



## **International Organization for Migration to assist an additional 20,000 displaced persons from Donbas and Crimea. New office opens in Kharkiv**

15 December 2014 – Kyivpost

The International Organization for Migration (IOM), with financial support from the EU and Germany, will provide assistance to an additional 20,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Donbas and Crimea.

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## **The National Bank of Ukraine equates displaced people from Crimea with Ukrainian residents when carrying out banking transactions**

18 December 2014 – Interfax-Ukraine

The National Bank of Ukraine (NBU) has amended its November resolution No. 699, equating officially registered displaced people from Crimea with residents of Ukraine when they carry out banking transactions.

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## **Nearly 9,000 Ukrainians have applied for asylum in the EU following the conflict in eastern Ukraine**

5 December 2014 – National Radio Company of Ukraine

The number of Ukrainian citizens seeking asylum in EU countries this year is almost ten times higher than in 2013, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has reported.

According to the UNHCR, the number of Ukrainians fleeing abroad could even be considerable higher as many Ukrainians prefer to apply for other forms of legal stay, such as temporary or permanent residence. "So far this year, more than 317,000 Ukrainians have applied for such permits in Russia (222,000), Belarus (60,000), Poland (23,000) and other neighbouring countries. It is not clear, however, whether all of these people have left Ukraine because of the conflict or for other reasons," the UNHCR report states.

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## **EU provides food, water, shelter and basic health care to Ukrainian refugees in Belarus**

12 December 2014 – EU Neighbourhood Info Centre

The European Commission has allocated over EUR 63,000 through the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) in order to support the Belarus Red Cross Society in meeting immediate needs of vulnerable refugees.

This new funding comes as a response to the increase in people who have fled to Belarus from the conflict in eastern Ukraine as the winter is looming.

Humanitarian aid will be provided to about 2,400 people, of whom 1,200 have crossed the border only recently. Over 100 families with children, 20 expectant mothers, 480 single parent families, 300 disabled and 300 elderly are among the most vulnerable refugees. They will receive vouchers to buy food, water, and hygiene items. The funds will also contribute to replenish the emergency stock, which was used this summer to help 1,200 refugees.

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## **Collection of biometric data from Ukrainians applying for Schengen visas to be introduced in January**

19 December 2014 – National Radio Company of Ukraine

In accordance with the Schengen Visa Code, obligatory collection of biometric data from Ukrainian citizens applying for Schengen visas will be introduced tentatively in late January, the Foreign Ministry's press service has announced.

According to the Ministry, the Schengen states are developing the Visa Information System in order to ensure quick exchange of information between diplomatic missions of Schengen states and border checkpoints on issues related to short-term visas. All information submitted during the visa application process, a digital photo and the applicant's fingerprints will be entered into the database. Children under 12 are not required to submit biometric data.

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## **Poland to expand visa opportunities for Ukrainians – Ambassador**

6 December 2014 – Interfax-Ukraine

During recent Ukrainian–Polish consultations, the two countries agreed to start negotiating the terms for issuing two-year tourist visas to Ukrainians, as well as to work for a further expansion of local border traffic.

"Poland will issue two-year tourist visas, expand local border traffic to 50+ km, begin the negotiation process" the Ukrainian Ambassador to Poland, Andrii Deschytsia, wrote on his Twitter account.

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## Ukrainian specialists and the international community discussed Ukraine's efforts in combating human trafficking

17 December 2014 – Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine

The Ministry of Social Policy, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration, recently held a roundtable discussion on Ukraine's efforts in combating human trafficking. The event was held within the framework of a U.S. Congress delegation visit to Ukraine. The roundtable was also attended by representatives from the Ministry of Interior, General Prosecutor's Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

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Compiled by IOM Ukraine Communications team