

NEWS DIGEST

June, 2012



MIGRATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL
International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Mission in Ukraine

NEWS FROM UKRAINE

Frontex coordinating operation to support Polish and Ukrainian border guards during EURO 2012

During the European Football Championship in Poland and Ukraine, the EU's border control agency Frontex is coordinating a joint operation in support of Polish and Ukrainian border guards. From the beginning of June, over 100 officers from 23 EU member states have been deployed on the Polish-Ukrainian border to assist with border checks and border surveillance. At the same time, border guards from several member states and non-EU countries are working in key airports in Poland and Ukraine.

Border guards from Ukraine, Russia and Croatia are deployed as observers to Poland, supporting the Polish border authorities during examination of travel documents, assisting local officers with their language skills, and facilitating information exchange between participating Member States and Ukraine, Russia and Croatia.

Read more: EU Neighbourhood Info Centre, 14 June, 2012
http://www.enpi-info.eu/maineast.php?id_type=1&id=29349&lang_id=450

Ukraine, Poland to abolish payment for visas

Foreign Ministers of Ukraine and Poland, Kostiantyn Hryshchenko and Radoslaw Sikorski, signed an Agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Poland on abolishment of payment for the issue of national visas.

“The signing of this agreement is a real step to meet wishes of both countries’ citizens,” Mr. Hryshchenko said.

Read more: National Radio Company of Ukraine, 7 June, 2012 <http://www.nrcu.gov.ua/index.php?id=148&listid=172548>

Ukraine's honorary consulate opens in Przemysl

Ukrainian and Polish Foreign Ministers Kostiantyn Hryshchenko and Radoslaw Sikorski attended the opening of Ukraine's honorary consulate in Przemysl, Poland, on 6 June, 2012.

Mr. Hryshchenko said that the consulate would serve the development of Ukrainian-Polish human relations and a broader integration of the Ukrainian society into a common European space.

Read more: The National News Agency of Ukraine, 6 June, 2012
http://www.ukrinform.ua/eng/news/ukraines_honorary_consulate_opens_in_przemysl_283572

Ukrainians to enjoy visa-free regime with Panama

Ukrainians may go to Panama without visas since 25 May, 2012. On that day, resolution of the Ministry of State Security of the Republic of Panama No. 380 came into force, in compliance with which a list of states, whose citizens may visit Panama with tourist aims and without visas, was added by Ukraine. Previously Ukrainians had to pay USD 50 for a tourist card when entering Panama.

Read more: Newspaper.net, 13 June, 2012 <http://newspaper.net/en/article/region/3/theme/9?id=864465&date=2012-06-13>



Ukrainian and Moldovan border guards start joint border patrols

The Heads of the Border Agencies of Ukraine and Moldova have signed a protocol on the organization of joint patrols of the Ukrainian-Moldovan border.

According to the document, joint border patrols will be carried out in order to prevent irregular border crossings outside checkpoints, counter irregular immigration and related crimes, detect and detain persons wanted by law enforcement agencies of Ukraine and Moldova, and share experience on state border protection.

Read more: Europe without Barriers, 8 June, 2012

<http://novisa.com.ua/news/Ukrainian-Moldovan-border-guards-start-joint-border-patrols/en/>

Hate crimes on rise in Ukraine, civil society reports

Hate crimes are on the rise in Ukraine, a group of human rights organizations said on 13 June, 2012, amid calls to boycott European Championship matches here because of a threat of racially motivated abuse.

Ukraine, which is a co-host of Euro 2012 along with Poland, has been rocked by accusations of racism. Days before the tournament started, the BBC broadcasted footage of racist and violent incidents at recent club matches in Ukraine.

Authorities have responded angrily to the suggestions that the country is inherently racist. Officials have vowed that all fans would be greeted here with open arms. UEFA's tournament director in Kyiv, Markiy Lubkivskiy, said on 12 June, 2012, there have been no reports of racial abuse during the matches played in Ukraine so far.

But a recent study of racism and xenophobia conducted by the Eurasian Jewish Congress shows that the number of hate crimes rose from 37 in 2009 to 48 in 2011, including an attack in 2010 that was lethal.

"Without a doubt, racism exists in Ukraine," said Maksym Butkevych of No Borders, a Kyiv-based advocacy group. "We are seeing a rise in such sentiments and views and this is a worrisome tendency."

Co-chairman of the Kharkiv Human Rights Group Yevhen Zakharov said that the rise in xenophobic sentiments can be attributed to a severe economic crisis that has shaken the country in recent years, leading people to blame others for their hardships.

The activists said that authorities rarely punish the perpetrators of hate crimes and often write off such attacks as mere hooliganism because they are harder to prove and victims are often scared to report them, fearing retribution from the attackers and further racially motivated abuse at the hands of police.

Read more: Kyiv Post, 13 June, 2012

<http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/129534/#ixzz1xIFle0Wc>

Challenges of irregular migration to Ukraine exaggerated, human rights activist states

The scopes of danger of irregular migration to Ukraine are grossly exaggerated, stated the co-chairman of the Kharkiv Human Rights Group Yevhen Zakharov during the press conference on 13 June, 2012.

"The idea that foreigners bring criminal actions and so on to our country is wrong; it is the stereotype, which does not correspond to the reality. Foreigners committed only 0.5 per cent of all crimes in Ukraine," Mr. Zakharov said.



He specified that in this regard human rights activists approached the Ukrainian Ministry of Interior, and received the response, which “verifies very clearly: talks that criminals arrive to the country in order to commit crimes against Ukrainians are nonsense.”

According to the human rights defender, allegations that foreigners bring exotic diseases to Ukraine also do not correspond to reality. “The Ukrainian Ministry of Health answered that there were no such occasions recorded,” Mr. Zakharov emphasized.

He also noted that “Ukraine is no longer attractive for migrants as a destination country”.

Read more: Institute of Human Rights and Prevention of Extremism and Xenophobia, 14 June, 2012

http://www.ihrpex.org/en/article/3269/danger_of_irregular_migration_to_ukraine_is_grossly_exaggerated_human_rights_defender

U.S. Department of State: Ukraine endeavouring to eliminate human trafficking

The Ukrainian Government is making significant efforts to introduce the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking, but it does not fully comply with them.

Such an assessment of the situation in Ukraine is expressed in an annual U.S. Department of State report on trafficking in persons in 186 countries, which was published on 19 June, 2012.

The document says that last year, “the Ukrainian Government passed legislation that could improve the delivery of services to trafficking victims, including through the development of a national victim referral mechanism.” It also notes that the “Government of Ukraine increased law enforcement efforts during the reporting period, particularly increasing the number of convictions of trafficking offenders.” The government reported that it convicted 158 trafficking offenders in 2011, an increase from 120 in 2010 and 110 in 2009. Cases of “modern slavery” were also investigated in cooperation with law enforcement agencies from at least 20 countries.

According to the report, “Ukraine is a source, transit, and increasingly a destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. Ukrainian trafficking victims are subjected to trafficking in Russia, Poland, Iraq, Portugal, the United Arab Emirates, the Czech Republic, Turkey, Germany, Azerbaijan, Israel, Lithuania, Lebanon, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Spain, Syria, the United States, Albania, Bahrain, Bosnia & Herzegovina, China, Egypt, Hungary, India, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, South Africa, Syria, Turkmenistan, and the Netherlands.”

The report notes that “men, women, and children from Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Cameroon, Moldova, Germany, Albania, and the Czech Republic are subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking in Ukraine.” “The most prevalent sectors for labour exploitation were construction, agriculture, manufacturing, domestic work, the lumber industry, nursing, and street begging or selling,” reads the report.

Read more: The National News Agency of Ukraine, 20 June, 2012

http://www.ukrinform.ua/eng/news/us_department_of_state_ukraine_trying_to_eliminate_human_trafficking_284315



Over 20 million victims of forced labour globally

Today, almost 20.9 million persons are victims of forced labour, the new report of the International Labour Organization (ILO) states. Out of them, 4.5 million people are victims of sexual exploitation, and 14.2 million are victims of forced labour for the purpose of economic exploitation.

The authors of the report note that 18.7 million persons (90 per cent of all victims) are subject to exploitation in private sector. At the same time the document draws attention to the fact that 2.2 million persons are victims of forced labour, exploited by a state. For example, prisoners working in conditions, which do not meet the requirements of the ILO, or people forced to work by armed forces.

5.5 million persons (26 per cent of victims of forced labour) are people at the age under 18.

According to the report, the number of victims of forced labour per one thousand residents is the highest in the countries of Central and Southeast Europe and the CIS countries, as well as in Africa, where this index is 4.2 and 4.0 per one thousand residents.

Read more: Institute of Human Rights and Prevention of Extremism and Xenophobia, 5 June, 2012
http://www.ihrpex.org/en/article/3196/more_than_20 mln_persons_are_victims_of_forced_labour_-_un

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Compiled by Communications team of IOM Ukraine