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Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia



PHOTO: SAŠA ĐORĐEVIĆ

Balkan migrant route closed

Balkan migrant route from midnight 9 March 2016 is closed, after Slovenia started implementing the new regime of entry into the Schengen zone and stopped allowing entry to migrants without valid passports and visas. So did Croatia.

Following the decision of Slovenia and Croatia, Serbia harmonized all measures with the European Union, and reciprocally apply them on its southern and eastern borders.



PHOTO: SAŠA ĐORĐEVIĆ



A delegation of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly visited Šid

A delegation of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly visited on 10 March 2016 the Reception-transit centre "Adaševci". The delegation was welcomed and familiarized with the Centre by Mr. Aleksandar Vulin, Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs and Assistants Commissioner for Refugees and Migration Mr. Ivan Gerginov and Ms. Danijela Popović Rocco.

Minister Vulin thanked guests from NATO for their interest and, as he said, for their respect on a daily basis of the policy of the Government of Serbia and everything what has been done done for migrants.

Mr. Thomas Michael Jopling, Vice President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, who led the delegation of the NATO in Adaševci, said he was really impressed with what the Serbian government has done, and that it managed to reconstruct and refurbish the Center in ten days, where large numbers of refugees are received on a daily basis.

"We are working to reduce the influx of migrants. Otherwise, we are from ten different countries, and when all this is over,



we'll come back, we will talk to our Parliaments and the NATO PA and we will convey our impressions", said Mr. Jopling.

He thanked Minister Vulin and the Government of Serbia, which, as he said, did all they could for migrants.



PHOTO: NADA OSTOJIĆ AGBABA

The engagement in the Reception-transit centre Sid Station

Migrant stories are different. Fortunately, there are those joyful. One of that kind took place in mid-March in the Reception-transit center Šid Station, where Muhammad Mansur and Nada Bakar, both from the Syrian town of Raqqa, got engaged. Engagement was attended by Nada Ostojić Agbaba, Trustee for Refugees and Migration in the town of Sremski Karlovci.

Serbia will respect the EU-Turkey agreement

Serbia will respect the agreement between the EU and Turkey on migrants, said on 21 March 2016 Mr. Aleksandar Vulin, Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs and explained that our country will follow the implementation of the agreement in question.

Minister Vulin said that the EU must first determine where migrants will be placed, and what will be the receiving country, but it is not known whether the quota system, which was agreed upon, will function or not.

"The agreement is really fresh, we need to see what will happen. As for Serbia, we will behave humanely as much as we can, taking into account our own citizens and our capacities", said minister Vulin after a visit to the Asylum centre in Krnjača.

We will not force anyone to stay, if

someone wishes to remain he will express intention, if they do not want, we will not make them do it. It is obvious that it will reduce the number of those who will be passing through our country, and it will be easier for us, because we will have fewer organizational problems and costs and that facilitates our work", said Mr. Vulin. Serbia, as he pointed out, is not the country of final destination and migrants in the vast majority do not want to stay in Serbia.

"We did not want to close our borders, we behave like other countries along the route," said Mr. Vulin.

Asked what will happen to the migrants who are already here, because the borders are closed, the minister said that they could seek asylum and that Serbia has the capacity to take care of them.

PEOPLE TESTIMONIALS



PHOTO: SCRM

From being a migrant to becoming a first football league player

Ibrahim Isakka, an asylum seeker from Ghana, from March plays football in the youth team of the OFK Belgrade. At the same time, he works in the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration and helps migrants from Syria, Afghanistan and other countries.

This guy, who is affectionately called Maradona in Karaburma and the Centre for accommodation of the asylum seekers in Krnjača, found happiness in Serbia. "I came to Serbia two years ago, when I was 17. I had to leave Ghana. It is a sad life story. I do not want to go back to it. I'm not in touch with the family, because it is the best for everyone. Others stayed in Accra. I escaped first to Niger and from there to Libya. After that I came to Lebanon, and Turkey. Then I crossed Greece and Macedonia and arrived in Serbia". When he speaks of Serbia, Ibrahim's face brightens. He says he cannot complain about anything in Serbia.

"I got it all here. People from the Commissariat have accepted

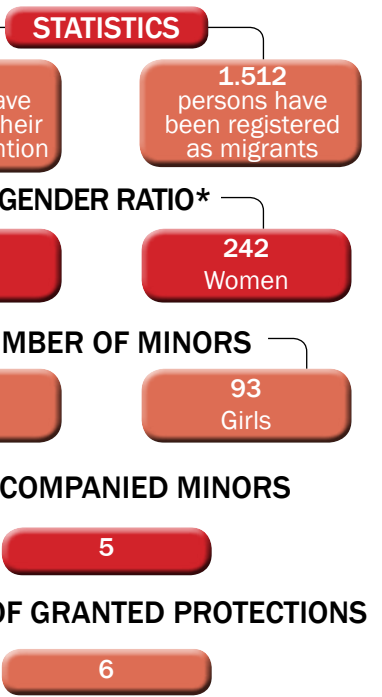
me, they gave me a job, and I try to give them all back. Serbs as a people are hospitable and always ready to help. Mr. Vladimir Cucić, head of the Commissariat, is my second father". Ibrahim Isakka stays a week in Belgrade, and then the following week he is in Adaševci near Šid working in the Reception-transit centre for migrants.

"I felt the need to help the people of Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq ... I try to help them in trouble. I learned Serbian, so I try to be a translator. I'm sorry for young children and these people experiencing such a misery. None of them will remain in Serbia, they want to go to Germany, Denmark, Sweden". Ibrahim Isakka says he has no time for love, although there are plenty of friends in Belgrade. "Serbian women are really good looking! The local girls are curious and well-intentioned. They like to know where I was and why I came to Serbia. I had no problem due to my skin colour".

This guy thinks he will stay to live in Serbia.

This newsletter is supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation within the framework of the project "Support to the national coordination for the reintegration of returnees (Phase 2)". The aim of the project is to improve the overall process of migration management, the establishment of better conditions for the reception of asylum seekers, as well as reducing the risk of social exclusion of returnees.

The views in this publication are those of authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SDC and the Swiss Government.



* Refers to the persons who expressed asylum intention



PERMANENT CENTERS – 1. Krnjača, 2. Banja Koviljača 3. Bogovađa, 4. Sjenica, 5. Tutin

THE RECEPTION-TRANSIT CENTERS – 6. Preševo, 7. Principovac near Šid, 8. Bujanovac, 9. Adaševci near Šid, 10. Subotica, 11. Šid Station, 12. Dimitrovgrad, 13. Bosilegrad, 14. Pirot, 15. Zaječar, 16. Negotin, 17. Sombor

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