

S U M M A R Y

PoMOCna KAWA #39



NOSTRIFICATION OF DIPLOMAS AND EXISTING SOLUTIONS IN THIS AREA

17 REPRESENTATIVES OF ORGANISATIONS PARTICIPATED IN OUR MEETING Blue Dot Krakow, Żywiec Development Foundation, Zustricz Foundation, Ocalenie Foundation, Centre for Integration of Foreigners in Opole, Nagle Sami, Women's Rights Centre and others....

At the summer PoMOCna Kawa, on 8 August, we discussed psychological support for refugees. The discussion was dominated by the topic of the nostrification of the diplomas of psychologists and psychologist from Ukraine, especially in the context of the expiry of the existing regulations allowing them to operate temporarily without nostrification. Representatives of dozens of organisations shared their experiences and concerns. Together, we decided to launch an appeal on this issue to the RPO. We encourage you to read a brief outline of the topics raised.

What is nostrification?

Diploma nostrification (also known as diploma recognition or diploma equivalence) is the process of **recognising a qualification obtained in one country as equivalent to a qualification obtained in another country**. It is a mandatory procedure. In practice, this means that an educational institution or administrative body in a country assesses the qualifications contained in a foreign diploma. On the basis of these, it decides whether they are sufficient to balance local educational standards. As a result, the applicant for nostrification can receive official confirmation of the equivalence of the foreign diploma to the diploma obtained in the country to which he or she has moved.

Until 24 August 2023, a **citizen of Ukraine** residing in Poland during the period of stay in accordance with the current legislation, who holds a diploma obtained in Ukraine:

- a degree in the field of psychology or
- a diploma of a first degree in psychology and a second degree in psychology

with the professional title of specialist in the field of psychology or master's degree in the field of psychology, **could provide psychological services to Ukrainian citizens residing in Poland, including the provision of health care services in the field of psychiatric care and treatment of addictions.**

Such a solution was justified. In the face of the humanitarian crisis (huge numbers of refugees in need of urgent psychological support), as well as the overburdening of the Polish psychological care system (e.g. insufficient number of psychologists from Poland), **Ukrainian specialists were an invaluable help - not only as additional hands for work, but also due to the same experience of the war in Ukraine.**

Situation after 24 August 2023

The period during which nostrification was not required ends after 24 August 2023. From that date, a psychologist with qualifications based on the Ukrainian education system must identify with confirmation of his/her competences on Polish grounds. **Currently, the overwhelming number of psychologists from Ukraine, employed by both NGOs and public administration units, do not have nostrified diplomas.**

Ukrainian psychologists were waiting for the decision of the Sejm on the extension of their entitlement to provide psychological assistance, which was given to them by Article 64a of the special law for a period of 18 months. They hoped that after 18 months of the specustat, just as Ukrainian citizens will have their protection period extended for another year, psychologists serving directly their compatriots will also have their possibility to provide services extended without the need to nostrify their diploma. The above uncertainty, and additionally the long waiting time for nostrification (a three-month period for nostrification of the diploma from the time of collecting all documents), difficulties in obtaining copies of diplomas (destruction of the infrastructure of universities in the occupied territories), as well as the high cost of nostrification (the cost is about PLN 3,000-3,700 regardless of the financial situation) **have caused that 90% of psychologists currently working with citizens and nationals of Ukraine will lose the opportunity to work on 24 August 2023.**

This may result in a **crisis of psychological counselling offered by more than 400 NGO facilities and almost all public facilities in the country.**

In addition, NGOs may **have problems related to labour law** (e.g. under Article 52 of the Labour Code), as well as the **implementation of grant targets** in refugee psychological counselling projects.

The need to fully codify the situation of Ukrainian psychologists

The situation of Ukrainian professionals in Poland is unique and should be fully codified. Resorting to available half-measures cannot be a solution in the long run. Full codification **should be preceded by broad public consultation with legal and psychological organisations** so that there are no gaps in the law. Such a solution will clear up additional uncertainties such as:

- does nostrification also apply to the professions of psychotherapist and psychiatrist?
- Are only employees of public institutions obliged to do so?
- Are diplomas obtained at universities currently located in the occupied territories (Donetsk and Lugansk regions) nostrified?

Call for intervention on the crisis in the provision of psychological assistance to Ukrainian citizens

As representatives of social organisations supporting refugees and refugee women coming to Poland from Ukraine, **we have created a Letter to the Ombudsman. The aim of the letter is to request urgent intervention to extend the right to provide psychological services without the need for nostrification of the diploma for psychologists coming from Ukraine.** If you are a representative or a representative of a non-governmental organisation, a psychological-educational counselling centre or an expert/expert on psychological assistance, please sign the letter [here](#) (by 22 August until 10:00)



If you need a contact for a specific organisation, please email us at mapujpomoc@culturelab.pl.