



UN, aid partners appeal for USD 298 mln to help conflict-affected people in Ukraine

17 February 2016 – UN in Ukraine

The Humanitarian Country Team, together with the Government of Ukraine, appealed to the donors to generously contribute to the Humanitarian Response Plan 2016 requirements of USD 298 million. The plan illustrates the strategic humanitarian response priorities that the UN and its humanitarian partners are planning to carry out in 2016 in Ukraine, targeting 2.5 million most vulnerable amongst the 3.1 million conflict-affected people who continue to need critical life-saving assistance.

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President signs three more ‘visa-free’ laws

25 February 2016 – President of Ukraine Press Office

President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko signed laws necessary for the establishment of the visa-free regime between Ukraine and the European Union. The Parliament adopted them on 18 February. The main purpose of the laws is to ensure the fulfillment of anti-corruption criteria necessary for the abolition of the visa regime with the EU, particularly regarding the seizure of property and functioning of the specialized anti-corruption prosecutor’s office. Consultations on the law on electronic declarations are being continued with the European Commission in order to elaborate possible amendments.

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EU may offer Georgia visa-free travel, delay on Ukraine

26 February 2016 – Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty

The European Commission appears ready to offer visa-free travel to Georgia, but could postpone a similar offer to Ukraine. In December, the European Commission said both countries had fulfilled the criteria to qualify for visa-free travel through the Schengen zone. The Commission said it would send a proposal to that effect to EU member states and the European Parliament in the beginning of 2016. However, unnamed EU officials tell RFE/RL that Brussels is not convinced Ukraine has done enough to fight corruption, and therefore should not be grouped together with Georgia in the proposal.

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Ukrainian Parliament registers draft resolution proposing termination of visa-free agreement with Russia

8 February 2016 – Interfax

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has registered a draft resolution of an appeal to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine concerning the termination of the agreement between the governments of Ukraine and the Russian Federation on visa-free trips of citizens of Ukraine and Russia.

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Ukrainian migrant workers are biggest investors in Ukraine's economy

16 February 2016 – International Organization for Migration

Ukrainians working abroad send back to Ukraine more funds than the combined total of foreign direct investment (FDI) and international donor contributions coming into the country, according to a new IOM study. Ukrainian migrant workers transferred almost USD 2.8 billion in 2014 through formal and informal channels. In addition, about USD 100 million was received in goods as in-kind remittances, according to the Canadian-funded study.

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Poland lures "the best migrants in the world"

23 February 2016 – Belarus Digest

The Polish Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers proposed granting residence permits to a million migrants currently in Poland. The majority of them are Ukrainians, followed by Belarusians and Vietnamese.

The union estimated that due to the demographic crisis, by 2050 Poland will need to accept between two million and five million migrants to maintain the current economic growth rates. Currently, around one million people, mainly from Ukraine and Belarus, are employed in the Polish economy. Thanks to them, the Polish budget receives an extra EUR 1.5-2 bln annually. In an interview with *Gazeta Prawna*, the union head Cezary Kaźmierczak said that migrants from these countries are "the best in the world". They do not take away jobs from Poles and cost nothing for taxpayers.

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Ukrainian refugees to be offered to settle down in Siberia, Far East

16 February 2016 – TASS Russian news agency

The Russian Ministry of Economic Development has supported the initiative of members of the State Duma (lower house of parliament) who proposed to increase the population beyond the Urals region by means of Ukrainian refugees, Russia's *Izvestia* daily wrote. The ministry noted that more than 50,000 jobs would be created in Russia's Far East until 2020, which could be taken by Ukrainians. According to *Izvestia*, the Russian Ministry of Economic Development has already informed the Federal Migration Service about this initiative to further address the issue.

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State Migration Service tests online queue

4 February 2016 – SMS Ukraine official web site

A new service became available at the State Migration Service (SMS) of Ukraine website – the online queue to its departments and divisions. Currently, the service is being piloted for the issuance of passports for traveling abroad and ID cards for internal identification, which are replacing internal passports (for persons who have turned 16 years old and are applying for their first ID card). The pilot initiative was launched at one SMS division in Kyiv, but other divisions in the capital and all over Ukraine are to follow.

The online queue is designed to facilitate the application process and make it more transparent and convenient for people, as well as to improve the divisions' operational capacity.

Currently, the online queue can be found at <http://dmsu.gov.ua/online>.

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Compiled by IOM Ukraine Communications team