



## Project News

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11/12/2014

### **Credibility assessments in asylum procedures in focus of the Panel expert meeting in The Hague**

The representatives of the EU Member States, Eastern Partnership countries, academia and international organizations gathered in The Hague to compare their practices, experience and standards in conducting credibility assessments in asylum procedures. The two-day expert meeting of the Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum took place on 8-9 December 2014 and was co-hosted by the Netherlands and Georgia. It provided the participants with an opportunity to review the definition and the role of credibility assessment in refugee status determination. The combination of theoretical and practical sessions allowed for dynamic and open discussions in a friendly atmosphere.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

10/11/2014

### **Panel meeting on labour migration was held in Warsaw**

About 50 representatives of the EU Member States, Eastern Partnership countries, academia and international organizations gathered in Warsaw to discuss joint opportunities and challenges in the field of legal labour migration. The two-day meeting of the Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum that took place on 6 and 7 November was co-hosted by Poland and Ukraine and provided the participants with an opportunity for exchange on their strategies and policies aiming at maximizing the benefits of labour migration. As usual for the Panel, the meeting was marked by dynamic, open and constructive discussion and a friendly atmosphere among the long-standing partners.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*



The Project is funded by the EU



The Project is implemented by the IOM



The Swedish Migration Board  
is a partner of the project



## Highlights: Country News

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19/12/2014

### **Armenia, EU sign draft of agreements on further cooperation**

The European Union Delegation to Armenia has allocated EUR 10 million (about USD 12.3 million) for 15 projects in the country. In the next couple of years, projects will promote dialogue within civil society, strengthening of freedom of speech, rule of law, gender equality and campaigns against sex-selective abortions. The projects are also aimed at ensuring the integration of Syrian refugees and assistance to children without parents.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

09/12/2014

### **Flow of Armenian migrant workers to Russia may reduce**

The flow of Armenian migrant workers to Russia may reduce, demographer Ruben Yeganyan believes. He is convinced that consequences of the Ukrainian crisis will be felt for a long time, and the situation will aggravate because of landslide in oil prices. This will lead to recession and decline in demand for labour force in Russia, affecting migrant workers from Armenia.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

02/12/2014

### **Armenian migrant workers to save USD 15-20 million in Eurasian Union**

Hundreds of thousands of Armenian migrant workers will save a total of USD 15-20 million in the Eurasian Union, Deputy Finance Minister Suren Karayan said during the debates in the parliament. Migrant workers will not have to pay duties for registration and job permission which will considerably facilitate their stay and work in the Eurasian Union area.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

20/11/2014

### **Obtaining Schengen visa easier for Armenians after visa regime facilitation agreement**

Under the agreement, Armenian citizens face fewer hurdles to travel to the EU for short stays. The EU-Armenia visa facilitation agreement aims to facilitate the issue of short-stay visas for an intended stay of no more than 90 days per period of 180 days. The new rules make the procedures quicker, cheaper and less bureaucratic.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*



20/11/2014

## **Armenia's state migration service launches web-resource for Armenian nationals wishing to return home**

Armenia's State Migration Service has developed and launched an online resource at [tundarc.am](http://tundarc.am) (back to home) to assist those Armenian citizens abroad who wish to return home, head of the agency, Gagik Yeganyan, told a news conference. He said the information resource provides all the information regarding procedures for returning to the country. He said Armenian compatriots abroad can get answers to their questions directly from Armenian government officials.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

10/11/2014

## **Eastern Partnership territorial cooperation: future partners from Armenia and Georgia invited to apply for cross border projects**

Local authorities, communities and civil society organizations from the neighbouring regions of Armenia and Georgia are being invited to apply for joint cross-border projects in the framework of the Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation Programme (EaPTC), which has an overall budget of EUR 1.35 million for the two countries.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

23/10/2014

## **Armenia approves readmission agreements with Latvia and Estonia**

Armenia has approved the agreements on readmission of irregular migrants with Latvia and Estonia. The documents are drafted within Armenia-EU readmission agreement, and are signed with each member state separately.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

29/12/2014

## **Over two years only 18,000 foreigners received e-visas for Azerbaijan**

E-visas have been introduced in Azerbaijan since March 2013 but only a small part of foreigners arriving to the country use this visa issue system. According to the Azerbaijan's Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 55 travel companies have been accredited for e-visa issue. "Travel companies issued 6,147 e-visas in 2013 and 11,933 visas during the first half of 2014," the Ministry informs.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

28/11/2014

## **Azerbaijan, Georgia sign project on improvement of land border protection**



The Azerbaijani Government, the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme have decided to jointly implement a project on the improvement of land border protection. The project will mainly cover security issues on the green border between the two countries.

For further information, please follow [this link](#)

24/10/2014

### **Azerbaijan actively fighting human trafficking**

About 23 criminal cases have been filed for 104 human trafficking reports in Azerbaijan in the first nine months of 2014, including 97 cases with direct link to the trade in humans, Imran Najafov, Deputy Head of Department for Combating the Human Trafficking, informed at a joint counter-trafficking event organized in Baku by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the British Embassy.

For further information, please follow [this link](#)

20/10/2014

### **EU to consolidate migration and border management capacities in Azerbaijan**

The European Union will present a twinning project on “Consolidation of Migration and Border Management Capacities in Azerbaijan”. “The project to be implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) between 2014 and 2017 aims to consolidate Azerbaijan’s migration management capacity to effectively implement the reforms foreseen by the EU-Azerbaijan Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements. IOM will be implementing the project jointly with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Migration Service, State Border Service, Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population,” EU Delegation to Azerbaijan informs.

For further information, please follow [this link](#)

15/10/2014

### **Azerbaijan to change rules for employing migrants**

The executive authorities in Azerbaijan will control the provision of labour migrants’ rights by employers, the Azerbaijani parliament Milli Majlis announced. The issues not covered by the Migration Code, will be regulated by the Labour Code of Azerbaijan, according to the amendments.

For further information, please follow [this link](#)

14/10/2014

### **Azerbaijan to provide numerous benefits for foreigners granted refugee status and stateless persons**

The foreigners granted refugee status and stateless persons in Azerbaijan will not be required to get visas to return to the country in a case of voluntary departure. In this regard, annexes and amendments will be made to



the Articles #6, #15 and #16 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On status of refugees and forcibly displaced (persons displaced within the country) persons”, the Azerbaijani Parliament informed.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

10/10/2014

### **Azerbaijan to issue visas with no time limit**

The Azerbaijani parliament is considering amendments to the state customs law so multi-entry visas would have no time limit. The visas have a lifespan of a year at the moment. The amendments will require adjustments to the Migration Code.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

18/12/2014

### **Migration flows through Belarus – EU border decrease**

"Recent trends suggest that the migration flows that reveal themselves right on the border have been reducing. This is thanks to the efforts that Belarus has undertaken in this field, and not because the number of migrants has decreased. Annually about 25,000 foreign nationals were brought to liability for violation of the rules of entry, transit and stay in Belarus," said spokesperson of the Belarusian State Border Committee Alexander Tishchenko.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

09/12/2014

### **Belarus, EU to continue working on readmission, simpler visa procedures in January-February 2015**

In January-February 2015 Belarus and the European Union will continue the work on adjusting the agreements on facilitating visa procedures and readmission. The information was released by Belarusian Deputy Foreign Minister Yelena Kupchina.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

26/11/2014

### **Regulation on Belarus – Ukraine border demarcation approved**

The Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus has approved the Belarusian – Ukrainian intergovernmental agreement, which in turn approves the regulation on demarking the state border between Belarus and Ukraine. The move is stipulated by Council of Ministers executive order No. 1097 of 24 November.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*



10/11/2014

## **Belarus' consular services in European countries issue about 140,000 visas in January – June 2014**

Belarusian consular services in European countries issued about 140,000 visas in the first half of 2014, Deputy Foreign Minister Yelena Kupchina said at a meeting of workers of Belarusian consular services in the European countries. Ms. Kupchina remarked that in January – June 2014 Belarusian consular agencies in the European countries provided help to more than 600 Belarusian citizens, collected about USD 13 million of consular fees, conducted over 15,000 consular operations.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

29/10/2014

## **Georgia: one step closer to EU visa liberalization**

Georgia has come one step closer towards the goal of a visa free regime with the European Union, after the European Commission adopted its second progress report on the implementation by Georgia of the Visa Liberalization Action Plan (VLAP). The report concludes that Georgia meets the first-phase requirements of the visa dialogue. The second phase, where the Commission will be checking the implementation of all these benchmarks, can now be launched.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

24/10/2014

## **Georgia changes rules for issuing visas**

Georgia made changes to the law on the legal status of foreigners. The change was made to the law, which was adopted by the Georgian parliament in March, and came into force in September. The Georgian Minister of Justice Tea Tsulukiani said the changes include the possibility of quick and painless solution to problems that have arisen after introduction of regulations. “The law imposed responsibility on all foreign nationals, wishing to stay in Georgia for over 180 days, to get special visas or residence rights,” the minister said.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

03/10/2014

## **Georgia benefits as visitor numbers rise**

The number of foreign guests spending time in Georgia is continuing to increase with the latest figures revealing more than four million visitors have already spent time in Georgia in 2014. Data from the Ministry of Internal Affairs Informative-Analytical Department stated Georgia hosted 4,187,595 visitors in the first eight months of the year – a two per cent increase from the same period of 2013.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*



07/11/2014

### **Moldovan government approves new border police management strategy**

The government approved the Border Integrated Management Strategy for 2015 – 2017. The document reinforces the reform efforts made by implementing the Action Plan on visa liberalization with the European Union, the government's communication and media relations department has reported.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

02/10/2014

### **Ukraine, Romania sign border traffic agreement**

The governments of Ukraine and Romania, on 2 October 2014, signed an agreement on local border traffic. The document was signed by Ukrainian Prime Minister Arsenii Yatseniuk and Romanian Prime Minister Victor Ponta.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

24/10/2014

### **UNHCR says more than 800,000 displaced by Ukraine conflict**

The United Nations says the conflict in Ukraine has forced more than 800,000 people from their homes. UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, told a briefing in Geneva that an estimated 430,000 people were displaced within Ukraine as of end October.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

15/10/2014

### **Ukraine receiving financial aid to equip border under 15 international projects**

Ukraine is receiving financial aid for equipping its border under 15 international projects, Prime Minister Arsenii Yatseniuk said. In line with the government's directive, the border equipment project should be implemented within three years, he said.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

05/12/2014

### **Nearly 9,000 Ukrainians applied for asylum in EU due to situation in eastern Ukraine**

The number of applications from Ukrainian citizens seeking asylum in the EU countries during the conflict in the east of the country is almost ten times higher than the figure recorded for the whole of 2013, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has reported.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*





28/11/2014

## Number of displaced persons in Ukraine reaches half a million

"Nearly 19,501 people have been displaced from Crimea and Sevastopol to other regions of Ukraine," MP Iryna Herashchenko said on 28 November. "The number of people displaced from the [conflict] zone is 470,545, including 124,701 children and 98,286 disabled people and pensioners."

For further information, please follow [this link](#)

20/11/2014

## Poroshenko signs law on status of internally displaced persons

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has signed the law on ensuring the rights and freedoms of internally displaced persons (No. 4490a-1), the presidential press service has reported. The new law will protect people from discrimination and forced return.

For further information, please follow [this link](#)

15/10/2014

## CIS states exchange information about situation on external borders online

The border guards of CIS countries have launched an e-system of information exchange on situation on the borders. It enables to exchange information about situation on the external borders in real time.

For further information, please follow [this link](#)

# Highlights: EU Spotlight

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22/12/2014

## EU and Council of Europe to boost cooperation in Eastern Partnership region

The Council of Europe and the European Commission have signed a new cooperation agreement to promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law in six Eastern European countries. The agreement, which is worth EUR 33.8 million and covers the period 2015-2017, will fund joint programmes in countries covered by the EU's Eastern Partnership – namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

For further information, please follow [this link](#)





10/12/2014

## **Focus on saving lives, says UNHCR, as numbers of people taking to the seas in search of asylum or migration passes 348,000 globally**

UNHCR warned that the international community was losing its focus on saving lives amid confusion among coastal nations and regional blocs over how to respond to the growing number of people making risky sea journeys in search of asylum or migration.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

04/11/2014

## **UNHCR seeks to end statelessness in 10 years**

The UN refugee agency, the UNHCR, is to launch a campaign to end statelessness worldwide within 10 years. It estimates that at least 10 million people are currently stateless, having neither nationality nor passport.

*For further information, please follow [this link](#)*

This information sheet is produced by the Support Project to the EaP Panel on Migration and Asylum, implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mission in Ukraine and the Swedish Migration Board.

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