



President of Ukraine and EU leaders discuss visa-free regime introduction

27 June 2016 - President of Ukraine Press Office

President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko, President of the European Council Donald Tusk, President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz discussed the abolition of the visa regime with the Schengen countries for Ukrainian citizens during high-level political consultations between Ukraine and the European Union.

“We have discussed a series of important issues and, inter alia, coordinated our actions on the visa-free regime. I would like to express gratitude to members of the foreign affairs committees of the European Parliament for their professional work. We expect formal procedures in the committees to be completed by summer holidays in the Parliament,” President Poroshenko said following the Ukraine-EU mini-summit in Brussels.

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Merkel backs Georgia visa-free travel to EU, but suggests Ukraine link

15 June 2016 – Reuters UK

German Chancellor Angela Merkel endorsed swift approval of visa-free access to the European Union for Georgia, but suggested the move could be linked to visa liberalization for Ukraine.

Both the south Caucasus country and Ukraine have met the criteria for the EU visa waiver, but Berlin earlier this month led last-minute opposition to the process.

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Bulgaria ready to help Ukraine build closer ties with EU

30 June 2016 – Novinite Sofia News Agency

Bulgaria will support visa-free travel to the EU for Ukrainian citizens because Ukraine has met the requirements set by the European Commission, Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov said at a meeting with Ukraine’s President Petro Poroshenko in Sofia. Borisov expressed support for Ukraine’s political association with the EU and its economic integration into the bloc and said that Bulgaria was ready to offer expert advice to assist the building of closer links between Ukraine and the EU.

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President Poroshenko approves regulations allowing foreigners to serve in Ukrainian army

10 June 2016 – Interfax Ukraine

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko signed a decree approving the regulation about foreigners’ and stateless persons’ military service in the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The decree is aimed at regulating the system of recruiting foreigners and stateless persons as privates,

sergeants and officers in Ukrainian Armed Forces under a contract, the Ukrainian president's press service reported.

The signed decree allows foreigners and stateless persons, who did not previously serve in Ukraine's armed forces but are now at its military bases, "to fulfill their duty of protecting the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine in good faith and on a voluntary basis."

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Central Europeans ask EU to help Ukraine deal with IDPs

8 June 2016 – Reuters

Central European countries asked the European Union to free up funds to help Ukraine deal with a growing number of people displaced by conflict. In a letter to European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, the leaders of the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary said the number of internally displaced persons in Ukraine had reached more than 1.7 million by March.

"There is no indication that conflict will be solved in the near future and that the number of internally displaced persons in Ukraine has reached its maximum," the letter said. The Central European leaders requested the EU's executive to free up funding for a Regional Development and Protection Programme, which the bloc has used in Jordan and Iraq.

The programme would help Ukraine beef up state institutions to handle the rise in displaced. The countries said they were ready to lead this programme.

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Ongoing war in Ukraine turns 1.7 million people into refugees

20 June 2016 – CBC News

Internally displaced persons struggle to find new homes and jobs in their own country. According to a recent survey by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Mission in Ukraine, only about a half of such families in Ukraine even have regular income from employment. Even those who do can't manage to pull in very much. "The general level of well-being of most IDPs is quite low," says Manfred Profazi, IOM Ukraine's Chief of Mission.

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More than 40% of Ukrainians have positive attitude towards displaced persons

9 June 2016 – Interfax Ukraine

A total of 43% of Ukrainians have a positive attitude to internally displaced persons (IDPs), according to a poll conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS).

Thus, according to figures revealed at a press conference in Kyiv on Thursday, 43% of respondents have a positive attitude to the IDPs from Donbas and Crimea, 47% are neutral, 6% – negative, and 4% have no opinion on the issue.

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U.S. Department of State: Government of Ukraine making significant efforts to eliminate human trafficking

30 June 2016 – the U.S. Department of State

The conflict in eastern Ukraine has displaced nearly two million people, and this population is especially vulnerable to exploitation, the U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report 2016 reads. The report underlines that the situation in non-government-controlled areas situation has become particularly challenging. In particular, "the recruitment of children by militant groups took place on territory not under the control of the central government and in areas where the government was

unable to enforce national prohibitions against the use of children in armed conflict.” According to the TIP Report 2016, the Government of Ukraine does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. Despite these measures, the government did not demonstrate overall increasing antitrafficking efforts compared to the previous reporting period; therefore, Ukraine is placed on Tier 2 Watch List for the fourth consecutive year.

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Ukraine builds significant fortifications along border with Russia

24 June 2016 – Russia Beyond the Headlines

Ukraine has fortified its border with Russia in the Kharkiv and Chernihiv regions with more than 120 miles of anti-tank trenches and about 43 miles of metal fencing. These upgrades were announced by the press center of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine.

“A total of 230 kilometers (about 140 miles) of anti-tank ditches, over 70 kilometers (about 43 miles) of metal fencing and 116 kilometers (about 72 miles) of belt roads have already been completed to date,” the State Border Guard Service's report said.

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European Commission reinforces cooperation with third countries to better manage migration

7 June 2016 – European Commission

The European Commission has set out plans for a new results-oriented Partnership Framework to mobilize and focus EU action and resources in our external work on managing migration. The EU will seek tailor-made partnerships with key third countries of origin and transit using all policies and instruments at the EU's disposal to achieve concrete results. Building on the European Agenda on Migration, the priorities are saving lives at sea, increasing returns, enabling migrants and refugees to stay closer to home and, in the long term, helping third countries' development in order to address root causes of irregular migration.

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Global forced displacement hits record high

20 June 2016 – UNHCR

Wars and persecution have driven more people from their homes than at any time since UNHCR records began, according to a new report by the UN Refugee Agency. On average 24 people were forced to flee each minute in 2015, four times more than a decade earlier, when six people fled every 60 seconds. The detailed study, which tracks forced displacement worldwide based on data from governments, partner agencies and UNHCR's own reporting, found a total 65.3 million people were displaced at the end of 2015, compared to 59.5 million just 12 months earlier. Also in the tally are a record 40.8 million people who had been forced to flee their homes but were within the confines of their own countries, another record for the UN Refugee Agency.

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Compiled by IOM Ukraine Communications team