



NEWS FROM UKRAINE

Ukrainian Government established the immigration quotas for 2012

The Ukrainian Government has established the immigration quotas for this year. The decree of the Cabinet of Ministers “On establishment of immigration quota for 2012” was adopted during the meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on February 15.

The purpose of adoption of this normative act is settlement of the maximum number of foreigners and persons without citizenship, for which the provision of permission to immigration to Ukraine by the categories and in view of separate regions of the country are stipulated.

These categories include men of science and cultural workers, the immigration of which meets the interests of Ukraine, the highly skilled specialists and workers, whose knowledge and skills are strongly needed for the economy of the state, persons, whose relatives are citizens of Ukraine, etc.

Thus, in 2012, the maximum number of representatives of different categories of immigrants, determined under the part 2 of the art. 4 of the Law of Ukraine “On immigration”, is approved at the level of a little more than 8.2 thousand people.

Read more: Institute of Human Rights and Prevention of Extremism and Xenophobia, 16 February, 2012
http://ihrpex.org/en/article/2517/the_government_has_established_the_immigration_quotas_for_this_year

European Union allocates EUR 1.55 million for law enforcement reform in Ukraine

The European Union has allocated EUR 1.55 million for the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine to improve the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies in ensuring the rights and freedoms of citizens, the EU representative office in Ukraine reported in February, 2012.

The funds were allocated under the project, which should facilitate law enforcement reforms “by implementing the best European and international practices, ensuring the rule of law in Ukraine.”

The programme will be implemented with the support of France and Romania.

Head of the EU Mission to Ukraine, Jose Manuel Pinto Teixeira said that the EU has already allocated USD 10 million for implementation of the judiciary and justice reform.

Read more: ForUm, 2 February, 2012
<http://en.for-ua.com/news/2012/02/02/163020.html>

Second progress reports on visa - liberalization for Ukraine and Moldova published

The second progress report on the implementation by Ukraine of the Action Plan on Visa Liberalisation (VLAP) has been released by the European Commission. The Action Plan, setting out all the technical conditions to be met by Ukraine before the possible establishment of a visa-free travel regime, covers the period since November 2010, when it was endorsed by the Council and welcomed by the leaders at the EU-Ukraine Summit.



The report takes note “of the overall satisfactory implementation of the EU-Ukraine Readmission and Visa Facilitation Agreements.” However, certain issues, it adds, “including the situation of third-country nationals readmitted to Ukraine under the agreement, remain subject to further examination.”

Overall, the report covers four blocks of issues relevant to the visa dialogue:

- document security, including biometrics;
- irregular migration, including readmission;
- public order and security;
- external relations and fundamental rights.

This Second Progress Report reflects the state of play until November 2011. Once Ukraine has provided the additional information and clarifications requested, the Commission will present an updated report, as well as “a wider assessment of possible migratory and security impacts of future visa liberalization for Ukrainian citizens travelling to the EU.”

Read more: ENPI Info Centre, 13 February, 2012

http://enpi-info.eu/maineast.php?id=27950&id_type=1&lang_id=450

Ukraine, Moldova create Dnister Euroregion

Ukraine and Moldova signed an agreement on the establishment of the Dnister Euroregion. The document was signed in the presence of the prime ministers of both countries Mykola Azarov and Vlad Filat and governmental delegations of Ukraine and Moldova in Kyiv in February, 2012.

The agreement provides for the establishment of the Dnister Euroregion as a body of cross-border cooperation between these administrative-territorial units. In addition, the instrument approved status of the Euroregion, the rules of the Council of the Euroregion and its Coordination Centre. The purpose of the agreement on the establishment of the Dnister Euroregion is to strengthen and develop good-neighborly relations, partnership and cooperation in economic, social, cultural and humanitarian fields between Ukraine and Moldova at the regional level.

Read more: The National News Agency of Ukraine, 6 February, 2012

<http://www.nrcu.gov.ua/index.php?id=148&listid=163366>

Poland intends to cancel national visa fees for Ukrainians

Poland plans to cancel fees for national Polish visas for Ukrainians in year 2012, Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski informed at the meeting with Ukraine’s Foreign Minister Kostiantyn Hryshchenko.

“We expect to sign an agreement this year, which provides for cancellation of fees for national visas,” the Minister said.

Mr. Sikorski also informed that now Poland issues more visas for Ukrainians than all European Union countries put together.

Read more: ForUm, 8 February, 2012

<http://en.for-ua.com/news/2012/02/08/162048.html>



Law adopted to extend rights of Ukrainians abroad

The Parliament of Ukraine has amended the Law on Legal Status of Foreign Ukrainians.

The document proposes granting citizenship to foreign Ukrainians, without requiring continuous residence in Ukraine for 5 years, as it was before.

Under the law, a person who has acquired the status of foreign Ukrainian has the right to work at enterprises, institutions and organizations or to do other work on the grounds and in the manner prescribed for the citizens of Ukraine.

Ukrainians abroad now may annually get state grants for higher education within the established quotas.

Read more: The National News Agency of Ukraine, 9 February, 2012
<http://www.ukrinform.ua/eng/order/?id=244689>

Ukraine's Government approves bill on biometric passports

The Government of Ukraine has approved a bill on the introduction of biometric passports for traveling abroad, which will contain forefinger prints, Ukrainian Justice Minister Oleksandr Lavrynovych informed.

According to Mr. Lavrynovych, the document stipulates that foreign passports have to contain the citizen's photograph, signature and the prints of two fingers.

The Minister added that the fingerprints will be used in foreign passports only, and this does not refer to other documents.

Read more: Kyivpost, 16 February, 2012 - <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/122577/>

1,500 foreigners seeking refugee status in Ukraine

1,500 foreigners are waiting for consideration of their applications for refugee status in Ukraine, Director of the Department for Refugees at the State Migration Service of Ukraine Natalia Naumenko told Radio Liberty in February, 2012.

Approximately 70 per cent of those who claim this status, according to Ms. Naumenko, cross the border of Ukraine irregularly.

The expert also said that during the entire period of functioning of the institution of asylum in Ukraine, more than 20,000 applications were considered and more than 5,000 refugees were recognized. 5-7 per cent of them have already been granted citizenship in Ukraine.

In all, Ukraine has officially registered 2,345 refugees from 43 countries worldwide.

Read more: The National News Agency of Ukraine, 9 February, 2012
<http://www.ukrinform.ua/eng/order/?id=244613>



Foreign Ministry helped migrant workers get USD 880,000 as unpaid wages

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry helped migrant workers from Ukraine to receive USD 880,000 as unpaid wages, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kostiantyn Hryshchenko informed in February, 2012.

According to the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry's information policy department, the Ministry has significantly stepped up efforts to protect the interests of migrant workers abroad.

During an open lecture titled "Ukraine's Foreign Policy in 2011-2012: Achievements and Priorities," which was held at the Kyiv Institute of International Relations on 10 February, 2012, Mr. Hryshchenko noted that Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich had outlined this task as a priority for the Foreign Ministry.

Read more: Kyivpost, 11 February, 2012

<http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/122262/>

Polish visa centre opened in Donetsk

A Polish visa centre opened in Donetsk on 9 February, 2012, the press service of Donetsk Regional Council reported in February, 2012.

The visa centre's opening ceremony was attended by Donetsk Mayor Oleksandr Lukianchenko, Deputy Head of Donetsk Regional Council Oleksandr Kravtsov and Deputy Head of Donetsk Regional State Administration Oleksandr Fomenko.

Polish Consul General in Kharkiv Jan Granat said that this is the fifth such visa centre in Ukraine. Poland is planning soon to open its seventh consulate general in Ukraine – in Donetsk.

Read more: Kyivpost, 9 February, 2012

<http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/122133/>

Hungary Consulate General in Uzhhorod introduces online visa application system

The Consulate General of Hungary in Uzhhorod has introduced a new online system of applications for the Schengen visa, local border traffic, D type visa and identity card of a foreign Hungarian, Consul of Hungary in Uzhhorod Endre Szalipszki told at a press conference in February, 2012.

"With the new system, everyone will be able to apply for an appointment to provide documents or get a visa at a certain time, and upon arrival at the consulate will be met without delay or waiting. The system will operate on the Internet. It is designed to completely eliminate queues at the consulate," Mr. Szalipszki informed.

According to him, the distinctive feature of the new system is that both phone calls and Internet entries will be entered in a single queue. That is, those who call on the telephone for registration will be put to the same list as the Internet users. One of the advantages of online system, which is functioning both in the Hungarian and Ukrainian languages, is the registration at any time, day or night, the diplomat said.

Read more: The National News Agency of Ukraine, 17 February, 2012

<http://www.ukrinform.ua/eng/order/?id=245342>



United States Embassy in Kyiv to start processing diversity visas for Ukrainians on 1 March, 2012

The United States Embassy in Ukraine will start processing Diversity Visas (DV) for Ukrainian applicants beginning 1 March, 2012.

According to the Embassy, these first DV interviews will be conducted for the Ukrainian applicants who were selected as DV winners on the basis of their on-line registration for the DV lottery 2010 (often referred to as the “Green Card Lottery”).

The document notes that applicants whose DV interviews had been scheduled prior to 1 March, 2012, need to follow the instructions provided to them by the Kentucky Consular Center (KCC) and proceed either to Warsaw or to Kyiv as indicated in the instructions. “Please note that if the DV interview was originally scheduled to occur at the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw, the case will not be transferred to Kyiv and the applicants still need to attend their appointments in Warsaw,” the Embassy informed.

The Embassy notes that in order to find additional information on the DV program as well as to review the instructions on how to prepare for a DV interview, it is necessary to visit the Department of State official website and that the registration period for the current DV program is now closed. The on-line registration period for participation in the next DV program will be announced on the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv’s website in autumn 2012.

A total of 50,000 diversity visas will be drawn in the 2013 lottery, and they give the right to live and work in the United States. DVs are drawn among six geographic regions. The largest number of visas goes to regions with low levels of emigration to the United States.

Read more: The National News Agency of Ukraine, 20 February, 2012
<http://www.ukrinform.ua/eng/order/?id=245492>

Ukrainian consulate general opened in Nizhnii Novhorod

A Ukrainian consulate general opened in Nizhnii Novhorod on 14 February, 2012.

The opening ceremony was attended by Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kostiantyn Hryshchenko and Russian Foreign Minister Serhei Lavrov.

The primary task of the consulate general will be to protect the rights and interests of Ukrainian citizens living in the Volga Federal District, first and foremost, their desire to preserve their native language and national culture.

An important area in the work of the consulate general will also be the expansion and deepening of economic, cultural and humanitarian relations, as well as the promotion of interregional cooperation between interested subjects in Ukraine and the Volga Federal District.

According to provisional data, about 500,000 Ukrainians live in the Volga Federal District.

Read more: Kyivpost, 14 February, 2012
<http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/122396/>



Ukrainian Parliament ratifies law on Ukraine – Russia border crossing

The Parliament of Ukraine ratified an agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the Russian Federation on the procedure for the crossing of the Ukrainian-Russian state border by the residents of the border regions of the two countries.

Under the agreement, the residents of border regions can cross the border in local checkpoints of the region, where they reside, and stay on the territory of the neighbouring state only within the region which they entered through a local checkpoint. The agreement also foresees an opportunity to stay in the border regions of another state without registration, if the term of such stay does not exceed 90 days from the date of entry. While crossing the border, the residents of border regions, on the terms of this agreement, do not fill in migration cards.

The border regions in Ukraine bordering Russia include the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Donetsk, Luhansk, Sumy, Kharkiv and Chernihiv regions.

Read more: The National News Agency of Ukraine, 22 February, 2012

<http://www.ukrinform.ua/eng/order/?id=245707>

Two - six million persons working irregularly in Ukraine, official

Social-economic rights of two – six million workers who fulfill their work without registering their labour relations and without social guarantees are violated in Ukraine.

Those data were made public by Deputy Chairman of the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine Serhii Ukrainets at a round table, dedicated to perspectives of uniting supervising authorities of state bodies in the labour sphere. “At least, two million persons are fulfilling work without registering their labour relations and without social guarantees. And this means that over UAH 200 billion of wages are given to workers without making tax and pension payments. In total, the number of irregular workers may reach 6 million persons,” Ukrainets said.

Irregular workers most often become victims of production injuries, tens of thousands of cases of such traumas are concealed. In addition, it will be difficult for those who did not register labour relations to prove later that their disease is professional.

During discussions it was noted that the State Labour Inspection and State Service of Mining Supervision and Industrial Safety, which are law-enforcement bodies of the state and have to protect rights of citizens for life, health and labour, are equaled to regulators of economic activities. Their inspection possibilities are sharply limited despite conventions of the International Labour Organization, operating in Ukraine.

As it was reported, Vice Premier and Social Policy Minister Serhii Tihipko estimates the volume of shadow wages at 40 per cent of total labour remuneration fund. According to Mr. Tihipko, shadowing of wages is especially peculiar to services and construction spheres.

In this connection, Mr. Tihipko considers it necessary to take a number of legislative initiatives for legalization of wages, in particular, in the nearest future, it is necessary to amend labour legislation, which was adopted in the 1970ies.

Read more: The National News Agency of Ukraine, 16 February, 2012 <http://www.ukrinform.ua/eng/order/?id=245232>

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Compiled by Communications team of IOM Ukraine