving family allowances included children of citizens of Bulgaria (87.3%) and Russia (62.5%);**

**in 2020, Roma children (approx. 3 thousand) were still in a poor economic situation, in the vast majority of cases due to deficiencies in their parents' education.**

As at 1 January 2021, there were 45.1 thousand minors with in Poland with valid documents confirming the right to stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland. The vast majority of foreigners aged 0-17 were citizens from countries neighbouring Poland in the east, namely: Ukraine – as many as 27.5 thousand people, i.e. 61.1% of all foreigners in this age range, and Belarus – 3.0 thousand minors, i.e. 6.6% of all foreigners of this age.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Data on the number of minors with valid documents confirming the right to stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland come from the register of the Office for Foreigners. The data does not include information about foreigners staying in the territory of the Republic of Poland based on resident visas.

**Chart 16. Minors in Poland by citizenship as at 1 January 2021**

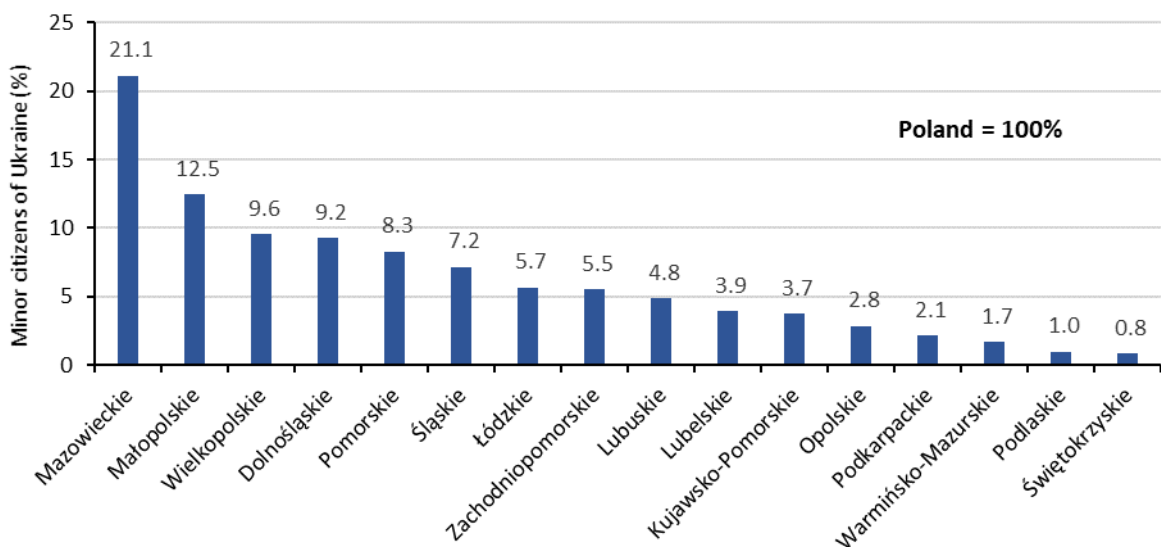


Source: own study based on data from the register of the Office for Foreigners (data concerns minors with valid documents confirming the right to stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland)

The number of foreigners in Poland is gradually increasing every year. Over the five-year period, the number of minor citizens of other countries with valid documents confirming the right to stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland has almost tripled. In the period concerned, the greatest numbers of minors came to Poland from Ukraine and Belarus. The number of underage Ukrainian citizens increased by 22.6 thousand people, i.e. more than five times, and the number of underage citizens from Belarus increased by 2.2 thousand, i.e. four times.

The largest number of underage citizens of Ukraine reside in the central part of Poland (in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship – 5.8 thousand; 21.1%) as well as in its southern (in the Małopolskie Voivodeship – 3.4 thousand; 12.5%) and western parts (in the Wielkopolskie Voivodeship – 2.6 thousand; 9.6% and in the Dolnośląskie Voivodeships – 2.5 thousand; 9.2%).

**Chart 17. Minor citizens of Ukraine in Poland by voivodships (as at 1 January 2021)**



Source: own study based on data from the register of the Office for Foreigners (data concerns minors with valid documents confirming the right to stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland)

Comparing the number of underage foreigners residing in Poland with the number of family allowances to which children of citizens of other countries were entitled in 2020, it can be concluded that 25% of foreigners' children were in a difficult financial situation. The most difficult situation was experienced by citizens of Bulgaria (as many as 87.3% of children of Bulgarian citizens were entitled to family allowances), Russia (62.5%), Belarus (29.8%) and Ukraine (24.4%).<sup>15</sup>

Roma people are a significant ethnic minority living in Poland. According to estimated data from the government social integration strategies for this minority group implemented since 2001, the number of Roma people in Poland is estimated at 20-25 thousand, of whom some 2.6 thousand are children attending school.<sup>16</sup>

The most numerous Roma communities live in the southern belt of Poland, in the Małopolskie, Dolnośląskie, Śląskie and Opolskie Voivodeships. These voivodeships are inhabited by Roma belonging to the poorest and most excluded Roma group.

The poor economic situation of the Roma is mainly due to the low level of their education: only 2% of them have higher education, 7% have secondary education, and the remaining 91% have primary education, in 50% incomplete.

In the Roma culture, multi-child families (with at least 3 children) prevail and there is a faster succession of generations (early motherhood, i.e. at the age of 15), therefore this is one of the youngest social groups in Poland.

### **Wave of refugees from Ukraine**

On 24 February 2022, as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a mass exodus of its citizens to neighbouring countries began. By 10 April 2022, 2.86 million refugees from Ukraine had arrived in Poland. It is estimated that approx. 1.95 million of them have remained in Poland, and 50% of them are children. Women are the vast majority of adults.

According to the UNHCR estimates, the number of refugees from Ukraine may reach 4 million, and the situation may turn into the largest refugee crisis in Europe in this century. Poland, as the country to which the largest wave of refugees has arrived, declared its full readiness to support Ukrainian citizens who will leave their country due to the invasion, seeking safe refuge in Poland. This includes providing them both with accommodation, medical care, and psychological support, as well as long-term assistance, e.g. in the labour market.

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<sup>15</sup> Entitlement to a family allowance depends, among others, on meeting the income criterion. A family allowance is granted if the average monthly family income per person or the income of a student does not exceed PLN 674.00. If a family includes a child with a certificate of disability or a certificate of moderate or severe disability, a family allowance is granted if the average monthly family income per person or the income of a student does not exceed PLN 764.00. If these amounts are exceeded, the PLN-for-PLN mechanism is applied.

<sup>16</sup> Data on the number of Roma students was estimated by local government units; this data should be treated as minimum values.



### 1.3.5 Children in alternative (especially institutional) care

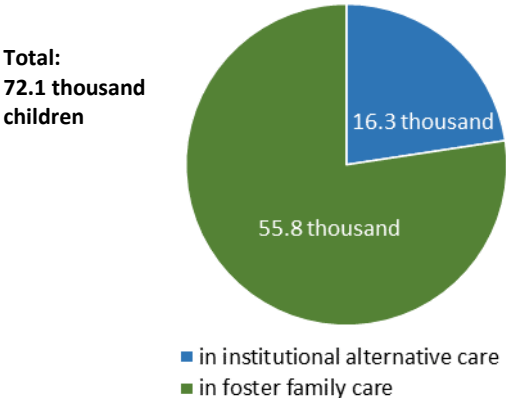
**Conclusions: in 2020, there was a slight decrease (by 5.8%) in the number of children placed in alternative care compared to 2015, including a significant decrease (by 16.5%) in the number of children in institutional care;**

**in 2020, the greatest number of children in institutional care were in the Śląskie Voivodeship, and the lowest in the Podlaskie Voivodeship.**

In 2020, there were 1,194 care and educational facilities in Poland, 10 regional care and therapy centres, and 2 pre-adoption intervention centres with a total of 16.3 thousand children (22.6% of all children in alternative care). As many as 55.8 thousand children (77.4% of all children in alternative care) were placed in foster family care in 36.8 thousand foster families and family orphanages. Only 1% of all children in Poland were in alternative care, of which 0.2% in institutional care, and 0.8% in foster care.

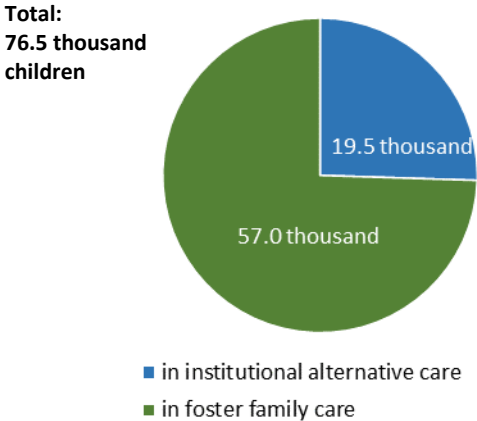
Compared to 2015, the total number of children in alternative care decreased by 5.8%. It is worth noting that the declines in the number of children in institutional care were much higher than in the case of foster family care – the number of children in institutional care decreased by as much as 16.5%, while the number of children in foster family care decreased by 2.1%.

**Chart 18. Children in alternative care in 2020**



*Source: own study based on data from work and expenditure statements submitted by local government units*

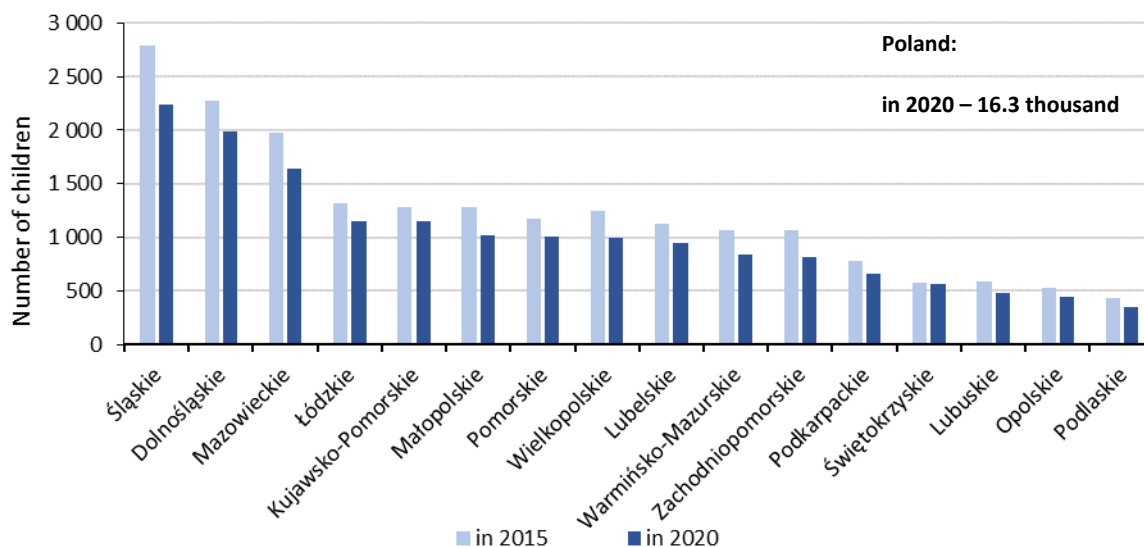
**Chart 19. Children in alternative care in 2015**



*Source: own study based on data from work and expenditure statements submitted by local government units*

In 2020, the greatest number of children in institutional alternative care resided in the Śląskie Voivodeship – 2.2 thousand, Dolnośląskie Voivodeship – 2.0 thousand, and the Mazowieckie Voivodeship – 1.6 thousand.

Chart 20. Children in institutional alternative care by voivodeship in 2015 and 2020



Source: own study based on data from work and expenditure statements submitted by local government units

There are 170 thousand children in institutional care facilities in Ukraine. As at 19 April 2022, 1.9 thousand children covered by alternative care in Ukraine had arrived in Poland since the beginning of Russia's aggression of Ukraine. Currently, there are approximately 200 Ukrainian children in alternative care.

### 1.3.6 Children in a precarious family situation

**Conclusions: in 2020, there was a decrease in the number of families covered by social assistance due to alcohol addiction (by 30.4%) and drug addiction (by 7.0%) compared to 2015;**

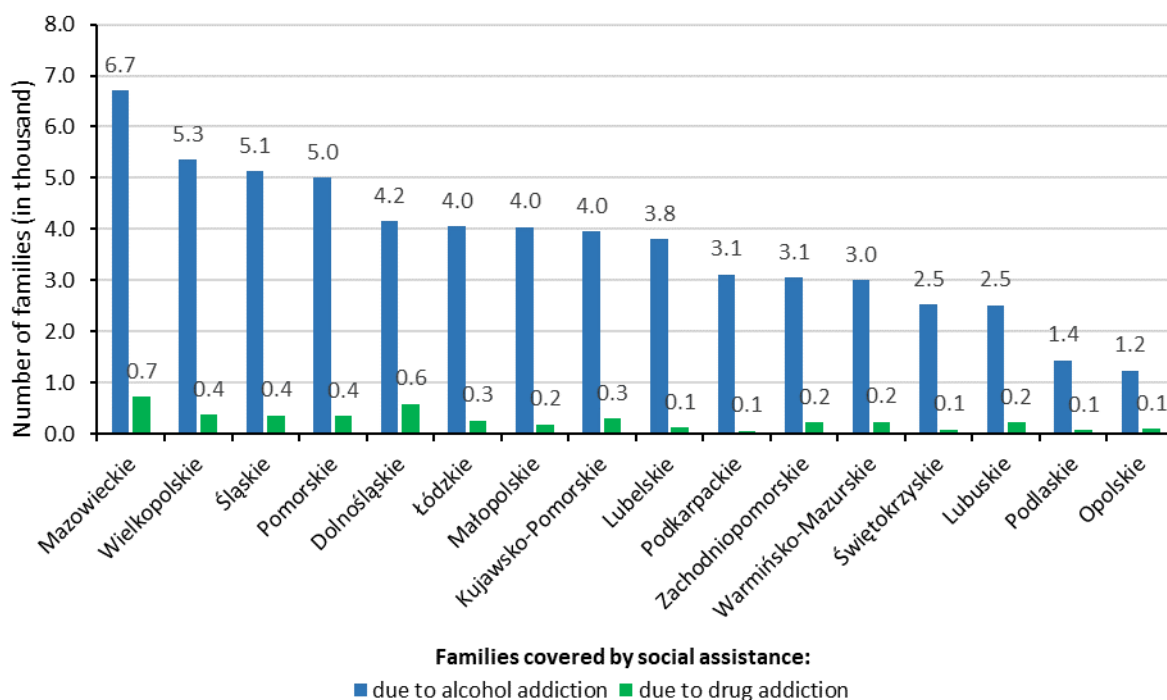
**in 2020, the AROPE rate for households with one adult raising dependent children decreased by 8.1% compared to 2015;**

**in 2020, the number of children assisted by public institutions due to violence experienced by them increased by 25.5% compared to 2015, with the highest increase recorded in the Śląskie Voivodeship and Wielkopolskie Voivodeship.**

In 2020, 59.1 thousand families were covered by social assistance due to alcohol addiction, i.e. 30.4% less than in 2015. The number of families to whom assistance is provided is decreasing every year.

In 2020, 4.3 thousand families were covered by social assistance due to drug addiction, i.e. 7.0% less than in 2015. Families with drug addiction problems accounted for only 0.53% of all families receiving social assistance benefits.<sup>17</sup>

**Chart 21. Families covered by social assistance due to alcohol addiction and drug addiction in 2020 – by voivodeship**



Source: own study based on data from reports on social assistance benefits granted, completed by local government units

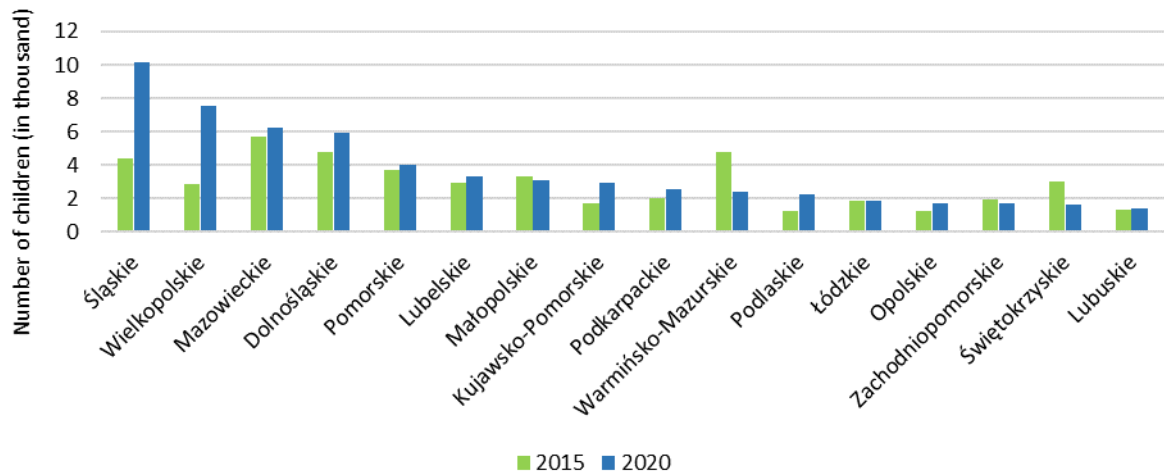
In 2019, 5.8 thousand patients aged 0-17 were treated in Poland due to addictions, which was slightly more than in the previous year.<sup>18</sup>

In 2020, approx. 59,000 children experiencing domestic violence were provided with assistance by public institutions. This figure was approx. 12 thousand higher than in 2015. The increase in the number of children experiencing domestic violence taking advantage of assistance and support provided by public institutions in 2015-2020 was mainly due to a change in awareness and increased trust in the services that provide help and support as part of the “Blue Card” procedure. In 2020, the largest number of children covered by assistance were in the Śląskie Voivodeship (10.1 thousand). The least assistance of this type was required by children from the Lubuskie Voivodship (1.4 thousand). According to an analysis of the data from 2015 and 2020, the greatest increase in the demand for such assistance was observed in the Śląskie Voivodeship (increase by 5.8 thousand).

<sup>17</sup> Data on families covered by social assistance due to alcohol and drug addictions comes from work and expenditure statements submitted by local government units.

<sup>18</sup> Based on the System and Implementation Analyses Database of the Ministry of Health.

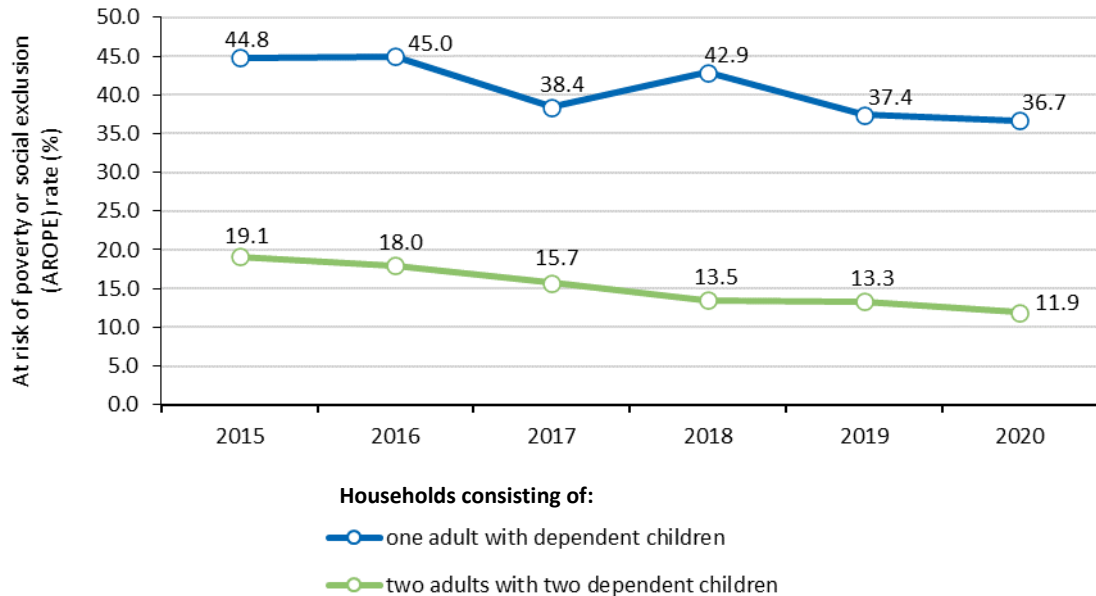
**Chart 22. The number of children experiencing domestic violence that were provided with assistance by public institutions in 2015 and 2020 – by voivodeship**



Source: own study based on data from reports submitted by public institutions providing assistance to people experiencing domestic violence

Children growing up in households consisting of one adult are also in a difficult financial situation. In 2020, the at risk of poverty and social exclusion (AROPE) rate for this type of household was 36.7%, while the same rate for households consisting of two adults with two dependent children was 24.8 pp lower.

**Chart 23. Households at risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE rate) in 2015-2020 – by type of household with dependent children**



Source: own study based on EU-SILC data published by Eurostat (as at 1 December 2021)

## **2. Assistance provided to the needy and raising awareness**

### ***2.1. Actions, schedule and financial resources***

#### **2.1.1 Actions targeting children who are homeless or experience severe housing deprivation**

##### ***2.1.1.1 Reform of the operation of the public rental market and the use of flats in the municipal housing stock, as well as increasing financial support for the implementation of the government programme of support for subsidised and government housing***

The state housing policy focuses on developing solutions to make it possible to satisfy housing needs by private households. It is based on the National Housing Programme (NHP), adopted on 27 September 2016 by a resolution of the Council of Ministers. The NHP defines various, yet complementary, actions to improve the availability of housing, especially for people with income that makes it difficult to purchase or rent a flat on commercial terms on one's own. The housing policy focuses primarily on the rental housing sector.

This initiative is to help individuals and families, including families with children, meet their housing needs and improve their living standards. The housing policy focuses primarily on the rental housing sector. However, actions taken as part of this policy are not directly addressed to children, but to private households. Children cannot be a party to rental agreements for residential premises and other civil law contracts, and thus they cannot be the direct addressee of a given action. Identifying and solving the problem of homelessness among children is related to the lack of their welfare and social security. The above action is part of the process of creating real assistance to local governments that are obliged, among others, to meet the housing needs of the local community. Implementation of this action by making the management of the municipal housing stock more flexible and increasing funds from the state budget to support the government programme of subsidised and government housing is aimed at reviving local housing investments and solving the problem of people, including families with children, at risk of exclusion and housing deprivation. The 2019 reform of the operation of the public rental market and the use of flats in the municipal housing stock, as well as increasing financial support for the implementation of the government programme of support for subsidised and government housing, which took place at the end of 2020, fostered municipal housing investments. In 2021, 294 municipal housing investments were eligible for financial support in connection with the planned construction or renovation of 8,039 government or subsidised tenement flats.

##### ***2.1.1.2 Monitoring the scale of child homelessness***

On the initiative of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, a nationwide survey on the number of homeless people is carried out every two years since 2009. The survey is carried out in winter using the point in time method. Investigating and assessing the current scale of child homelessness is an important aspect in the process of developing social policy directions at all levels of administration, as awareness of the scale of this problem allows for the development of effective intervention methods.

The action in question requires the involvement of both representatives of government administration at the voivodeship level, local government units (including social service organisational units), uniformed services (the Police, Municipal Police), as well as non-governmental organisations. NGOs play an important role in the support network for people exposed to homelessness, most often providing assistance commissioned by

local governments with the use of public funds. Those involved in the survey include employees of shelter facilities run by NGOs as well as street workers and people involved in voluntary help for people exposed to homelessness.

The implementation of the national survey on the number of homeless people is planned every 2 years, in the first quarter of the year, in 2023, 2025, 2027 and 2029.

The action is implemented with the funds from the budgets of institutions and organisations involved in the project.

## **2.1.2 Actions targeting children with disabilities**

### ***2.1.2.1 Providing access to early childhood development support services and programmes supporting the development of children with disabilities and improving the situation of children with disabilities and their families/carers.***

The above action is carried out under the Strategy for People with Disabilities for 2021-2030 as well as subsequent editions of the programmes implemented as part of the Solidarity Fund and the Programme for Comprehensive Support for Families “For Life”, hereinafter referred to as the “For Life” Programme, as well as various programmes of the Supervisory Board of the State Fund for Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities (PFRON).

The schedule of selected actions from the Strategy for People with Disabilities 2021-2030 is as follows:

By 2023: Providing specialist medical care and preventive measures to children with disabilities or those at risk of persistent physical limitation; Prevention in the area of mental health of children and adolescents; Raising awareness of inclusive education for people with disabilities.

By 2025: Support for parents of children with disabilities; Adapting public spaces to the needs of children with disabilities; Implementation and popularisation of bilingual education for deaf people.

By 2030: Supporting the possibility of self-determination and self-advocacy of people with various disabilities; Adaptation of correctional facilities and shelters for minors to the needs of people with disabilities; Transportation “on request”; Increasing the availability of infrastructure, sports events, and sport for people with various disabilities; Functional assessment standards; Development of legislative and organisational solutions to ensure accessibility and improve the quality of inclusive education; Availability of kindergartens, schools and educational institutions; Preparation of human resources for the implementation of inclusive education; Support for kindergartens and public schools; Providing support for children and adolescents with disabilities in the development of their potential; Support for the process of transition between educational stages and the transition from the education system to the labour market; Early identification of developmental disorders in children and early help for the child and family.

### ***2.1.2.2 Enabling access for people with disabilities to various forms of support facilitating the process of vocational and social rehabilitation as part of projects implemented by non-governmental organisations, with the use of PFRON funds***

Tasks are outsourced to non-governmental organisations pursuant to Article 36 of the Act of 27 August 1997 on Vocational and Social Rehabilitation and Employment of People with Disabilities (Journal of Laws of 2021, item 573, as amended). The order may concern tasks specified in the Regulation of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 7 February 2008 on the types of tasks in the area of vocational and social

rehabilitation of people with disabilities, commissioned to foundations and non-governmental organisations (Journal of Laws of 2016, item 1945). Tasks are commissioned following an open competition. Competitions are announced in accordance with the Act of 24 April 2003 on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work (Journal of Laws of 2020, item 1057, as amended). In the case of competitions announced by the PFRON, tasks must be submitted to the PFRON in the form of projects.

Entities authorised to submit proposals under a competition include:

- non-governmental organisations, including foundations and associations;
- legal persons and organisational units operating pursuant to the provisions on the relationship of the State to the Catholic Church in the Republic of Poland, on the relationship of the State to other churches and religious associations, and on guarantees of freedom of conscience and religion, if their statutory goals include public benefit activity;
- associations of local government units, social cooperatives, as well as joint-stock companies, limited liability companies and sports clubs being partnerships, as long as they meet special conditions.

As part of these competitions, the following activities are carried out: home rehabilitation of children with disabilities and education of parents (legal guardians) at a facility or at their place of residence, by preparing them to independently support the development of a child with a disability in order to better adapt children with disabilities to independent life; individual and group counselling and community support groups for families with children with disabilities in order to provide psychological support and counselling for families in the area of social integration of children with disabilities); personal assistance of a person with a disability; vocational activation of people with disabilities; campaigns to change the image of people with various disabilities.

The PFRON has been commissioning the implementation of tasks since 2009. The programme is financed with funds available to the PFRON, as determined in the state budget for a given year. The amount of funds allocated to the implementation of commissioned tasks is determined annually in the PFRON financial plan. In the PFRON financial plan for 2021 – PLN 415 million, for 2022 – PLN 570 million. In the draft plan for 2025 – PLN 445 million.

In 2020, the measure value determined in the task budget reached 226,436 people, including 27,537 children and adolescents. In 2021, this was 260,156 people, including 31,124 children and adolescents. In 2022, support will be provided to 270,000 people, including 32,042 children and adolescents. The draft plan for 2025 envisages support for 260 thousand people, including 32,042 children and adolescents. According to the estimates for 2030, 270,000 people, including 33,242 children and adolescents, will be supported.

### ***2.1.2.3 Targeted programmes of the Supervisory Board of the PFRON supporting system solutions – a pilot programme “Active Local Government”***

The above programme is aimed at: preparing people with movement, hearing and visual processing disorders to fulfil various social roles by enabling them to join the emerging information society and preparing programme beneficiaries for social or professional activation or learning, or supporting them in maintaining employment by eliminating or reducing movement, communication and transport barriers. The programme provides for subsidies to car accessories, electronic equipment or an electric wheelchair adapted to the needs of a particular person. It is also possible to receive support for the necessary training in the use of electronic equipment or reimbursement of the cost of maintaining the technical efficiency of an electric wheelchair.

The programme is implemented annually since its approval by the Supervisory Board of the PFRON, i.e. since 2012, with no specific completion date. The call for proposals starts in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the year and ends on 31 August. The proposals are considered on an ongoing basis, and contracts are concluded and performed until 15 April of the following year. The programme is financed with funds available to the PFRON, determined in the state budget for a given year. The amount of funds allocated to the implementation of programme is determined annually in the PFRON financial plan. In 2021, this amount is PLN 189,622,000, in 2022, PLN 191,027,000 is planned, of which approx. PLN 11,000,000 is spent for support of people up to 18 years of age. Similarly, until 2025, the budget includes only domestic funds.

In 2020, a total of 1,514 people with disabilities up to the age of 18 benefited from assistance under the presented tasks. They could obtain support under several tasks at a time. The baseline indicator for the programme for 2020 – 1,500, by 2025 – 1,500, by 2030 – 1,500.

#### ***2.1.2.4 Provision of educational materials, including digital educational tools, textbooks adapted to the needs of children with disabilities***

This action is aimed at: primary school students (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> educational stages), students with disabilities, regardless of the educational stage, and all students and teachers involved in the Polish education system.

This initiative consists in providing free textbooks, educational/exercise materials intended for compulsory educational activities for all primary school students (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> educational stages), as well as textbooks, educational and exercise materials for students with disabilities, adaptation of school textbooks and auxiliary books – adapted to the needs of blind, visually impaired and deaf students (available to all students regardless of the educational stage). Moreover, a free public digital tool has been made available at the central level, called Integrated Educational Platform (*Zintegrowana Platforma Edukacyjna – ZPE*) (available at [www.zpe.gov.pl](http://www.zpe.gov.pl)), which can be used by all students and teachers involved in the Polish education system. ZPE consists of an LCMS platform module for e-learning and a repository of educational materials for general and vocational education, including materials adapted for students with disabilities.

Until 2030, estimated public funds should be maintained at the level of the current annual expenditure, earmarked for:

- textbook subsidy – in the amount specified in the Act of 27 October 2017 on Financing Educational Tasks (Journal of Laws of 2021, item 1930, as amended),
- ZPE – in the amount of PLN 2.5 million.

As part of public funds, funds from the EU budget in the amount of PLN 61.3 million have been allocated so far to the preparation of digital educational materials in 2021 only. Until 2027, funds in the amount of PLN 531.3 million have been planned for this purpose.

### **2.1.3 Actions targeting children with mental health issues**

#### ***Improving the quality of inclusive education aimed, in particular, at children and adolescents with disabilities and children and adolescents with mental health issues. Implementation of a new model of early support for child development and family support***

It is planned to adopt an act on support of children, students and families, that will define the change in the method of assessing the needs of children and students as well as planning, providing and assessing the



effectiveness of the support provided and the method of financing tasks in this area with the use of functional assessment and the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF).

The functional assessment will take into account information from observations of how children function in everyday situations and what difficulties they encounter, as well as how their environment influences this functioning. Learning outcomes will also be analysed (assessed), so will be the findings of specialist diagnosis, if any, (e.g. identification of a neurodevelopmental disorder). The key objective will be to identify any barriers to learning as well as child's or student's development and social inclusion, and to establish an action plan to overcome these barriers and, consequently, improve the student's broadly understood achievements. Apart from teachers and specialists, those involved in the functional assessment process will also include students and parents.

The use of ICF will enable the development of a functional profile of the student containing information relevant to understanding their functioning and the impact of their environment, as well as planning adequate support, and then monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of this support. Teachers and specialist teachers will be equipped with tools to identify the needs of children and students and to plan appropriate support on this ground. Support instruments are based on a three-tier model, with which financing mechanisms are also related:

- universal support instruments provided to all children and students. With the implementation of universally designed solutions into the organisation of the education and upbringing process, consisting in, for example, the development of a curriculum and its implementation, creating educational and exercise materials, planning preschool and school classes and events, while acknowledging as much as possible the various development and educational needs of children and students, it will be possible to meet the needs of a greater number of children and students with no adaptations. Strengthening health promotion and preventive health care in kindergartens and schools will be an important element of these solutions. They are also to improve the physical and mental condition of Polish children and students, and to reduce the rates of psychoactive substance abuse, self-destructive behaviours, and mental health issues, including depression;
- educational and specialist support provided based on a diagnosis made at school by a teacher or during team consultations (joint, team identification of needs, monitoring of students' progress, and assessment of the effectiveness of their activities by the teaching and non-educational staff of the kindergarten or school) and within the school's own resources. Support may include, for example, instructions for teachers running classes, regarding work with a child or student, integration or psychological and educational lessons for the class, providing speech therapy or other therapeutic activities;
- additional educational and specialist support for students who need enhanced and long-term assistance introduced based on functional assessment carried out in a public psychological and pedagogical counselling centre (additional weights in the division algorithm in the educational part of the general subsidy for providing support for a given student). It is anticipated that in the case of children and students with disabilities, it will also be possible for the entity running a kindergarten, school or institution attended by such children or students to receive a subsidy for adapting study stations.

As part of the planned act on support for children, students and families, a new model of early support for child development and family support will be defined. This model will integrate the existing solutions offered to children from birth until they start school, i.e. early child development support, psychological and pedagogical support as well as special education or rehabilitation and educational classes, as required, and will coordinate them with the assistance provided to the family. As part of the model of early support for child development and family support, it is planned to provide support at three levels differing in support intensity. Proper and effective support for the development of young children, adequate to their needs and abilities, is the foundation for the development of inclusive education in the subsequent stages of education.

The current solutions in the area of early support for child development are based on a medical model, according to which assistance is provided only upon identification of a disability (the education system, support with the PFRON funds) or the risk of a disability ("For Life" Programme), or based on a medical diagnosis (health care system). The tasks resulting from the implementation of support offered to the child and family under the new model of early support for child development and family support should be coordinated, continuous, multi-faceted, and carried out in the environment in which the child develops and is raised. Changing the approach in the area of early child development support and family support, where it is important to activate the family's potential and use daily activities to accomplish goals related to child development support, requires a different view of the role of particular entities providing support in various ministries and related sectors, and thus placing them in the system and organisation of intersectoral cooperation in terms of need assessment and implementation of support for children and families, coordinated at the local level.

The action schedule is as follows:

2022: launch of the functional assessment pilot project; completion of projects preparing free diagnostic tools for specialists in psychological and pedagogical counselling centres and putting these tools into use; launch of postgraduate studies in early support for child development and family support; launch of the next edition of the "For Life" Programme; continuation of the project co-financed by the European Union, supporting psychological and pedagogical counselling centres and extending their support offer.

2023: completion of the functional assessment pilot project, launch of the implementation of a project co-financed by the European Union, as part of which IT solutions will be developed to support psychological and pedagogical counselling centres, kindergartens and schools, among others in the area of functional assessment; adoption of the act on support for children, students and families; training for the staff of the education system in inclusive education, including early support for child development and family support.

2024: 1 September – entry into force of the provisions of the act on support for children, students and families, regulating functional assessment and early support for child development and family support.

The following fund amounts are planned to be spent on the implementation of the above task:

- PLN 52 million for staff training in inclusive education in 2022–2023 (EU funds);
- PLN 81 million to provide integrated and comprehensive support for psychological and pedagogical counselling, including extension of the support offer in 2023-2026 (EU funds);
- PLN 528 million under the "For Life" Programme for 2022–2026, an additional PLN 280 million for family advisors in 2023-2026;
- approx. PLN 2.5 million in 2022 to launch postgraduate studies in early support for child development and family support;
- PLN 1.1 million in 2022 for activities related to improving the quality of inclusive education, also in the area of early support for child development and family support;
- PLN 300 million under the educational part of the general subsidy transferred to early support for child development and family support in 2021 (the amount of funds in subsequent years depends on the number of children covered by support and the algorithm for calculating the educational part of the general subsidy that changes every year, therefore a slight increase in expenditure from year to year may be expected in subsequent years. In 2022, expenditure of approx. PLN 330 million is expected);

- approx. PLN 9 billion under the educational part of the general subsidy allocated to the organisation of education for students for whom special education was found needed in 2021 (it is estimated that by 2030, this expenditure will increase to approx. PLN 12 billion per year).

The implementation of this action will be measured through the number of public schools that meet the accessibility standards. Value for the base year (2018): 0

Value for 2025: 500

Value for 2030: 2,000

Development of an inclusive education system for all learners:

-the number of tools and sets of methodological materials developed to work with learners, taking into account their different educational and development needs (4 by 2025 and 51 by 2030);

-the number of representatives of teaching staff involved in inclusive education covered by support (1,500 by 2025 and 14,000 by 2030);

-the number of established Specialist Centres for Inclusive Education Support (17 by 2025 and 285 by 2030);

-the number of validated solutions to improve the quality of inclusive education in Poland (9 by 2030).

As for early support for child development and family support, it will be measured through the percentage of children covered by early childhood development support.

Value for the base year (2018): 1.6% of the child population from birth to school age.

Value for 2025: 2.5% of the child population from birth to school age.

Value for 2030: 6.0% of the child population from birth to school age.

Integrated and comprehensive support for psychological and pedagogical counselling:

- the number of grants awarded to psychological and pedagogical counselling centres (40 by 2025 and 380 by 2030);

- the number of psychological and pedagogical counselling centres that have implemented solutions in the area of educational and specialist support (base: 0; 380 by 2030);

- the number of representatives of teaching staff involved in inclusive education who have improved their competences (13,300 by 2030).

### ***2.1.3.2 Reform introducing a new model of the mental health care system for children and adolescents***

The new model of the mental health care system for children and adolescents provides for the establishment of a network of centres within three reference levels. Each reference level will provide help to patients with different health needs. The aim of the reform is to de-institutionalise the system of psychiatric care for children and adolescents and to increase the role of community services.

The key change consists in the popularisation of aid provided in newly-established facilities located close to the child's place of residence – community psychological and psychotherapeutic care centres for children and adolescents, where psychologists, psychotherapists and community therapists work. Patients can take advantage of the offer of these facilities without a general practitioner's referral. Aid provided in these facilities is available to people who do not need a psychiatric diagnosis or pharmacotherapy, as in the case of a

number of mental disorders occurring in childhood, effective support can be provided through individual and group psychotherapy, family therapy or work with a peer group.

The implementation of the above reform is supposed to translate into a tangible improvement in the staffing situation in psychiatric care for children and adolescents, and to provide an adequate infrastructure for the provision of mental health services to children and adolescents under the new model of the mental health care system.

By 2025, it is planned to develop and popularise organisational as well as diagnostic and therapeutic standards for institutions operating under the new model of mental health care system for children and adolescents. By 2027, it is planned to educate at least 1,200 new specialists in clinical psychology or psychotherapy of children and adolescents or community-based therapy for children and adolescents. By 2027, expansion of the network of 1<sup>st</sup> level reference centres – ultimately 400 entities specialising in community-based psychological and psychotherapeutic care for children and adolescents, as well as infrastructural support, at least 120 health care entities participating in the implementation of the new model of health care for children and adolescents and entities willing to be included in the new model of mental health care for children and adolescents.

It is planned to provide funds for a long-term programme called “Support for Psychiatric Wards for Children and Adolescents in 2022-2023” in the amount of PLN 80 million. Negotiations regarding EU funds and programmes under the new framework are underway.

### ***2.1.3.3 Strengthening the system of psychological and pedagogical care as well as educational and preventive care in arts education***

As part of professional support for arts schools, the Centre for Arts Education has established a psychological and pedagogical counselling unit composed of 8 specialist psychological and pedagogical counselling centres run by psychologists. Each secondary arts school employs specialist psychologists and/or school counsellor. The support system for school specialists consists, among others, in on the development and dissemination of support materials and training in the area of inclusive education. With respect to supporting arts school students with physical and mental health problems and students with a migrant background or minority ethnic origin, each arts school in Poland is obliged to ensure voluntary and free psychological and pedagogical support. As part of this support, students of arts schools are offered a number of different activities: therapeutic, didactic and compensatory, integration, adaptation, developing talents and learning skills, as well as activities developing emotional and social competences. As for preventing undesirable social phenomena, each school, as part of the educational and preventive programme, implements during the school year dedicated preventive activities in the form of workshops, training, pedagogical counselling, media publications, artistic performances/installations/concerts, etc.

Expanding the staff of the Specialist Psychological and Pedagogical Counselling Centres operating at the Centre for Arts Education to include school counsellors will allow for the organisation of more complementary psychological and pedagogical support for students, parents and teachers of art schools. Increasing the number of psychologists and school counsellors in arts education guarantees better care for students with physical and mental health problems, with a migrant background or minority ethnic origin, and in a precarious family situation. Publication and dissemination of auxiliary materials and training in the area of broadly understood inclusive education improves the quality of work of psychologists and school counsellors in arts education. The monitoring of educational and preventive programmes enables a quantitative and qualitative diagnosis of educational and preventive activities of arts schools in the area of counteracting peer and family violence, while the monitoring of psychological and pedagogical support makes it possible to plan integrated measures to support schools’ work in terms of ensuring a sense of security and the organisation of psychological and

pedagogical support for all students in need, especially those experiencing physical and mental health problems and students with adaptation difficulties.

2022 – implementation of the monitoring of the quality of psychological and pedagogical support as well as educational and preventive programmes; development of a training system in inclusive education implemented by psychologists from the Specialist Psychological and Pedagogical Counselling Centres as well as psychologists and school counsellors employed in arts education.

2023 – development of a procedure for additional employment of specialists in the Specialist Psychological and Pedagogical Counselling Centres at the Centre for Arts Education; development of a strategy to increase the number of psychologists and school counsellors in arts education; implementation of a training system.

2027 – monitoring of the number of specialists working in music, fine arts and ballet schools as well as dormitories for arts school students.

2028 – evaluation of the effectiveness of training in inclusive education and the quality of psychological and pedagogical as well as educational and preventive support activities.

2022-2030 – publication of 8 issues of the new Auxiliary Psychological and Pedagogical Materials series created by the Centre for Arts Education; each issue will be devoted to a different problem experienced by students, along with a detailed description of educational adaptations to the specific needs of arts subjects and practical examples of good school solutions.

Accomplishment rate:

2022 – monitoring of the implementation of psychological and pedagogical support as well as educational and preventive programmes in 122 arts schools;

2025 – increasing the number of the staff of the Specialist Psychological and Pedagogical Counselling Centres at the Centre for Arts Education from 8 to 16 specialists;

2027 – increasing the number of psychologists and school counsellors in arts education from 213 to 250;

2028 – development and dissemination among arts schools of 5 issues of the series of auxiliary materials in the area of psychology and pedagogy in arts education; development and implementation of 60 training courses in inclusive education for specialist teachers of arts education.

## **2.1.4 Actions targeting children with a migrant background or minority ethnic origin (particularly Roma) and children of refugees from Ukraine**

### ***2.1.4.1 Support for the education of migrant students***

Education of people coming from abroad, subject to compulsory schooling or compulsory education, who do not know the Polish language or know it at a level insufficient to take part in regular education, is supported, among others, by organising additional, free-of-charge Polish language lessons by the body running the school, at least 2 hours a week, for a period of no more than 12 months of compensatory classes in subjects taught at school. Support for education of students coming from abroad may also be conducted in the form of a preparatory class, using methods and forms adapted to the individual development and educational needs as well as psychophysical abilities of the students.

The action covers all students for whom the school will diagnose the need for support in the area of additional Polish language classes.

As part of the open tender competition announced by the Ministry of Education and Science for the implementation of the public task entitled “Support for Educational Initiatives in the Multicultural School Environment”, under which non-governmental organisations as well as local government units receive funding for projects, among others, for schools attended by migrant students, including those covered by international protection, and for educational institutions operating in the local community attended by such students.

#### ***2.1.4.2 Support in learning the Polish language and fulfilling the compulsory schooling obligation, ensuring access to health care, ensuring adequate nutrition and adequate housing for people applying for international protection***

The Office for Foreigners carries out social activities for people applying for international protection, including children. These include accommodation, full board or a cash equivalent for food, medical care, pocket money for small personal expenses, cleaning and personal care products or permanent financial support for the purchase of cleaning and personal care products, one-time cash support or vouchers for the purchase of clothing and shoes, Polish language classes and basic materials necessary to learn this language, teaching aids for children learning and being cared for in public institutions, primary schools or secondary schools, covering, if possible, the costs of extracurricular classes and recreational and sports activities for children, financing travel by public transport to take part in the procedure for granting international protection, undergo treatment or protective vaccinations, and in other particularly justified cases.

These activities are continuous and it is not possible to define their measure. It is assumed that the conditions of foreigners’ stay and the quality of the assistance provided to them will be maintained at the current level. Social assistance provided to foreigners is well organised and access to it is immediate. As at 31 December 2021, the Office provided assistance to 2,031 children, including 563 ones in the centres.

Since 24 February 2022, social assistance and medical care provided by the Head of the Office for Foreigners has covered also foreigners who were granted temporary protection, for whom the Head of the Office issued a certificate confirming that they are entitled to such protection (applies to eligible third-country nationals fleeing the territory of Ukraine as a result of the invasion of the Russian Federation). In the case of this group of foreigners, the scope of social assistance and medical care depends on income from work or business activity and the entitlement to health insurance under work or business activity. Pursuant to the Act on Granting Protection to Foreigners in the Territory of the Republic of Poland – as at 23 May 2022 – the Head of the Office has extended various forms of assistance to include 352 third-country nationals fleeing Ukraine, including children.

In 2021, the Office for Foreigners spent for social purposes, including food, accommodation and education, PLN 74,866,338.61. In 2022, these expenses are planned to amount to PLN 93,108,712.

Moreover, as part of the ongoing project “Material and Educational Support for Foreigners Applying for International Protection in Poland”, co-financed under the National Programme as part of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), PLN 2,204,099.38 was spent in 2021; these expenses are still being made (the budget covers all individuals applying for international protection in Poland, including children).

It can be assumed that the budget for these purposes will be similar in the coming years. Its amount depends, among others, on the number of individuals applying for international protection in Poland and foreigners covered by temporary protection, benefiting from social assistance provided by the Office for Foreigners, as well as changes in migration trends.

### **2.1.4.3 Programme of social and civic integration of the Roma in Poland for 2021–2030**

Since 2001, the Roma ethnic minority has been included in national strategies for social and civic integration. The 4<sup>th</sup> edition is currently underway. Roma children and youth are the main beneficiaries of activities provided for in this edition.

Local government units and NGOs submit applications with proposals of types of support that includes, for example, additional compensatory classes for Roma students, summer camps, school kits for secondary school students, support for preschool education, support for after-school activities (informal education), purchase of equipment for schools and afterschool clubs, including computer equipment, trips for students, competitions, popularisation of Roma culture, educational publications, vocational and pro-vocational education, grant schemes for students of Roma origin, etc.

As regards housing, the tasks include improving the conditions in flats inhabited by Roma families (e.g. sanitary facilities, replacement of windows, heating, etc.).

The actions taken are to improve the level of education of Roma, reduce the drop-out rate after primary school, increase participation in pre-school education, and reduce the percentage of Roma children attending special schools.

Activities related to housing are to improve housing conditions, especially when it comes to children, so as to create appropriate conditions for their education.

The aim is to increase the level of social and civic integration of Roma by increasing their participation in educational activities and improve housing conditions. The relevant measures are provided below in the following order: measure – base value/value to be achieved in 2025/2030.

The number of Roma children covered by pre-school education as part of the Integration Programme for 2021-2030

168 people/1,500 people/3,000 people

The number of Roma students applying for scholarships at the secondary school level

58 people/400 people/800 people

The number of Roma students applying for scholarships

42 people/300 people/600 people

The number of Roma education assistants employed

87 people/100 people/113 people

The total number of people covered by the activities under Areas of Intervention I: Education

5,829 people/30,000 people/60,000 people

The number of participants covered by health education activities

1,234 people/6,500 people/13,000 people

The number of participants covered by security education activities

0 people/4,370 people/8,740 people

The number of participants covered by pro-vocational education activities

201 people/1,830 people/3,660 people

The number of Roma people covered by the activities under Areas of Intervention II: Housing

458 people/2,500 people/5,000 people.

The schedule provides for an annual call for proposals in the above-mentioned areas of intervention, i.e. Education and Housing, which are partly a continuation of existing activities or are new activities that fit into the objective of the above-mentioned Integration Programme for 2021-2030. The call for the next year is announced in the autumn of the preceding year, so as to implement the tasks envisaged by the Commission for funding at the level of voivodeship offices from the beginning of the following year. This procedure ensures the continuity of the financing of activities in the following years.

The above-mentioned activities are financed from the state budget in the total amount of PLN 11.4 million per annum and in 15% with own contribution made by local government units applying for the Integration Programme.

#### **2.1.4.4 Support for refugees from Ukraine and their children**

##### – Legalisation of the stay of refugees from Ukraine

What was the key element in the activities taken by the state for refugees from Ukraine was the development and adoption of the Act of 12 March 2022 *on assistance to citizens of Ukraine in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of that country* (Journal of Laws, item 583, as amended). The new regulations entered into force on the day of their promulgation, but with effect from 24 February 2022, so they also cover all benefits provided to Ukrainian citizens since the outbreak of the war in their country. It is a special act, complementary to the legal acts in force in the area of migration and asylum, in particular the Act of 12 December 2013 on Foreigners (Journal of Laws of 2021, item 2354, as amended), and the Act of 13 June 2003 on Granting Protection to Foreigners in the Territory of the Republic of Poland (Journal of Laws of 2022, item 1264). The act concerned introduces special regulations providing *ad hoc* legal grounds for the legalisation of stay of Ukrainian citizens for a period of 18 months, enables access to the labour market, education, health care, social welfare benefits and benefits for families with children.

##### – Access to services for children

Ukrainian citizens legally residing in the territory of Poland under the Act on assistance to citizens of Ukraine in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of that country are entitled to benefits such as: Family 500+, Good Start, Family Care Capital (biological parents only), subsidy for care in a nursery, children's club or at a day carer's; and to family benefits: family allowance with appropriate supplements, one-time childbirth allowance, parental benefit (biological parents only), care benefits related to disability, attendance allowance, special carer's allowance, nursing benefit.

The current rules regarding the conditions for obtaining: benefits for families with children, i.e. Family 500+, Family Care Capital and Good Start benefits, health insurance as well as retirement and disability benefits, are published on the website of the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS). This content is published also in Ukrainian, and it will be possible to set up one's profile in Ukrainian on the Electronic Services Platform (PUE) administered by the ZUS.

Moreover, the Act on assistance to citizens of Ukraine in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of that country stipulates that any entity, in particular a natural person running a household, that provides accommodation and board to refugees from Ukraine, may be entitled to a payment, based on an agreement concluded with the municipal office, for no longer than 120 days.

In order to provide funds that are necessary to finance and support the implementation of tasks to help Ukrainian citizens, an Aid Fund has been established at Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego.



#### – Access to care for children up to 3 years of age

Each parent (legal guardian, other person entrusted with the care of the child by the court), regardless of their nationality, may enrol a child in a nursery, children's club or entrust care for the child with a day carer in Poland. Entities that are authorised to establish and run nurseries and children's clubs (i.e. local government units, public institutions, natural persons, legal persons and organisational units without legal personality) may establish, depending on the needs and opportunities, new care institutions for children coming from Ukraine in connection with the armed conflict in the territory of that country.

Moreover, in order to provide care for children who have come from Ukraine in connection with the armed conflict in the territory of that state, the conditions for the operation of nurseries, children's clubs and day carers have been eased. It is possible to place more children in a nursery, children's club or at the day carer's, or to reduce the area per one child. It is also possible to exceed the maximum number of children allowed in a children's club (i.e. 30). A new nursery or children's club requires entry in the register of nurseries and children's clubs, but certain decisions regarding sanitary and accommodation conditions are not required.

#### – Alternative care

In connection with the mass entry onto the territory of the Republic of Poland of Ukrainian citizens who have left the territory of Ukraine due to the armed conflict on the territory of that state, it was necessary to introduce solutions to protect the welfare of minors crossing the border without their parents or legal guardians, and often with no adult care at all.

The court may entrust a Ukrainian citizen who does not meet the conditions for foster families or for running family orphanages in terms of necessary training, with the function of a foster family or with running a family orphanage for a child being a Ukrainian citizen, whose stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland is considered legal.

If a minor Ukrainian citizen is placed in alternative care, it is possible not to apply the standards defined in the Act of 9 June 2011 on *Family Support and Foster Care System* (Journal of Laws of 2022, item 447) (housing conditions, the number of children in foster families and care and educational institutions).

The introduced provisions ease the conditions of employing Ukrainian citizens in some organisational units (including day support facilities or institutional care).

#### – Temporary guardian

The Act on assistance to citizens of Ukraine in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of that country has also introduced solutions and rules regarding a temporary guardian who represents and takes care of a minor Ukrainian citizen and this citizen's property, having regard to the urgent nature of such matters:

- immediate action of the court – examination of the case and issuance of a final decision no later than within 3 days from the date of receipt of the request by the court or becoming aware of the need to appoint a temporary guardian;

- in the first place, the court should establish whether the function of a temporary guardian may be entrusted to a relative or affinity. Only then is it possible to appoint as a temporary guardian a person indicated by the social welfare unit competent for the minor's place of residence.

A person who is a temporary guardian has the full right to take care of the child and make various decisions on their behalf and in their interest, e.g. those related to health care services, placing the child in a specific location or applying for support for this child in Poland.

Moreover, in connection with the entry to Poland of third-country nationals fleeing the territory of Ukraine as a result of the armed conflict, entitled to temporary protection on the territory of the Republic of Poland, the Act on Granting Protection to Foreigners in the Territory of the Republic of Poland has been amended to enable the family court to be provided with information about the person who can take care of the child, e.g. grandmother, aunt, for the time necessary to make a decision by the guardianship court. This makes it possible

not to separate minors from people who in spite of not being their legal guardians, are close to them and make them feel safe.

– Appointment of “Children’s Evacuation” staff and „Place for Children” staff

The Ministry of Family and Social Policy together with the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, the local government and the president of Stalowa Wola have appointed the „Children’s Evacuation” staff and “Place for Children” staff. Tasks in this area are coordinated by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy.

The task of the “Children’s Evacuation” staff is to coordinate the arrival in Poland of mainly children from orphanages from Ukraine coming to Stalowa Wola under the care of guardians from a given Ukrainian orphanage, as well as other people. The „Places for Children” staff find for particular groups places in Poland where these children will be accommodated. Such places ensure placement of whole groups of children, without having to separate them, as this would entail further emotionally difficult experiences for them. The entire project requires effective logistics and efficient cooperation with Ukraine – it is carried out through the embassy and through cooperation with the Ukrainian government. Moreover, minors crossing the border from Ukraine to Poland that are identified as having neither a legal guardian nor any actual care are referred to Stalowa Wola.

In order to provide the Ukrainian government with information about the whereabouts of children from Ukrainian orphanages, „records of minors” are being introduced.

– Actions for refugees from Ukraine in the area of social assistance

- The right to a one-time cash benefit for maintenance, in particular to cover expenses on food, clothing, footwear, personal hygiene products and housing fees in the amount of PLN 300 per person.

- Cash and non-cash benefits from social assistance (short-term, provided for 1-2 months), e.g. periodical allowance, specific allowance for food or meals (as part of the “Meal at School and at Home” Programme), care services, sheltered housing, social work, specialist counselling, crisis intervention, food aid in the form of packages and meals under the Food Aid Operational Programme, free psychological support.

– Medical care

Ukrainian citizens whose stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland is considered legal are entitled to medical care, including health care services on the terms and in so far as persons covered by compulsory or voluntary health insurance are entitled to benefits under the Act of 27 August 2004 on Health Care Services Financed with Public Funds. The costs of health care services will be settled with service providers and pharmacies by the National Health Fund, and financed with a special-purpose subsidy from the state budget (from the part administered by the minister responsible for health).

– Education

In order to provide education and upbringing to children or students who are Ukrainian citizens and whose stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland is considered legal, other locations for teaching, educational and care activities, organisationally subordinate to schools or kindergartens (with the exception of art schools), may be created. A local government unit may arrange for such children to be transported free of charge to the place where they are educated and raised.

A Ukrainian citizen residing legally in the territory of the Republic of Poland may be granted by the head of the municipality (mayor, city president) a welfare benefit (school scholarship and school allowance). When establishing the right to the above-mentioned benefits, no family member who is not staying on the territory of the Republic of Poland is taken into account in determining the family’s income per person.

In the 2021/2022 school year, at a school where an additional unit has been created to provide education and upbringing to children and students who are Ukrainian citizens and whose stay in the territory of

the Republic of Poland is considered legal, the teacher may be assigned, with their consent, more overtime hours than the number specified in the Act of 26 January 1982 – Teacher’s Charter (Journal of Laws of 2021, item 1762, as amended). At the same time, in the 2021/2022 school year, the position of teacher assistance referred to in the Act of 14 December 2016 – Education Law (Journal of Laws of 2021, item 1082, as amended), may be held by a person who does not have Polish citizenship, provided that their knowledge of the Polish language in speech and writing is sufficient to help a student who does not know Polish or knows it at a level insufficient to benefit from education.

#### – Ukrainian citizens with disabilities

A 24-hour helpline dedicated to border services and staff of reception points for refugees from Ukraine has been launched by the PFRON in cooperation with the Polish Association for People with Intellectual Disability, Division in Gdańsk.

Actions and solutions regarding facilitations for foreigners with a document confirming a disability.

Making it possible to allocate PFRON funds for actions (including material support) addressed to foreigners with disabilities whose stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland is considered legal, as part of programmes approved by the Supervisory Board of the PFRON.

Making it possible to allocate funds from the Solidarity Funds as part of programmes financed by it for actions addressed to foreigners with disabilities whose stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland is considered legal.

Powiat Family Assistance Centres carrying out tasks in the area of social assistance, supporting the family and the alternative care system, counteracting domestic violence, and social rehabilitation of people with disabilities.

Information on disability and the resulting needs is obtained in the course of the entry procedure at the state border, reception points, and points indicated by the services of Voivodeship Governors or at Powiat Family Assistance Centres.

Information on people with disabilities and their needs, as well as information on the scope of support, i.e. the possibility of providing accommodation, including accommodation that meets accessibility requirements, transport of people with disabilities, as well as access to medical devices, assistant, rehabilitation or psychological services, and translators, is comprehensively processed by the newly launched [www.pomagamukrainie.gov.pl](http://www.pomagamukrainie.gov.pl) service.

## **2.1.5 Actions targeting children in alternative (especially institutional) care**

### ***2.1.5.1 Development of an ICT system as part of which a central register of vacancies in alternative care will operate***

Support in this area is aimed at ensuring adequate living and development conditions for children and adolescents staying in 24-hour care institutions, meeting the requirements specified in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, by strengthening and supplementing actions aimed at the implementation of the process of deinstitutionalisation of alternative care. The right to live in a family environment is one of the most important and fundamental rights of the child, therefore it is highly desirable that children are not placed in alternative care at all, however, where it is unavoidable, this should be alternative care in a family.

In order to more effectively use the resources of family forms of alternative care, an ICT system will be developed, as part of which a central register of vacancies and a register of children placed in foster care as well as care and educational institutions will operate. The need to create such registers has been repeatedly reported by circles related to alternative care. In fact, this set of information will be used by organisational units supporting the family and alternative care to better organise alternative care. It will be also used to

search for vacancies in alternative care in Poland by family courts, in line with the best interest of the child. A court that decides to place a child in alternative care will be provided with all the necessary information about the child and the entities that would be responsible for this child. The set of thus provided information will allow the court to assess the child's needs and the capacities of future alternative carers, while strengthening the already applicable principle of the primacy of family forms of alternative care.

The action schedule and indicators:

- An operational ICT system including a central register of vacancies in alternative care and a central register of care and educational institutions – 1 (2029)
- The budget of the action is planned at PLN 11.5 million (funds from the ESF + domestic contribution).

## **2.1.6 Actions targeting children in a precarious family situation**

### ***2.1.6.1 Increasing the security of children experiencing domestic violence***

Tasks in the area of counteracting domestic violence are carried out pursuant to the provisions of the Act of 29 July 2005 on Counteracting Domestic Violence (Journal of Laws of 2021, item 1249) and its implementing regulations, as well as the provisions of the National Programme for Counteracting Domestic Violence. These regulations include provisions dedicated especially to children at risk or experiencing domestic violence, e.g. regarding the implementation of the „Blue Card” procedure.

Children, as one of the categories of individuals covered by the provisions of the Act on Counteracting Domestic Violence and the provisions of the National Programme for Counteracting Domestic Violence, benefit from the assistance and support of relevant services, both in the preventive and institutional dimensions.

Legislative work is currently underway to amend the system for counteracting domestic violence. The planned amendments include, among others, solutions aimed at increasing the safety of children experiencing violence. These include, for example, defining a minor witnessing violence as a person who suffers violence. With this regulation, a child-witness of violence will be able to take advantage of the range of services specified in the provisions of the above-mentioned act to which people suffering violence are entitled. To ensure high-quality services addressed to children experiencing domestic violence, preventive, awareness-raising, educational and monitoring activities are necessary, including:

- supporting local preventive initiatives under the Protection Programme will contribute to the promotion and implementation of correct educational methods in families at risk of domestic violence;
- examination and assessment of the current scale of violence against children will have affect the process of developing effective tools and methods to increase the safety of abused children;
- raising public awareness of the causes and effects of violence against children will contribute to more effective action in cases of violence against children;
- the operation of the infrastructure, in particular specialist support centres for victims of domestic violence, will help provide a temporary stay and professional support where a person suffering violence with children cannot stay in the place of their permanent residence.

The action schedule and indicators:

- Protection Programme – “Supporting Local Government Units in Developing a System for Counteracting Domestic Violence” – every year until 2030;

- Diagnosis of violence against children – in 2024 (1 study) and in 2029 (2 studies);
- Nationwide social campaign – in 2025 (1 action) and in 2030 (2 actions);
- Operation of specialist support centres for victims of domestic violence – continuous action.

The budget for the action depends on the budget guaranteed in the National Programme for Counteracting Domestic Violence adopted for the next framework and on the budget guaranteed for the implementation of the Protection Programme. Currently, these amounts are as follows:

- Protection Programme – PLN 3 million per year, in addition, local government units participating in the open call for proposals are required to allocate at least 20% of the total cost of the task for the implementation of projects;
- according to the budget of the National Programme for Counteracting Domestic Violence for 2022, including:
  - maintenance of specialist support centres for victims of domestic violence – PLN 17.9 million,
  - National Social Campaign – PLN 130 thousand,
- according to the budget of the National Programme for Counteracting Domestic Violence for 2021, including:
  - diagnosis of the domestic violence phenomenon – PLN 150 thousand.

#### **2.1.6.2 Multiannual governmental programme “Meal at School and at Home” for 2019–2023**

The programme is to provide school children and adolescents with a hot meal prepared in the school canteen. This programme is aimed at children starting education at primary and secondary schools. The programme provides assistance, among others, to children who are brought up in disadvantaged families. The programme envisages financial support for municipalities in providing assistance in the form of a meal, a cash benefit in the form of a specific allowance for the purchase of meals or food, or a benefit in kind in the form of food products.

In 2021, approx. 1 million people, including children, were covered by this programme. The programme is financed from the state budget and the own funds of local government units.

#### **2.1.6.3 Actions to prevent and combat social exclusion of children and adolescents (in particular, legal exclusion), by organising initiatives to increase legal awareness among children and adolescents, supporting the participation of young people in decision-making processes, preventing the increase in crimes committed by minors, as well as promoting the development of a child-friendly justice system**

Currently, a number of programmes are being implemented to disseminate and raise legal awareness in the society through education adapted to the age of its addressees.

Accessible materials for a ready 45-minute lesson have been developed, i.e. a presentation, a script and a lesson plan, based on which the teacher can conduct classes in a secondary school. Through learning based on practical exercises, students can acquire knowledge regarding the basics of legislation, an alternative dispute resolution method, i.e. mediation, points of Free Legal Assistance and Free Assistance to Victims, as well as issues relating to assistance to victims.

There are also educational initiatives addressed to both primary and secondary school students. There are competitions and programmes such as the “Justice League” Competition, the Olympiad of Knowledge about Law and Justice or the “Bet on Mediation” Competition, aimed at increasing legal awareness, thus preventing legal exclusion, which is one of the elements of social exclusion, increasing the participation of young people in decision-making processes, preventing the creation of barriers in the lives of children and adolescents, while performing a preventive function in preventing juvenile delinquency.

This action is intended to cover 25 thousand addressees in 2025. In each subsequent year, it is planned to increase the number of addressees by 1 thousand, so as to reach 30 thousand in 2030.

#### ***2.1.6.4 Assistance to crime victims, witnesses and their relatives, including minors, under the Victims and Post-Release Assistance Fund – Justice Fund. Assistance is provided by Regional Centres and Local Crime Victim Support Posts, making up the nationwide Victim Support Network.***

Assistance from the Justice Fund is provided to crime victims, witnesses and their relatives, including children and adolescents. Every victim of a crime is entitled to this assistance, regardless of the crime type – domestic violence, rape, battery, theft, burglary or usury. The benefits are tailored to the particular needs of people applying for support from the Justice Fund and may include, in particular, organising and financing legal aid, including alternative conflict resolution methods, covering costs related to psychotherapy, psychiatric or psychological support; organising and financing training and courses improving professional qualifications, covering the costs of temporary accommodation or providing shelter, financing periodic subsidies to current rental liabilities and fees, covering the costs of food or meal tickets as well as the purchase of clothing, underwear, footwear, and cleaning and personal hygiene products.

In 2019–2021, there were 336 help centres operating as part of the nationwide Victim Support Network (as at 31 December 2021) in almost every poviát. Currently, a competition procedure is underway to establish institutions that will operate as part of the Victim Support Network for 2022–2025. It is planned to establish 47 Regional Crime Victim Support Centres and 258 Local Crime Victim Support Centres. The website of the Justice Fund provides information on the places where assistance is provided. The list of newly created facilities of this type is continuously updated. In accordance with the adopted assumptions and the results of the competition procedure, regional victim support centres are located in the cities where regional courts are seated, while local victim support centres are located in cities where district courts have their seats.

The implementation indicators are specified in the Victim Support Programme for 2019–2025. In 2022–2025, it is planned to establish:

- 47 Victim Support Network Centres,
- 258 Victim Support Network Posts,
- 4 Specialist Victim Support Network Centres,
- Telephone and e-mail access lines.

The following amounts are planned to be spent on the implementation of the Victims Support Programme: in 2022 – PLN 120 million, in 2023 – PLN 120 million, in 2024 – PLN 120 million, and in 2025 – PLN 120 million.

#### ***2.1.6.5 Actions carried out by the National Centre for Counteracting Addictions as part of the Addiction Prevention Programme***

Implementation and dissemination of standards and procedures for prevention, diagnosis and therapy of FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders) in line with the current scientific knowledge.

Expanding and improving the offer and supporting the implementation of prevention programmes with scientific foundations or with proven effectiveness, in particular those recommended under the System for Recommendation of Preventive Programmes and Mental Health Promotion.

Expanding and improving the quality of the offer of psychological, social and therapeutic care as well as educational support for children from families with alcohol problems and their families.

As part of these actions, the National Centre for Counteracting Addictions carries out activities related to:

- education (running websites, organising seminars and conferences, publishing and disseminating papers, disseminating recommendations for actions to be implemented by local governments);
- training (commissioning training for biological and adoptive/foster parents, employees of care and educational as well as social and therapeutic institutions, guidance counsellors, psychologists, court-appointed curators, employees of non-governmental institutions, local government activists);
- research and innovations (e.g. developing new tools to be used by care and educational institutions in their work, verifying the effectiveness of the implemented preventive and corrective interactions);
- supporting the operation of institutions – providing educational materials and other aids to be used by institutions in their work, informing about projects implemented for institutions.

The following is planned for 2022:

- training for individuals working with children from families with alcohol problems, guidance counsellors, psychologists, educators, with particular emphasis on improving the competences of employees of care and educational institutions and social therapy clubs for 60 persons;
- training conference for individuals working with children from families with alcohol-related problems, guidance counsellors, psychologists, educators, with particular emphasis on improving the competences of employees of care and educational institutions and social therapy clubs for 150 persons;
- „The More the Merrier” programme for employees of care and educational institutions and social therapy clubs aimed at providing information on activities for the benefit of employees of care and educational clubs and social therapy clubs as well as educational materials for 140 facilities;
- disseminating Recommendations for sports clubs in the area of prevention of problematic behaviours of children and adolescents in 120 facilities;
- organization of conferences on psychological support for children from families with alcohol-related problems in day support centres for 150 persons;
- organisation of training to enhance the knowledge and skills of educators working in social therapy clubs and other facilities supporting children from families with alcohol-related problems for 60 persons;
- organisation of a training conference on effective prevention strategies and prevention of alcohol consumption by adolescents for 150 persons;
- training for adoptive/foster parents dedicated to work with children with FASD for 80 persons;
- training regarding work with adoptive parents of children with FASD on emotion regulation – psychological training for 80 persons;
- organisation of training courses for addiction therapists in FASD prevention for 80 persons.

The 2022 budget of the National Centre for Counteracting Addictions for the implementation of the above tasks is PLN 1.75 million.

#### ***2.1.6.6 Actions carried out by the National Centre for Counteracting Addictions as part of the implementation of selective prevention programmes***

Implementation of preventive programmes or interventions for children, adolescents and young adults from a defined high-risk group and their families. Development (pilot implementation) of preventive programmes adapted to be implemented remotely with the use of ICT solutions and their preparation for dissemination. Substantive work related to the assessment of the quality of preventive programmes and determination of the qualifications required to conduct preventive activities. Educational and training activities addressed to the staff, regarding drug addiction prevention, risky behaviours, and dealing with children and adolescents from risk groups.

The aforementioned actions are to:

- increase the accessibility of drug addiction prevention programmes based on scientific foundations and with proven effectiveness, among others in groups at risk of social exclusion and marginalisation;
- improve the quality of preventive measures;
- enhance the competences of the staff participating in the implementation of public health tasks in the area of addiction prevention;
- increase the number of programmes with scientific foundations or with proven effectiveness and those included in the System for Recommendation of Preventive Programmes and Mental Health Promotion;
- facilitate access to indicative prevention programmes.

The budget planned for the aforementioned actions in 2022 amounts to PLN 5.1 million (from the state budget).

## ***2.2 Supportive policy framework***

The Council Recommendation complements and is consistent with a number of other EU initiatives. Having regard to the treaties regulating the functioning of the European Union alone, i.e. the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) – provisions regarding the EU support for Member States in actions to combat social exclusion and discrimination and to protect children's rights are included, among others, in Article 3(3) of the TEU, Article 9 of the TFEU, Article 151 of the TFEU, Article 153(1)(j) of the TFEU. Moreover, children's rights to protection and care are set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Articles 24 and 33).

The most important recommendations that have recently been adopted within the EU to facilitate the protection of children's rights include, among others, the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan (Principle 11: childcare and support to children, specific objective to reduce the number of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU by at least 5 million by 2030), Council Recommendation on High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Systems, Council Recommendation on Roma equality, inclusion and participation, Council Recommendation on a Bridge to Jobs, EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child (EC Communication), Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027 (EC Communication), EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030 (EC communication).

The Council Recommendation also takes into account the broader perspective of the acts of international law related to the Council of Europe (revised European Social Charter – Article 17) and the United Nations (Convention on the Rights of the Child – Articles 2, 3, 6, 12, 18, 24, 27, 28 and 31, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – Article 7, Agenda 2030 – Sustainable Development Goals regarding eradication of poverty, ensuring healthy life and promoting well-being, as well as ensuring high-quality and equitable education for all).



The actions presented in the National Action Programme are part of numerous strategies and programmes implementing public policies related to combating poverty or social exclusion of children and breaking the intergenerational cycle of marginalisation and unequal opportunities. The most important strategic programmes that provide for the implementation of the above-mentioned actions include: Family 500+, Good Start, Family Care Capital, "Toddler+", Victim Support Programme for 2019–2025; Strategy for People with Disabilities for 2021–2030; National Programme for Counteracting Domestic Violence; National Health Programme for 2021–2025; Healthy Future. Strategic Framework for the Development of the Health Care System for 2021–2027, with a view to 2030; National Mental Health Care Programme; Integrated Skills Strategy 2030; National Post-Pandemic Student Support Programme; „For Life” Programme; National Housing Programme; European Funds for Social Development 2021–2027; Programme for the Social Integration of the Roma in Poland for 2021–2030.

### **2.3 EU funding**

The actions planned to be implemented under this Plan with EU funds will be funded mainly from the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

According to the assumptions of the Plan, funds from the ESF+ will be spent both under the national programme entitled EU Funds for Social Development 2021-2027 (EUFSD) and under 16 regional programmes. The final form and scope of support depend on the ultimate provisions of the Partnership Agreement for the implementation of the cohesion policy 2021-2027 in Poland.

The following actions are planned as part of the EUFSD programme:

- support in inclusive education;
- support for child and adolescent psychiatry;
- support for alternative care;
- support for children with disabilities;
- support in the provision of childcare places for children up to 3 years of age.

Therefore, bearing in mind that the date of preparation of this Plan coincides with the official submission of the EUFSD programme for negotiations with the European Commission, it is necessary to emphasise that the implementation of the above-mentioned actions depends on the results of negotiations with the European Commission, in particular with respect to child and adolescent psychiatry, as well as the ICT system within which the central register of vacancies in alternative care and the central register of care and educational institutions will operate.

Assumptions for the support planned for implementation under 16 regional programmes do not have yet their final form either – talks and dialogue with the European Commission still continue. Nevertheless, based on the current projects under new regional programmes, it can be concluded that basically all regions plan to implement actions aimed at supporting the family and children.

Actions to be funded from the ESF+ will include:

- community services for families raising children, including families experiencing problems related to care and education;
- services for children and adolescents needing support, both those staying with families and those in various types of 24/7 institutions;

- comprehensive support for people becoming self-reliant and leaving alternative care and other 24/7 institutions;

- creation of family forms of alternative care, support services for foster families as well as training for candidates for foster care providers and individuals providing family forms of alternative care;

- support for the creation and operation of sheltered and assisted housing as well as other solutions combining social and housing support for young people that are becoming self-reliant;

- pre-adoption support (e.g. diagnostics, training, counselling) and post-adoption support (e.g. diagnostics, rehabilitation, therapy and psychological support);

- crisis intervention services;

- development of services related to counteracting violence, including domestic violence;

- elimination of non-financial barriers related to access to early childhood education and care as well as school activities (creating new preschool facilities and developing inclusive education);

- providing personalised counselling and enhancing cooperation with families;

- providing educational support to children with learning difficulties in order to compensate for their linguistic, cognitive and educational gaps;

- introducing measures to support inclusive education and to prevent the emergence of segregated classes in early childhood education and care and in educational institutions;

- ensuring equal and inclusive access to school activities.

Moreover, as part of regional programmes, it will be possible to spend ESF+ funds on implementing actions that will indirectly improve the situation of children, such as:

- housing support for people exposed to homelessness and at risk of housing exclusion, including the implementation of the Housing First programme, which may improve the situation of children raised in families exposed to homelessness

- supporting social and economic integration of the Roma community, including support for community clubs, organisation of additional activities aimed at social inclusion, support provided by education assistants, etc.

The children's situation will be also indirectly improved by the implementation of projects aimed at social and professional activation of families and people at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

At the level of regional programmes, the support implemented with the ESF+ funds will be supplemented with actions funded from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Thus, the support from the ERDF (infrastructural actions) will be the resultant of the final form of the support from the ESF+ (soft measures). Infrastructural actions proposed under the regional programmes include, in their current form, support concerning, in particular:

- entities providing care and foster parents, including family orphanages;

- investments in sheltered/assisted housing for young people leaving alternative care;

- social infrastructure for the daily support of children and adolescents;

- housing investments for people exposed to homelessness, families in crisis (covered by crisis interventions) and people from the Roma community.

Moreover, during the implementation of the Plan, depending on the identified needs, it is assumed that the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) will be used to support children applying for international

protection in Poland and benefiting from temporary protection, for whom the Head of the Office for Foreigners has issued a certificate confirming that they benefit from such protection.

### **3. Data acquisition, monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring of the correct implementation of actions to help children in need identified in the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the European Child Guarantee will be carried out by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy.

The following indicators have been established for monitoring purposes:

- the number of children experiencing homelessness;
- the percentage of children covered by early childhood development support in the total number of children from birth to school age;
- the percentage of children and students with disabilities (holding a certificate confirming that they need special education due to their disability), attending generally accessible pre-school education institutions and schools in the total number of children and students with disabilities covered by pre-school and school education;
- the number of parents with disabilities taking advantage of services supporting the performance of parental functions by them (e.g. family assistant, personal assistant to a person with a disability);
- people with disabilities and children with a certificate of disability covered by respite care;
- the percentage of children (the population of children from birth to school age) covered by early childhood development support;
- the number of entities supported under the new model of mental health care for children and adolescents;
- the number of people covered by support in the area of clinical psychology, psychotherapy, community therapy or other courses and training in the area of child and adolescent psychiatry;
- the number of Roma children covered by pre-school education as part of the Integration Programme for 2021-2030;
- the total number of people covered by the activities under Areas of Intervention I: Education under the Integration Programme for 2021-2030;
- the percentage of children covered by family forms of alternative care in the total number of children in alternative care;
- the number of children experiencing domestic violence that receive support in the form of medical, psychological, legal, social, professional and family counselling;
- the number of people covered by support under the “Meal at School and Meal at Home” programme, including children – if the programme is to be continued after 2023.

The values of particular indicators are provided by: the competent departments of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, the Ministry of Education and Science, Statistics Poland, the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy, the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, and the Ministry of Health.

Monitoring will be carried out in two stages:

Stage I – regards the performance for 2025. Entities submitting data are required to provide the value of the measure to the coordinator in the Ministry of Family and Social Policy by 30 September 2026. Based on the degree of the accomplishment of particular indicators, a quantitative evaluation will be performed by 31 December 2026.

Stage II – regards the performance for 2030. Entities submitting data are required to provide the value of the measure to the coordinator in the Ministry of Family and Social Policy by 30 September 2031. Based on the degree of the accomplishment of particular indicators, a quantitative evaluation will be performed by 31 December 2031.

The list of indicators for the evaluation of actions by area is attached as an appendix hereto.

Moreover, pursuant to paragraph 11(f) of the Council Recommendation, a report on the progress in implementing the Council Recommendation, in line with the National Action Plan, will be submitted to the European Commission every two years.

Apart from the above-described evaluation, an analysis of selected indicators included in the diagnosis to the National Action Plan is envisaged. These include, among others, the at risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE) rate, including for households consisting of one adult with dependent children and the severe housing deprivation rate.