

**A Report of A Workshop on The Subject of Refugees  
(transnational network meeting, 2nd of June Rostock,  
workshop on situation of refugees and closing off borders towards Eastern Europe)**

Attendance: 22 (changing throughout)

## **1. Introduction**

In this part participants introduced themselves and explained their motivation to join the workshop.

Some of the mentioned: cooperation between Polish and German groups helping refugees, fighting the development discriminating laws like Dublin

2 detention centres, medical help, Russia ÷ Finland contacts, antifascism in Poland and Germany, social situation of immigrants in the East, Visa getting in Poland

These are short characteristics of people who came:

Germany, A member of Medical Support for Refugees in Berlin, working mainly with people from Ukraine and Poland.

Finland, Helsinki, willing to start cooperation with movements in Eastern Europe

England, a traveller of Eastern Europe ÷ left during the workshop, for the next travel I guess<sup>f0</sup>

Ukraine, people organising the No Border Camp, take part in many initiatives (migration, human rights, anti racism and xenophobia)

Italy, 2 people publishing a magazine [www.meltingpot.org](http://www.meltingpot.org) , interested in situation in Eastern Europe

France ÷ willing to launch a campaign in Eastern Europe, in need of a network of contacts, they were in a French organisation NCR (I may have misheard)

Hamburg, member of a Refugee Council

Munich, interested in info on the East

Liepzig, -||-

Brussels, member of a Belgian refugee movement

## **2. Groups**

We split into 4 groups according to the country the people were interested in:

- 1) Belarus
- 2) Ukraine
- 3) Finland
- 4) Germany ÷ not enough time to report
- 5) I'm not sure whether there was one on Poland, if yes not much was said anyway.

### **Ad. 1**

Belarusian government does not care about refugees. There are no centres for them. Once they come there, they treat it just as a stop to get

further west. While their stay they live on a train station (up to 300 people live there).

To register yourself as a refugee is impossible for them, as the institutions are corrupted. With money for a bribe it is even possible to cross the border with an expired visa.

There are almost no social centres. The ones existing are not funded by the government so they are very poor.

Growing problems are: people traffic for sex industry; homophobia, racism and xenophobia fueled by the state media.

Antifascism is especially active in central Belarus.

## **Ad. 2**

The situation is far from good, however it is better than it used to be in the 90's.

A small percent of applicants get asylum. The statistics are not bad because children of the refugees already granted it get the status automatically.

Refugees getting the asylum receive 3\$ help for life (!). To prosper they need a document confirming their living place which is almost impossible to get (corruption).

When it comes to deportations they don't happen often because they are expensive. Most often people from China, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Uzbekistan are sent back. On the borders with Slovakia and Romania people happen to be sent back immediately.

Generally Ukraine is just a part of the chain of migration to further West

There are few refugee centres with very poor conditions. They are placed in military zones where no one can enter without a pass. They are not allowed to leave the place so they are like prisoners. Lately riots broke out there because of scandalistic conditions.

There was a project of building new and better centres but the government cancelled it.

## **Ad. 3**

Asylum system is strict and unfair. For 3000 applicants (mostly Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia) 20 get the status and 300 are let a temporary stay (1-2 years).

The latter have no basic services so live in poor conditions.

Centres for refugees are placed near airports.

The general attitude is getting worse, because selective policies are to be introduced, due to a big labour immigration.

The law is to undergo some changes.

\* During the workshop people from Romania/Gypsies joined

There used to be a big movement to Romania as it was easy to get the status. People come from Palestine, China and Moldova.

Moldovians are favoured due to long traditions connecting both countries.

Detention centres are around airports.

Police controls refugees what often results in sending them back to centres for not obeying some rules.

Refugees have poor social support, as well as the centres.

\*Gypsies

They are the most discriminated (school, work, housing) ethnic group in Europe.

As a result, they live in ghettos.

Explained why he considers term Cinthi Romans as racistic.

Conclusions:

There is a big need for better (network) exchange of information and experiences.

Not many concrete unfortunately :/

Next place to meet is below the camp described below.

### **3. No Border Camp in Ukraine**

11-20 August

In Carpathia Mountains around Mokhaczewo

It is a region where big migration takes place and some negative attitudes to refugees develop.

People from the EU countries don't need visas. Others need to contact in advance, Organisations expect around 200-300 people.

It is connected with Food Not Bombs international gathering (don't worry about food supply<sup>o</sup>).

There are to be 2 concerts: in the camp hc/punk and outside a folk one.

What is the most important they are waiting for suggestions for workshops, lectures etc

[www.noborder.org](http://www.noborder.org)

[noborder2007@riseup.net](mailto:noborder2007@riseup.net)

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There was a topic of some Strasbourg projects or something.

I did not understand it, nor did some others.

Anybody knows something please write it to the list.

ARI Berlin Juli 2007