

A bimonthly newsletter published by the GDISC Ukraine Project Team - a project funded by the European Union under AENEAS 2006 and GDISC partner states

## EU MS and GDISC members are ready to continue in co-operation with Ukraine on its migration management development

The final ERIT Project Co-ordination Group meeting that took place in Kyiv on 9 March 2010 confirmed willingness and readiness of both EU/GDISC partners and Ukrainian counterparts to continue in the well started co-operation.

EU MS evaluated the results and impact of the GDISC ERIT project as highly positive and reaffirmed their strong conviction of the need to continue delivering support to Ukraine in a similar project framework. The representatives of the Ukrainian institutions, which were extraordinarily invited to the meeting, also evaluated the impact and results of the GDISC ERIT project as very positive, referring to the high level of expertise and strong role

of ICMPD. The establishment of the Country of Origin Information Unit within the State Committee of Nationalities and Religion, trainings, promotion of interagency co-operation, formulation of clear recommendations, building of screening centres and delivery of other technical equipment were among the many achievements mentioned. In several breakout sessions the representatives of the Ukrainian institutions and EU MS discussed and agreed upon the activities under a possible follow up project. All partner agencies were invited to the GDISC ERIT Final Conference scheduled for 27 April in Odessa as well as to the opening ceremony for the screening centre in Odessa, delivered by the GDISC ERIT project, scheduled for 26 April.

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## Fruit of the Loom - Ceremonial opening of the temporarily holding centre in Seredina Buda

Despite the difficult weather conditions, two new facilities for the temporary holding of illegal migrants were officially opened in the Sumy region of Ukraine on 15 February 2010, one on the territory of the border garrison of Seredina Buda, and one in Velyka Pysarivka. The ceremony was held in Seredina Buda with representatives of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, Hungarian State Authorities (Office of Immigration and Nationality and Hungarian National Police) and ICMPD. The Mayor of Seredina Buda, Director of Regional Police, District Prosecutor and the Director of the local hospital (actors that



overall investment of 260 thousand Euro, three more centres (in addition to the two mentioned above) will be opened before the end of the project in Kharkiv (31 March 2010), in Lugansk and in Odessa (26 April 2010).

The event did not only raise the visibility of the GDISC ERIT project and the European Union support to Ukraine in the area of migration, but also awareness and understanding of the local inhabitants for the work of the local Border Guard Service.



cooperate closely with the SBGS) also attended the ceremony. Numerous regional and local media came to record the unique event.

General V.P. Gresko, Deputy Head of Eastern Regional Directorate of the SBGS and Ms. Marcela Entlichova, Project Co-ordinator of GDISC ERIT Ukraine, officially opened the centre and invited the participants to a tour of the facility after official speeches. All the participants lauded the excellent results, especially seen in light of the limited funds available under the GDISC ERIT project for the technical development. With the



## Centres for temporary holding of apprehended illegal migrants offer European standards

The five centres that are being delivered under the EC co-funded GDISC ERIT project in the overall investment of 260 thousand Euros reflect the needs of the State Border Guard Service and offer European standards to apprehended migrants.

All centres are located at the Eastern and South Eastern border of Ukraine where most illegal migrants enter the country. They are constructed from mobile modules, a solution suggested by the Ukrainian SBGS and based on Hungarian expert assessment report on the enhancement of the screening capacity in Ukraine. This solution is very flexible and time and cost effective. Moreover, in case of changes in migration flows in long term perspective this solution allows for possible removal of the centre to other locations in Ukraine.

At the same time the mobile modules ensure all necessary standards for temporary stay of migrants and they fully comply with all relevant Ukrainian legislation. The centres offer separate



rooms for men and women, a medical room and a room for interviewing the migrants. At the same time they offer proper working conditions for State Border Guard Service to deal with initial identification of migrants. The aim was not only to provide SBGS with space for detention but also to create respective conditions for SBGS to work with various categories of migrants such as unaccompanied minors, women or victims of human trafficking. It is important to say that it is a pilot project and only running of the centres will show effectiveness of such a solution.

## Tailor-made training programme for the staff of the newly built screening centres in Seredina Buda and Velyka Pysarivka

A set of practical training sessions and coaching was conducted for new personnel of the screening centres recently opened under the GDISC ERIT project in Seredina Buda and Velyka Pysarivka. Two experts from the Office of Immigration and Nationality (OIN) and the National Police of Hungary worked closely with their counterparts and discussed various topics related to the daily running and operation of the centres with the newly appointed staff. This was done in the working environment in smaller groups in order to allow for interactivity. Topics covered personnel, organisational and logistical issues of initial screenings, interviews, apprehensions and detentions, and information on vulnerable groups (such as unaccompanied minors, women, single parents or handicapped persons) and special cases (such as victims of human trafficking, child soldiers, victims of torture) arising from the extensive knowledge of the Hungarian experts. The setting of the activity



enabled lively and constructive discussion with the border guard officers. The oral assessment and communication feedback showed that the trainings were successful, efficient and adequate to the needs of both locations, as they provided new knowledge concerning the daily work of alien and border policing. The next and final on-the-spot support and training is scheduled from 29 March to 1 April 2010 for the staff of the Kharkiv and Odessa Screening Centres.

## Tackling the lack of interpretation abilities in Ukraine – testing and evaluation of interpretation via video conferencing



One of the core elements of the asylum procedure is the asylum interview. According to the Ukrainian law, such an interview must be conducted in the official national language of Ukraine – namely Ukrainian. Language barriers thus need to be overcome by including a third person in the asylum interview: the interpreter. The interpreter takes an important role in many asylum procedures and even experienced inter-



viewers depend on their availability. Interpreter's professionalism and interpretation abilities can have a decisive effect on the outcome of the procedure. While previous workshops focussed on the role of interpreters and on how to work with them in the asylum interview in general, the last GDISC ERIT asylum workshop was dedicated to exploring durable solutions for Ukrainian Regional Migration Services in cases where they lack an appropriate interpreter on the spot. Asy-

lum authorities in European countries tried at an early stage to overcome the problem by using teleconferences, where the interviewer and asylum seeker have telephone contact with an interpreter in another city or even in another country. Lately, some EU countries collectively initiated the Interpreters' Pool Project, which runs a data base of available interpreters in several partner countries. Interpretation in this project is facilitated via cost intensive video conferencing systems. For Ukraine, both of these solutions were explored, but were not found to be viable, both due to lack of funding and lack of overall infrastructure. The Internet based tool "Skype" was then proposed as a solution as related maintenance and connection costs are very limited therefore also sustainable for offices after project closure.



Skype was successfully tested with participants from all Regional Migration Services in Ukraine and the State Committee for Nationalities and Religion in Muckachevo at the end of February 2010. During mock-interviews the participants experienced the possibilities that Skype could offer. Having connected 16 RMS with the internet and 15 RMS with all the necessary Skype equipment, the project is currently negotiating for the remaining 9 RMS to be supplied with Skype equipment. Obviously the system still depends on the availability of sufficient interpreters. UNHCR took an initiative in this regard, inviting interpreters to register on their homepage. It is planned that migration authorities should in future have access to this list upon need. Interpreters can visit <http://interpreters.unhcr.org.ua/> and register there.

## Security of two existing centres for detention of illegal migrants has been significantly improved



Technical support in the amount of 140 thousand Euro has been recently provided to two detention centres in Rozsudiriv (Chernigov oblast) and Zhuravichi (Volyn oblast) under the GDISC ERIT project. That was in addition to substantial financial assistance of the EU to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine for actual establishment of those facilities in 2008.

In order to improve internal and external security systems, modern perimeter security systems were installed in both centres. Moreover, Rozsudiriv detention centre received power stabilizers

ries. The perimeter protection system will prevent migrants from escaping while the internal system will ensure security of staff working in the centres and facilitates management of larger conflicts.

During the handover ceremony that took place on 16 February 2010 the new security equipment was introduced to the Head of the EU Delegation to Ukraine, Mr José Manuel Pinto Teixeira. High level representatives of the Ministry of Interior and local administration were pleased to see that the provided security system conforms to European standards and is essential for smoother



running and higher safety of the detention centre. However, Marcela Entlichova, the GDISC ERIT Project Co-ordinator, stressed that the security equipment can only be fully functional if correctly used by the respective staff of the centre.



to eliminate problems with electricity supply and to ensure optimal functioning of the provided security equipment, independently on sharp fluctuation of electricity stream. The Zhuravichi detention centre received tourniquet system with registration cards for migrants, electronic door locking system, security window tapes and bars for dormito-



## The final stretch of the Return Module - training in implementing returns



The last return workshop was carried out in mid December in Kyiv. The representatives of the United Kingdom Border Agency, Polish Border Guards, Frontex and UNHCR comprehensively trained key Ukrainian officials involved in implementing returns and in carrying out return operations addressing both enforcement aspects as well as legal barriers to return, such as international protection concerns. In light of the positive feedback to the previous workshop carried out in June 2009, part of the agenda remained the same as the workshop targeted different participants. Representatives of regional and central offices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (including Kiev Police), regional offices and the headquarters of the State Border Guard Service, as well as the High Administra-

tive Court, took active part in the workshop and discussed with their counterparts issues such as identification and documentation (a major priority of Ukraine), detection, return procedure in practice, implementation of the European Community Readmission Agreement and protection concerns in the removal procedures. The Polish presentations highlighted readmission and return over the land borders. Frontex presence and contributions further strengthened the sharing of EU practices with the workshop participants. Frontex presented and distributed best



practice documents on removal by land, as well as by air, and acquisition of travel documents to the participants. The presentations had also this time a practical approach and managed to catch the full engagement of the participants.

## Finalisation of the Ukrainian Return Guidelines

Two GDISC ERIT Return Working Group meetings held on 16-18 December and 2-3 March reviewed the draft Guidelines, with special focus on the draft recommendations. The Guidelines are divided into three major parts: Part one is composed of policy recommendations on the further development of the return policies and procedures of Ukraine, drawn up jointly by Ukrainian officials and EU experts of Module 5 of the GDISC ERIT project. The recommendations cover forced return - The European Community Readmission Agreement (ECRA); identification and re-documentation; removal by

air; removal by land. They also cover voluntary return and co-operation with the EU on return. Part two describes the existing return situation and procedures in Ukraine, and includes an illustrative flow-chart. Part three includes an overview of EU return policies, including ECRA (European Community Readmission Agreement), illustrated by a compilation of the good implementing practices presented during the activities carried out by the Module. UNHCR contributed to the formulation of recommendations on legal barriers to return and IOM to the ones on Assisted Voluntary Return.

## Biometrics in entry control

To see visa in a comprehensive perspective, an assessment of the entry control at the airports in Kiev, Odessa and Donetsk, with special focus on biometrics and visa issuance at the border took place on 30 November to 4 December. Mr. Satko Mujagic, Mr. Jan Maliepaard and Mr. Marc Frijlink, from the Netherlands undertook the assessment. The assessment contributed to developing (automated) solutions able to read biometric documents and to improve border management standards, with particular focus on

visa issues. The experts produced an assessment with recommendations on conditions for the introduction of automated border passage that would be able to read biometric documents, as well as standards on entry control and related border management set-up, in light of the Schengen Borders Code. Topics included capacities to read visas, detection of false or falsified visas, interviewing of holders of visas as well as issuing of visas at the borders. The assessment will be annexed to the Visa Action Plan.

## The Visa Action Plan is Taking Shape



On 8-12 February the Visa Working Group meeting assessed the Ukraine visa legislation and procedures against the European Community Code on Visas, as a contribution to the GDISC ERIT Visa Action Plan. The experts Ms. Irene Huppert and Mr. Tijmen Kozin, from the Netherlands and Ms. Sona Sindelkova from the Czech Republic as well as Ms. Lotta Nygård, Visa Module Manager jointly together with the Ukraine officials elaborated the recommendations on up-grading visa legislation and procedures. It has been a strong priority of the Ukraine Ministry of Foreign Affairs to further develop its visa legislation and procedures. Moreover, the topic is a logical compliment to the Definition Study, since the visa IT system needs to reflect a satisfactory basis in terms of visa legislation and procedures. Some of the recommendations can be implemented in a short-term perspective through internal instructions, whereas others are to be implemented in a long-term perspective. Some of the recommendations can already be reflected in the new visa instruction to be elaborated by the Ukraine Ministry of Foreign Affairs; others are relevant in a lon-

ger term perspective, particularly in light of continued approximation to EU standards. The Visa Action Plan will in addition to the assessment and ensuing recommendations include the Definition Study on the Introduction of a Visa IT-Concept in Ukraine (described in previous Newsletters). The final Visa Working Group meeting on the Definition Study took place on 11 March and was facilitated by Ms. José Vreeburg (leading expert) and Mr. Robert Roos, from the Netherlands and Ms. Ann-Charlotte Nygård, ICMPD Module Manager. The Ukraine Definition Study reflects European state-of-the art in the field of visa IT, it is based on



Dutch good practices with regard to the development of IT-solutions and reflects recent developments with regard to biometrics and security and reliability of the system. It therefore meets certain key requirement of sustainability in its approach.

## Visa databases workshop - ad-hoc activity upon request of Ukrainian counter parts

Upon the explicit request of the Ukraine officials, a one day workshop on the “establishment of databases” was organised on 2 February. The purpose of the meeting was to present the Dutch experiences when it comes to setting-up visa

and migration databases. The Dutch experts Mr. Erwin Zweers and Mr. Paul Sturm provided an introduction to the legal, technical and practical aspects of the Visa Information System (VIS) and the Schengen Information System (SIS).

## Coming Events

### Module 1:

**29 March - 1 April** Training on running of screening centres, Odessa and Kharkov

**7 April** - Opening of temporary holding point in Kharkov, Kharkov

**26 April** - Opening of temporary holding point in Odessa, Odessa

**26 April** - Hand-over ceremony of five temporary holding points delivered by ERIT project to State Border Guard Service, Odessa

### Module 4:

**27 April** - Hand-over of technical support to Detention Centre in Zhuravichi, Odessa

### Module 6

**29 March – 1 April** - Drafting of Visa Instruction (ad hoc on-the-spot support activity), Kyiv

### GDISC ERIT

**27 April** – Closing Conference/Final Steering Group meeting, Odessa

**27 April** – Press conference for outcomes of the GDISC ERIT Ukraine project, Odessa

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