**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY POLAND**

\*All information below is to the best of Habitat for Humanity Poland’s knowledge, recognizing legislation is moving quickly.

**1. Has your country declared a prohibition on evictions? Have evictions continued to take place during the pandemic?**

Polish government introduced a moratorium on evictions on 31st March. Earlier this was recommended by the Polish Ombudsman on 20th March and a reference to Ms. Leilani Farha’s position of 18th March was made in this recommendation. <https://www.rpo.gov.pl/pl/content/koronawirus-rpo-i-komisja-ekspert%C3%B3w-ds-przeciwdzia%C5%82ania-bezdomno%C5%9Bci-w-sprawie-sytuacji-os%C3%B3b-w>)

As to our knowledge even before this provision was introduced court bailiffs were not enforcing binding rulings on evictions (however it was mainly caused by the necessity to keep social distancing).

Additionally, it should be underlined that in the same legal act of 31st March three additional provisions supporting tenants in maintaining their homes were introduced. According to those, until 30th of June (i) lease agreements cannot be terminated (and the rent cannot be increased), (ii) if were terminated, the notice period will not expire and (iii) if were concluded for a definite period of time, will terminate on 30th of June. Those provisions gave stability of lease agreements for the first three months of the pandemic.

**2. Please provide any information about other legal or financial measures aimed to ensure that households do not lose their home if they cannot pay their rent or mortgage?**

In Poland several instruments are being proceeded to financially support people to prevent them from losing their homes – one of the most important is additional housing supplement and the other is deferral of mortgage / bank loan payments.

Firstly, a new instrument of financial support is being proceeded by the Polish government and the parliament. It aims at protecting tenants who were affected economically by the COVID-19 pandemic. A bill in this respect was presented for public consultations on 4th of May. According to the bill any person who meets criteria for housing allowances (it should be noted that this is a narrow group) and their income decreased by 25% in reference to 2019 could apply. The procedure opens on 1st of July and the supplement will be granted for 6 months. According to governmental estimates this instrument will support more than 140,000 households while independent experts estimate this on level of 10,000 successful applications.

Secondly, the government is proceeding a bill granting deferral of payments of bank loans / mortgages up to three months upon debtor’s application if the debtor lost their job or source of income after 13th of March. It should be however noted that majority of banks introduced this possibility already in March or April (according to publicly available information of early May, 85% of 800,000 applications submitted at various banks were assessed positively).

**3. Have any measures been taken to provide safe accommodation for persons in situation of homelessness during the pandemic and in its aftermath?**

Generally there were no special instruments introduced to support persons in situation of homelessness. Several new procedures were presented, regarding e.g. requirements for accepting new persons to shelters. It has been required to preventively quarantine any new incomers for 14 days. Also new regulations on distribution of food were introduced.

Generally there were no dedicated public funds to subsidize shelters during the pandemic – shelters had to organize their activities in accordance with the recommendations and rules mostly on their own. There were some exceptions, such as: (i) provision of publicly funded personal protective equipment and disinfectants as well as (ii) broadening scope of a project run by a non-governmental organization (as a result “buffer places” for persons in situation of homelessness were organized in six Polish cities and personal protective equipment was provided).

In some cases there were places in hostels booked for persons in situation of homelessness but it was not a systematic solution, but rather result of good will of some local authorities and persistence of NGOs. 

**4. What measures have been taken to ensure protect older persons, persons with disabilities, migrants, women, and children from the pandemic, abuse, neglect or violence at the place where they are living or have been asked to stay? Please specify in particular measures taken to protect persons housed in institutions, shelters, care homes, psychiatric hospitals or detention.**

In order to protect victims of domestic violence a new legal act was enacted on 30th of April. According to the provisions contained in the act any perpetrator of violence may be immediately removed from their home and a restraining order may be issued by a police officer at the site of intervention. However, this act comes into force on 30th of November 2020.

In order to ensure protection from the pandemic in institutions, as mentioned above – several procedures were issued and protective equipment was provided. It has been underlined by the workers and management of shelters and institutions that there should be a possibility to test any persons in shelters and other institutions to shorten the time of preventive quarantine and to ensure safety at those places.