

News Digest Issue 28 (January 2018)

Global Spotlight

24/01/18

IOM highlighted the importance of migration data at the World Economic Forum in Davos

Investing in migration data can bring economic benefits of USD 35 billion, according to a new report presented by the International Organization for Migration (the UN Migration Agency), on 24 January 2017 at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

The report entitled “More than numbers: How migration data can deliver real-life benefits” sheds light on how investing in migration data can bring huge economic, social and humanitarian benefits. The report provides guidance to countries interested in realizing these benefits and suggests ways in which they could develop their own strategies to improve data collection on migration.

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

24/01/18

UN names top 10 “shrinking” countries

The top 10 countries with the fastest declining populations are all located in Eastern Europe (with only a few in Central and Northern Europe), according to the newest UN projections. Bulgaria, Latvia, Moldova, Ukraine, Croatia, Lithuania, Romania, Serbia, Poland, Hungary are estimated to see their populations shrink by 15% or more by 2050.

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



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EU Spotlight

17/01/18

European Parliament reviewed the First Report under the Visa Suspension Mechanism

On 15 January 2017, the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of the European Parliament discussed the First Report under the Visa Suspension Mechanism. The document addresses the functioning of the visa-free regime with the Western Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia) as well as the Eastern Partnership countries (Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine).

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

05/01/18

Mediterranean migrant arrivals to Europe halved in 2017

IOM, the UN Migration Agency, reports that 171,635 migrants and refugees entered Europe by sea during 2017, with some 70 per cent arriving in Italy and the remainder divided between Greece, Cyprus, and Spain. This compares with 363,504 arrivals across the region through the same period last year.

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

Highlights: Country News

Armenia

03/01/18

40,000 Armenian nationals left the country in 2017

According to research commissioned by the World Bank and the State Committee of Science of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia and conducted by the research group led by



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demographer Ruben Yeganyan, some 40,000 Armenians left the country for better opportunities elsewhere in 2017. This figure is a 2.5 per cent increase from 2016, when 37,500 people left Armenia.

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

Azerbaijan

19/01/18

Azerbaijan simplifies visa procedures for 2018 Formula 1 Grand Prix

The President of Azerbaijan has signed an order simplifying visa procedures for foreigners and stateless persons travelling to the Republic of Azerbaijan in connection with the 2018 Formula 1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix.

Under the presidential order, foreign citizens and stateless persons travelling to the country in connection with this event may get a visa valid from March 15 to May 15 on arrival at the international airports by presenting valid documents proving connection to the 2018 Formula 1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix to the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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

08/01/18

Azerbaijani citizens can visit 63 countries visa free

Citizens of Azerbaijan can visit 63 countries visa free, according to the updated Henley Passport Index, prepared by Henley & Partners.

In the Henley Passport Index, a ranking of states by the number of countries their citizens can visit visa free, Azerbaijan ranked 72nd, up two positions as compared to the previous year's index. It shares its position with Indonesia, the Philippines, Cuba and Cape Verde.

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



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Belarus

11/01/18

Visa waiver for Belarus increased the number of tourist arrivals in 2017

More than 79,200 foreign nationals took advantage of the visa-free entry to the country in 2017, as stated by the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Belarus. The majority of the tourists who came to Belarus in 2017 on a visa-free basis are citizens of Germany (12,700), Poland (nearly 7,600), and Italy (over 6,700). In total, in 2017 Belarus welcomed visa-free tourists from 65 countries.

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

Georgia

05/01/18

Almost 1.7 million tourists from Azerbaijan visited Georgia in 2017

The Head of Georgia's National Tourism Administration, Giorgi Chogovadze, said that 1,694,998 tourists from Azerbaijan visited Georgia in 2017.

A positive trend has also been observed in the number of tourists coming to Georgia from the EU countries in 2017, including Great Britain (+39.9%), the Netherlands (+31.1%), Spain (+29.9%), France (+29.6%), and Germany (+25.7%).

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

Moldova

04/01/18

Moldova strengthens control over the state border in the Transnistrian region

As stated by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova, Pavel Filip, Moldova started to de facto take over control over the state border in the Transnistrian region through the establishment of joint Moldovan-Ukrainian checkpoints. Also, significant progress has been made in restoring relations between the Government of Moldova and the self-proclaimed authorities of the Transnistrian region.

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



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Ukraine

20/01/18

Recent survey showcases migration intentions of Ukrainians

A little more than a quarter of Ukrainians leaving the country (26.1%) would like to stay on foreign soil to wait out hard times, according to a recent survey conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology. Some 15.4% of respondents choose to travel abroad to engage in seasonal work. Another 9.3% would like to seek education and improve professional skills, and then return to Ukraine.

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

01/01/18

Ukraine introduces new border crossing rules for foreigners

Ukraine has introduced a new system of biometric control for foreigners entering Ukraine as of 1 January 2018. It is applicable to citizens of 70 states designated as countries of "migration risk", including Russia.

Biometric monitoring systems will operate at 157 international border crossing points, including airports. It allows Ukrainian security agencies to control foreigners' duration of stay in the country and is also connected to Interpol's databases.

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

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