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**FORTY SEVENTH PLENARY SESSION OF THE PABSEC GENERAL ASSEMBLY
CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

REPORT*

**“Problems of the Refugees, Displaced Persons and Irregular Migrants in the BSEC
Member States – Social Aspects”**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The world currently faces its largest global displacement crisis since the World War II, with approximately 60 million people currently displaced due to conflict, persecution and untenable conditions in their home country, seeking refuge beyond the borders of their states. Humanitarian protection, whether for refugees, asylum seekers, or internally displaced persons (IDPs), represent a key policy area for many major immigrant-receiving states, as well as nations bordering locations where war, political upheaval, or natural disasters have disrupted daily life.
2. The current migration flows transiting through the Black Sea Region mainly originated from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan with people travelling through Turkey and entering the EU through Greece. The majority of groups originates from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan (55 % from Syria, 26 % from Iraq and 19 % from Afghanistan). The primary reason, defining their decision are insecurity and armed conflicts at country of origin (90% of the refugees). A secondary reason for leaving is a lack of access to basic services, specifically education (reported by 26% of Syrians and 14 % of the Afghans). The rest mentioned fleeing because of personal threats made against them by non-governmental armed groups and fear of forced military recruitment.
3. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation is concerned with the multiple effects of migration since it is an area both of sending and receiving migrants – as a final destination or transit area. Issues like brain drain, social rights of migrants and illegal migration have been many times in the center of discussion within the Assembly. In its Recommendation on “Rights and social protection of refugees and displaced persons” (21/1997) the Assembly stresses the importance of the exercise of all human rights, fundamental freedoms, as well as of economic, social and cultural rights, in promoting political and social stability. During the discussions at the Meeting of the Committee, which elaborated Report and Recommendation on “Migration in the BSEC Member States – social and cultural aspects” (32/2009), the national delegations emphasized the impact of migration in the social development of the Black Sea Region.
4. PABSEC Cultural, Educational and Social Affairs Committee decided to focus the present report on the social aspects of the problems of the refugees, displaced persons and irregular migrants in the BSEC Member States. Contributions to the Report were received from the national delegations of the Republic of Armenia, Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Republic of Serbia, Republic of Turkey and Ukraine. Reference material was also obtained from the official websites of UNICEF, the Council of Europe, and other relevant international organizations and sources on the Internet.

II. INTERNATIONAL LEGAL STANDARDS, APPLICABLE TO REFUGEES

5. Even though refugees are foreigners in the asylum country, they enjoy the same fundamental rights and freedoms as nationals. The right to equality before the law, equal protection of the law and non-discrimination which form a cornerstone of international human rights law appear to ban discrimination against refugees based on their status as such. In addition, such provisions would prohibit discriminatory

conduct based on grounds commonly related to situations of refugees, such as race, religion, national or social origin, and lack of property. In addition, all guarantees providing protection against specific categories of discrimination, such as race and gender specific discrimination are also applicable to refugees. Refugees as a group are the most endangered people in the world. Most of their basic human rights are threatened during flight and upon their relocation in camps in the sanctuary state and finally during their return to their countries of origin or nationality. In the initial and most desperate phase, they often lose all their belongings, their basic security, family and often their own lives. For a majority of refugees, life in exile is as bad or worse than the conditions in their own country which compelled them to flee.

6. According to UNHCR there were about 60 million refugees in the world at the end of 2015, 50% of whom were children. Most of the refugees, 38 million, are internally displaced people, seeking protection in another part of their home country. 20 million seek international protection, mostly in countries neighbouring their own. Developing countries are host to over 86% of the world's refugees. Turkey is the country hosting the greatest number of refugees, most of whom are Syrian refugees. In Syria, 13.5 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance and 6.5 million people are internally displaced. In November 2015, 4.3 million Syrians had been registered and were awaiting registration in neighbouring countries – Turkey (2.2 million), Lebanon (1 million), Jordan (630,000), Iraq (245,000) and Egypt & North Africa (128,000).
7. The refugee presence in hosting countries has potential social, economic and political impacts on the asylum communities. The economic influence of refugee presence on the hosting countries has been both negative (e.g. uncompensated public expenditure and burden on the economic infrastructure) and positive (e.g. stimulated local economies by increasing the size of local markets and reducing commodity prices). The social impacts of refugees – also context-specific – include inequalities between refugees and non-refugees and the resulting social tensions, which can be reduced by development projects targeting both refugees and the host communities. Some of the political and security impacts associated with the presence of refugees can be mitigated by a comprehensive framework to secure stability and development through sustainable solutions for displaced people. Even in a refugee crisis, there are development opportunities that may bring benefits to the refugees and host populations, and also prepare the refugees for an eventual return to their home countries. Moreover, when additional resources are channelled through development interventions systematically, they can help to create sustainable solutions for refugees, which can be helpful in stabilizing the region.
8. For society, granting refugees and asylum seekers the right to work decreases their dependence on State support and reduces the risk that they will become a burden on public funds. Usually the employment is also key for integration. International and regional conventions, as well as certain domestic legal instruments, grant the right to work, to refugees, as well as, in a more limited scope, for asylum seekers. The legal framework covers the right to work, conditions at work, as well as social assistance. However, legal, administrative and practical barriers prevent many refugees and asylum seekers from realizing their right to work. Irrespective of the particular right at issue, it makes enormous economic and social sense to allow asylum-seekers, whatever their mode of entry or particular circumstances, to work.

9. Along with the challenges, migration in general has also the potential to generate positive forces in the social and cultural development of societies, for both countries of destination and countries of origin. Refugees can bring assets to the hosting area as well as skills and knowledge with them that can be utilized to the benefit of local people. These skills vary, but do often include those of the more educated group, such as health professionals and teachers, who, even in limited numbers, can make a significant contribution in remote areas. An additional range of skills that can be brought by refugees may include an enterprise culture which can stimulate the local economy or offer innovative agricultural techniques previously unknown to the host areas.
10. However, the process of capturing positive forces of migration is not simple and requires political will. In this context comes the need to implement effective national frameworks of management of the migration phenomenon, to highlight the positive aspects of migration and its potential, in order to contribute to stability and development.
11. The international human rights standards, applicable to refugees may be found in a variety of legal instruments. They include both general treaties establishing fundamental human rights, and more specialized texts addressing a specific issue relevant to migration, such as non-discrimination. Refugee rights have been recognized and developed at both international and regional levels.
12. **The 1951 Geneva Convention, Related to the Status of Refugees** is the first international agreement covering the most fundamental aspects of a refugee's life. **The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** was created in 1951 to assist in the international protection of refugees. The organization's primary objective is to ensure that all persons can exercise the right to seek asylum to secure safe refuge in another state, and to return home voluntarily. Currently, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is assisting more than 22 million people worldwide. During the period of 15-16 December 2015, the second phase of Asylum Systems Quality Initiative in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus, implemented by UNHCR, was launched in Stockholm, Sweden. The project beneficiaries are the authorities responsible for asylum applications, examination in the administrative phase, border control authorities and state courts in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.
13. **The Council of Europe** is in a position to step up the co-operation activities offered in respect of training of personnel responsible for border control, reception and living conditions of migrants and asylum seekers, in particular in respect of children and other vulnerable groups, access to and fairness of status determination procedures, including "fast track" procedures, and standards applicable to return operations. These activities will aim at facilitating the implementation of Council of Europe standards and compliance with international obligations at national level. **The Council of Europe Development Bank** is envisaging to establish a "Migrant and Refugee Fund" which would finance the setting up, improving and operating of transit and reception centers for migrants and asylum-seekers. The Bank will endow the Fund with 5,7

million USD and will invite its shareholders and other donors to provide additional contributions with a target of 22-28 million USD.

14. **UNICEF** is actively engaged in regular Government and UN country team coordination mechanisms on the refugee and migrant crisis in Europe. This includes consultation with all relevant Government ministries, as well as UNHCR, respective national branches of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, IOM, and key international and national NGOs. As the global humanitarian and development agency for the child rights, UNICEF has taken the lead in mobilizing all relevant stakeholders to raise awareness of the rights of refugee and migrant children, and improve assistance to children and their families during their journey across Europe, both as part of the immediate humanitarian response and through longer term support to national child protection systems.
15. According to the **International Organization on Migration** more than one in five of over 870,000 refugees and migrants who have crossed the Mediterranean Sea to Europe are children. Children are among the most at risk of refugees and migrants. For some children, the difficulties begin with perilous border crossings and rough seas. All are at risk of being exposed to sickness, injury, violence, exploitation and trafficking – violations of their rights and threats to their lives and well-being – while some tragically never arrive at their destination. Children represent more than 30 per cent of all recorded deaths in the Aegean Sea this year. Another serious concern is the growing number of children who travel without a parent or guardian and claim asylum in Europe as unaccompanied children.

III. THE SITUATION IN THE BSEC MEMBER STATES, CONCERNING THE PROBLEMS OF THE REFUGEES, DISPLACED PERSONS AND IRREGULAR MIGRANTS

16. The growing migratory pressure on all countries poses a serious challenge to their economy and to their security, health and social systems. In order to deal with these negatives, the Governments shape effective single national policies to manage migration processes, develop strategies and take actions to integrate refugees.
17. All legislative documents, national strategies and initiatives in the BSEC Member States, concerning the refugee issues, are in line with the 1951 Geneva Convention, Related to the Status of Refugees. They all stress on the importance of international cooperation in solving refugee problem. Good partnership has been developed with the Representation of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The latter assists public institutions and civil society organizations working directly or indirectly in the field of refugee protection and supports the further development of the national protection system in the framework of a rapidly evolving pan-European Asylum System.
18. Other international organizations the BSEC countries cooperate with for tackling the increased migration pressure are as follows: the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent, the International Migration Organization, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), as well as UNICEF, the organization with which the Member States and their authorities are jointly seeking

opportunities for inclusion of children as the most vulnerable refugees in various social, educational and health programs, and for ways of protecting them from violence and discrimination.

19. Some of the main issues encountered during resettlement of the refugees are the lack of procedures allowing people to reunite with their relatives. Resettlement is a vital solution for the most vulnerable refugees – including torture survivors and people with serious medical problems. At present, 1.15 million people urgently need this lifeline and it is estimated by experts that 1.45 million refugees will need resettlement by the end of 2017. Another data that causes deep concerns is the safety issue. Almost 7,000 people drowned in the Mediterranean alone in the two years since the first big shipwreck in October 2013. The States may restrain this by investing in search and rescue operations and immediately helping people in distress.
20. Through specific regulations and bodies supported by the Governments, the BSEC Member States have developed a comprehensive system for the integration and the social protection of the refugees. In most of the BSEC countries have been developed action plans and strong integration programs, which include a series of measures and activities needed to facilitate the social integration and are achieved through cooperation between central and local public authorities and the non-governmental sector. Social services represent a set of measures and activities accomplished to meet the social needs of a person or a family in order to overcome certain difficult conditions, to prevent social marginalisation and exclusion.
21. Most of the BSEC countries Integration Strategies put special emphasis on the right to work, to educate and to be updated with the needs of the domestic labour market. The measures taken include the maintenance of a specialized database of employers offering jobs to persons granted international protection, information on job vacancies; programs and measures for employment preservation and promotion; information and employment mediation; opportunities for psychological assistance, occupational guidance, inclusion in adult education and in programs and mechanisms for employment and training. It is considered essential by the countries to initiate programs, projects and agreements with the private sector to employ persons granted international protection.
22. The accommodation of aliens who seek or have been granted protection is an important part of the overall process of the adaptation and integration of these individuals in the hosting or transiting countries. The provision of shelter upon the registration of the status application has social, health and psychological implications related to regaining the feeling of security and the protection of the rights of aliens seeking protection in the host country. The access and active involvement of refugees in the variety of forms and degrees of education is a guarantee for their successful adaptation and integration in the host country. Through national and international laws, refugees are entitled to full access, training and education at state and municipal schools. Refugee children and adults are involved in different intensive language studies, cultural events and integration programs.
23. During the asylum procedure, the applicants are granted the right to work, if they are deprived, for objective reasons, of necessary livelihoods and of the right to be

accommodated in the resort centre for temporary accommodation and reception of asylum seekers. The applicants staying in the centre are offered food, hygiene products and laundry items. At the same time, the asylum seekers may receive financial assistance from the funds of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

24. The Governments have created special budgetary funds to cover financial expenses related to the administration and management of the asylum system, the maintenance of the accommodation system of asylum seekers and the social protection of that vulnerable groups.

The situation in the BSEC Member States

25. ***The Republic of Armenia*** acceded to the main international instrument in relation to the rights of refugees, namely the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees, in 1993. In the absence of a legislative framework, ensuring the application of this Convention, by the year of 1999 the rights of the refugees were carried out by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Armenia and the Government, based on about 150 regulations that were largely focused on providing refugees with food, shelter, employment, pensions and social benefits.
26. The Law on refugees, was adopted in 1999, where the procedures and the conditions were stipulated, concerning the temporary accommodation, the rights and obligations of an applicant for refugee status, guarantees of their legal and social protection. The Government of Armenia has approved and is currently being implemented a number of measures to address the problems of refugees, which are related to the harmonization of the national legislation of the Republic of Armenia in accordance with the international standards and for ensuring effective integration into society. Some of the latest legislative acts are: Decision of the Government, adopted in November 2011; Action program, for the 2012-2016 period, dealing with the refugees and asylum-seekers, in accordance with the EU approaches and principles; Decision of the Government, adopted in 2014; "National strategy for the protection of human rights".
27. In 2015 was developed an Action plan, dealing with the mass fleeing of refugees to the territory of the Republic of Armenia, which defined the obligations of all authorities within their competence. On the 5th of September 2015 an exercise namely "Shant-2015" took place, aiming to check the immediate defence preparedness of the state, the mobilization preparedness of the state and military governing bodies when repulsing aggression and the capability to bring to a high degree of readiness, and to raise the harmony of interaction and actions.
28. With a view to enhance the rights of refugees the Law "On Refugees and Asylum" (2008) was amended in 2015. It stipulates the relations pertaining to recognition of a refugee and grant of asylum, as well as ensures the application of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and recognises the right of all aliens and stateless persons to seek asylum in the territory of the Republic of Armenia, as well as the right to be granted asylum, if they fulfil the necessary requirements for granting asylum, prescribed by this Law.
29. Article 23 of the Law "On refugees and asylum" states that refugees who have been granted asylum in the Republic of Armenia have the right to the following assistance,

if they fulfill the requirements in the relevant field: social services stipulated by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia for nationals of the Republic of Armenia; state benefits and other financial assistance; benefits granted for cases of temporary inability to work, employment injury, accidents and occupational diseases; pension security and social protection in case of unemployment as prescribed by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia.

30. The Laws on “Education” and “Refugees and Asylum”, adopted in 2008, are the main legal acts regulating refugees’ rights to education. Particularly, according to Article 25, asylum seekers and recognized refugees have the right to a basic education, enjoyed by the other citizens. Refugees granted asylum in the Republic of Armenia shall be treated as favorably as other foreign citizens with regard to the access to studies, recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, the remission of fees and charges and the award of scholarships.
31. The Law “On Children’s Rights”, adopted in 1996, ensures refugee children’s social, material and other rights. Refugees’ pension rights are carried out on the basis of pension-related legislation of the State. The current system of pension security services forms the most important basis or criteria for being included in the pension security system.
32. *In the Republic of Azerbaijan* there are more than 1.2 million refugees and IDPs, which were accommodated in camps in very poor conditions. In order to improve the living conditions of the refugees, in accordance with the international standards, has been fully established a legal framework, required to solve the social problems of the refugees, displaced persons and asylum-seekers. By the Decrees of the President of the country, the adoption of several decisions, laws and state programs were launched and measures were successfully implemented.
33. At the end of the 2007 the existing refugee camps were eliminated and funds of the State Oil Fund were allocated to projects which lead to the development of 94 modern residential complexes with complete socio-technical infrastructure on area of up to 2.9 million square meters, including more than 150 schools, Palace of Culture, several cultural centres, 59 kindergartens, 58 health centres and 2 Olympic sports complexes. Thus, so far have been improved the living conditions of thousands of families or 49 243 thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons. Due to the state budget resources monthly allowances for food are paid to almost 9 thousand displaced persons, who before worked in the budget enterprises and organizations and due to the reasons beyond their control lost their jobs and could not recover.
34. With the aim to assist the development of infrastructure facilities for temporary accommodation of IDPs and to improve their living conditions by assisting in the establishment of small business by the Presidential Decree of 6 December of 1999, the Social Development Fund of IDPs was established. Due to the credit agreements between the World Bank and the Government of Azerbaijan in 2003-2015 served as the basis for rendering the aid of 350 thousand people through the IDP Social Development Fund that resulted in 590 different micro-projects and 11 thousand IDPs got 5.2 million USD in the form of micro-credit. Over the past 12 years the poverty rate among internally displaced persons fell by 75 % to 12 %.

35. With the participation of representatives of donor countries and international organizations in Azerbaijan were held series of international conferences dedicated to the problems of refugees and internally displaced persons (in 1994, 1996, 2000 2004). Over the past 12 years more than 160,000 people received jobs mainly in the public sector, 2,716 people received vocational training courses, 1.901 million people were recruited for paid public works and 16 thousand families received targeted social assistance.
36. With a view to the coordination of the activities of a single Centre for refugees and internally displaced persons, full and timely analysis of their social problems, together with the relevant State bodies, international humanitarian organizations, donor countries and financial institutions, as well as to identify ways to address issues and take immediate action, the President of the Azerbaijan Republic issued a Decree on the establishment of the Republican Commission on international humanitarian aid. At present this Commission coordinates the activities of 21 international and local humanitarian organizations, 14 of them, which implemented various projects aimed at solving social problems of internally displaced persons.
37. Through international humanitarian organizations for internally displaced persons were built 12 campsites, 16 towns of the Finnish type and 8000 houses from raw bricks; 160 thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons were given the opportunity to participate in income-generating programmes. Projects in the field of development of society, agriculture, education, health care, micro-credit, income generation, training, civil society development, infrastructure rehabilitation are successfully implemented and still continuing.
38. In general, to address and solve the problems of refugees and internally displaced persons more than 3.5 billion USD has been spent over the past 22 years. Almost half of them were allocated from the State budgetary funds, 1.2 billion USD were from the State Oil Fund and 655 million USD came from international financial institutions and international organizations operating in Azerbaijan.
39. ***The Republic of Bulgaria's*** legal framework related to refugee issues includes various pieces of legislation at international, European and national level. The main sources of international law are the 1951 Geneva Convention on the status of refugees and the 1967 New York Protocol, both ratified by Bulgaria in 1992 and effectively in force since 1993.
40. The regulatory framework of the social aspects to refugee problems in the country includes the following legal acts: Employment Promotion Act (EPA), aimed at providing opportunities for persons who have received international protection in the Republic of Bulgaria to start work with Bulgarian employers; Social Assistance Act (SAA), according to which foreigners who have been granted asylum, refugee status or humanitarian status are entitled to social assistance. Child Protection Act (CPA), which applies to unaccompanied children, provides for protection measures depending on the specifics of the case and the interest of the child, as well as accommodation, placing in foster care, residential social services or specialized institutions.

41. Law amending and Supplementing the Asylum and Refugees Act (ARA), in effect as of October 16, 2015, which introduces the requirements of Directive 2011/95/EU and Directive 2013/33/EU for setting standards for the reception of applicants for international protection. The aim of Directive 2013/33/EU is to set out reception conditions that guarantee a decent standard of living and are comparable across the European Union, regardless of where the application for international protection is filed.
42. In June 2015 the Council of Ministers adopted a National Strategy on Migration, Asylum and Integration 2015-2020 which sets the policy framework for building a comprehensive and sustainable legal and institutional basis for successful management of legal migration and preventing illegal migration through synchronization with the EU migration policy.
43. For the aliens who have been granted refugee or humanitarian status in the Republic of Bulgaria and for the asylum-seekers the State Agency for Refugees (SAR) is rendering: social assistance which includes: monthly social benefit – granted to individuals and families whose income for the previous month is lower than the differentiated minimum income; Lump-sum social benefit – granted once a year for meeting ad hoc health, educational, utility or other urgent needs; information, social counselling, and, jointly with the Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria, facilitates the refugees, who need help, with their registration at the directorates “Social Assistance” and “Labour Office”.
44. Asylum-seekers pending the status determination procedure and aliens who have been granted refugee or humanitarian status with the Republic of Bulgaria have the same rights and obligations as Bulgarian nationals in the area of health insurance and access to medical assistance. Special focus is put on women, children and chronically sick asylum-seekers. These categories are referred for medical examination and treatment, including dental services with some NGOs assistance.
45. While pending the status determination procedure, the alien seeking protection is accommodated in a centre (transit or registration-and-reception) or another facility depending on the assessment of the individual’s health, family and financial status. The maintenance costs of these centres, including utility costs, food, maintenance, sanitary materials, etc., are covered by the State Agency for Refugees.
46. Refugee children aged up to 18 are entitled to full access, training and education at state and municipal schools in Bulgaria. Refugee children and adults attending the Bulgarian language courses at the Refugee Integration Centre participate in various forms of Bulgarian language practice: preparation of artistic and musical programs, study tours, summer schools for intensive learning of colloquial Bulgarian, cultural and sports events, etc.
47. The cooperation between all state institutions in charge of refugee matters is implemented through the National Council on Migration and Integration to the Council of Ministers (CM), established in 2013. Among the Council’s competences is to develop and table to the CM an updated single strategic document on migration and

integration based on existing strategic documents and integration along with measures aimed at increased efficiency in the management of migration flows in Bulgaria.

48. Measures undertaken at national level with regard to the social aspects of the refugee crisis in the framework of the “Human Resources Development” Operational Program 2014-2020, targeted measures to support migrants and persons from third countries and are provided under the Investment Priority “Socio-economic integration of marginalized communities such as Roma”. The complex nature of the problems facing the integration of these groups requires to apply an integrated approach combining interventions in the following areas: improving access to employment; improving access to education; improving access to social and health services; development of local communities and overcoming negative stereotypes.
49. The total amount of funds allocated under the investment priority is 77.6 million USD. 2016 is expected to see the start of the first operation under the above mentioned priority – “Socio-economic integration of vulnerable groups”. The operation is aimed to contribute to improving the quality of life, social inclusion and poverty reduction, as well as to continued integration of the most marginalized communities. The allocated funds are about 47 million USD and the scheme will be implemented until the end of 2019. It is expected that at least 400 migrants and participants from other countries of origin will be included in the measures under this operation.
50. In 2015 *Georgia* received 1449 asylum-seekers and 69 asylum-seekers were granted refugee status. 878 asylum-seekers were granted humanitarian status. As for 2015, there were 371 refugees and 1273 humanitarian status holders in the State. Under Georgian legislation and international obligations asylum-seekers, refugees and humanitarian status holders have the right to work. In this regard, they have the same social rights as the aliens in case of self-employment, as for the hired work – they enjoy the same rights as the citizens of Georgia. Nowadays Refugees and Humanitarian status holders get 18 USD monthly allowances (like IDPs) from the Government of Georgia. 181 440 USD were spent for 1 116 persons in this regard in 2015. The Government of Georgia also fully finances the service of asylum-seekers Reception Centre designated for 60 persons in Martkopi, consisting of 91 293 USD in 2015. In order to increase the reception and accommodation capacity of asylum seekers, a second wing of the Asylum Seeker’s Centre in Martkopi has been built with the financial support of US Office of Defence Cooperation (ODC), providing temporary accommodation to additional 72 asylum seekers.
51. The asylum-seekers, refugees and humanitarian status holders are involved in the State Health Program. As for the recent update, 170 beneficiaries were involved in this program with overall budget of 29 604 USD. According to the Georgian Government’s Decree № 15, dated 29 January 2015, a special educational program was introduced aiming at language courses.
52. The Migration Strategy of Georgia for 2016-2020 includes comprehensive State policies regarding the migration related issues, while its Action Plan further comprehends detailed activities for the successful implementation of state policy on migration. The asylum related issues are also enshrined in the National Action Plan of Georgia within the Association Agreement between the European Union and the

European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States. Considerable efforts have been made in the management of asylum claims: regarding contingency planning, a provision for the emergency management of sudden flows of refugees was added to the “Civil National Security Plan”.

53. Georgia has been suffering from the forced displacement for over two decades now. The first wave of internal displacement took place in Georgia in 1992-93, followed by the second largest wave after the events occurred in 2008. As for today, the total number of registered IDPs from Abkhazia, Georgia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia is 269 157. The Ministry has radically changed the approach towards the IDP resettlement. In October of 2014, Georgian Government approved “Project on transferring lawfully owned living spaces into IDP’s private ownership”, aiming to integrate and adapt to their environment. Under the project, more than 10 000 IDP families became owners of real estate. The action plan also foresees granting one-time financial assistance to the IDP families who have bought their housing units through a mortgage loan and it is their only factual living space. At this stage, the process goes in three directions: (1) Removing IDP families from the collapsing and health or safety high-risk facilities; (2) Provision of living spaces to IDP families based on the court, or higher administrative body decision and administrative undertaking of the Ministry; (3) Long-term accommodation of IDPs according to the criteria. IDPs have the right to equally benefit from State and other programs of social welfare, healthcare and education that the government of Georgia or the non-governmental sector offers to any citizen of Georgia. IDPs get an increased allowance of 18 USD per month. This provision applies to those whose registered income per month is below 550 USD (including taxes). In addition, the MRA offers financial assistance to vulnerable IDP families. The assistance entails issuing one-time grants and covering the rent costs. The UN Secretary-General emphasized in his latest report on the “Status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia”, reiterated that “the right of return and its exercise by an internally displaced person cannot therefore be directly linked to political questions or the conclusion of peace agreements. It is essential to recognize return as both a human right and a humanitarian issue that must be addressed irrespective of any solution to an underlying conflict.” Despite these calls, the displaced population continues to be deprived of the right to return.
54. Georgia is an active member in several international panels and processes, such as Prague Process, Eastern Partnership, Mobility Partnership, as well as Georgia dynamically cooperates with the International Centre for the Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and with its support has held Cooperation Agreement with Lithuania regarding the exchange of information about the asylum-related issues. In 2015 Georgia held Cooperation Agreement with the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD). Nowadays, active negotiations regarding the forms of cooperation are on-going with other EU Member States such as Hungary, Poland. Georgia has close cooperation with the European Union and negotiation regarding the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan is on-going.
55. *Greece* is the country that receives 95% of refugees and migrants who wish to reach Europe. 43% of the refugees originate from Syria, 34% are children and 21% are women. In 2015, 856,723 refugees and migrants arrived in Greece through the sea

route in the Eastern Aegean, while the arrivals for 2016, so far exceed 43,920 (46,121 is the total number of arrivals by the sea, for Greece and Italy). The average arrivals in Greece, in December 2015, were 3,500 and in January 2016 were 1,900, despite the adverse weather conditions. The Greek state has established reception facilities capable of hosting 8.000 people on five Greek islands. Facilities that can host 40.000 people have been built on the mainland, where refugees are finding proper shelter, while 90.000 meals are offered daily to the refugees staying at the reception centres.

56. The Greek legislation has been adjusted in order to ensure the legal framework for the implementation of the principles of “first safe country of asylum” and “third safe country”. More specifically, Law 4375/2016, introduces a considerable number of changes to the institutional framework, the first reception procedures, the asylum procedure, the labour rights of beneficiaries of international protection, as well as the management of refugee flows in Greece. The Law sets out the rules and principles applicable to the “new procedure” in line with the recast Asylum Procedures Directive. According to it the Applicants for international protection who have lodged a claim for over five years, have a pending appeal and possess a valid asylum seeker permit, are automatically entitled to a residence permit on humanitarian grounds, unless they pose a threat to national security or society, arising from a final conviction for a serious crime. The permit is granted for a period of 2 years and can be renewed.
57. Detention of unaccompanied children, pending their referral to a dedicated reception facility, has also been curtailed by a maximum time-limit of 25 days, which can be prolonged by a further 20 days if the child cannot be transferred to such a facility due to exceptional circumstances, such as a large number of arrivals of unaccompanied children. Asylum seekers who initially lodged their claim over five years ago who possess a valid asylum seeker permit will automatically be entitled to a residence permit on humanitarian grounds, unless there are national security concerns. This will resolve the situation for numerous Afghan nationals who have been waiting for a decision on their appeals for up to 13 years, living in precarious conditions with limited access to services and limited rights.
58. The Greek Ministry of Health tries to meet the health needs of refugees with funds made available through the national public health system. Health coverage will be provided in the hot spots for refugees/migrants operating within the framework of the Greek National Action Plan for health issues. The social and epidemiological profile of these populations has been modified recently and basically includes families, infants, young children, pregnant women and elderly people who need emergency health care due to the circumstances in which they travel and live during their displacement, also taking into account their health profile in cases such as chronic diseases.
59. In 2015, about 2,000 refugees and migrants have received hospital care with cost exceeding 910 000 USD (800,000 EUR). There has been provision for sufficiency in medicines and medical supplies (vaccine, tuberculin etc.) and coverage for refugees with chronic non-communicable diseases (diabetes). There is also provision for immunization coverage of vulnerable groups, in accordance with basic screening immunization protocol. International Medical Corps and its partner organization, Programs of Development, Social Support and Medical Cooperation (PRAKSIS), is working to assist refugees as they arrive on the islands of Samos and Leros, providing

medical care and psychosocial support also distributing hygiene kits to families and children.

60. *The Republic of Moldova* adhered, in 2002, to the UN Convention of 1951 relating to the status of refugees and the Additional Protocol of 1967. Consequently, this fact led to the adoption of the national legal framework, the completion of the necessary procedures and the development of the institutional system. The Republic of Moldova joined in 2011 the Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons (1954) and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (1961). Since joining the two conventions, the Republic of Moldova has developed the national procedure of the stateless status recognition, introduced by Law no. 284 of 28.12.2011 for the amendment and completion of certain legislative acts. The provisions on the procedure for recognizing the stateless status came into force on 10.02.2012.
61. The Republic of Moldova cooperates with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees based on the collaboration agreement signed between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the UNHCR. The Republic of Moldova is part to international migration partnerships: Prague Process, Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum, Budapest Process.
62. The Law on asylum in the Republic of Moldova, adopted in 2008 stipulates the legal status of asylum seekers, the beneficiaries of any form of protection in the Republic of Moldova, as well as the procedure of granting, termination and cancellation of protection (political asylum, refugee status, humanitarian protection, temporary protection). The law establishes the legal and institutional framework of asylum system functioning in the State.
63. The Law on the integration of foreigners in the Republic of Moldova (in force on 1 July 2012) regulates the process and the ways of facilitating the integration of foreigners in the country, and clearly establishes the activities carried out by public authorities. The integration activities are provided, as follows: socio-cultural adaptation sessions, courses for the state language study, information and counselling services on how to access the labour market or vocational guidance and training services. The Law also stipulates the achievement of certain rights, such as the right to education, access to health services or social protection system.
64. For the beneficiaries of a form of protection, the legal framework, in addition to integration activities, offers the possibility to apply for integration programs. These programs include a series of measures and activities needed to facilitate the social integration and are achieved through cooperation between central and local public authorities and the non-governmental sector. Such a program lasts for six months with the possibility of its extension up to one year, during which the person may benefit from free medical insurance policy.
65. During the asylum procedure, the applicants are granted the right to work, if they are deprived, for objective reasons, of necessary livelihoods and of the right to be accommodated in the resort centre for temporary accommodation and reception of asylum seekers (250 beds). As of 1 January 2016, a total number of 560 persons were registered with the asylum system of the Republic of Moldova, out of which: 114

asylum seekers (in the application examination phase), 144 refugees and 302 beneficiaries of humanitarian protection. In 2015, the majority of asylum seekers came from Ukraine – 123, Syria – 55, Iraq – 23, Afghanistan – 19, Sri Lanka – 7, etc., while in 2014 from Ukraine – 134, Syria – 61, Afghanistan – 10, Iraq–5.

66. A study was conducted at the request of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the authority that manages the immigration processes in the Republic of Moldova, aimed at assessing the current legal framework for the social, economic, cultural, and political integration of foreigners and at the identification of aspects to be improved in order to ensure effective protection of migrants' rights. The legislative framework of the Republic of Moldova scored 39 out of 100 points, ranking the position similar to Lithuania and Slovakia. The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) is a reference guide and a fully interactive tool to assess, compare and improve the integration policies in the country.
67. Although the analyses and data collected by the authorized services of the Republic of Moldova do not indicate risks of an immediate inflow of foreigners in the Republic of Moldova in ratios similar to those of the EU member states, the Prime Minister ordered the creation of two working groups for the development of the Contingency Plan (plan of activities and structures responsible for the implementation of the measures of reception, identification, status granting and potential assistance measures for refugees).
68. The first group includes the representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs: Bureau for migration and asylum, Border Police Department, Carabineer Troops Department, etc. The second group is an inter-ministerial and includes the representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, Ministry of Education, Ministry of External Affairs and European Integration, Ministry of Culture, Intelligence and Security Service, General Directorate for decentralisation policies and local administration within the State Chancellery. One of the programs developed by the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family in the field of social assistance is the Integrated system of social services. Within the in were designed social canteens, offering hot lunches to people in need, including the elderly. A total number of 6694 elderly and disabled persons, and families with children at risk, benefited from this service within those 83 canteens throughout the country.
69. In **Romania**, one of the main issues to be considered, regarding the integration of immigrants and refugees, refer to employment, access to social security system and health insurance, access to housing, access to health care, social work, education, host country language learning and cultural integration. It must be permanently achieved the exchange of information and best practices between countries of destination of foreign beneficiaries of an international protection form.
70. In order to ensure active inclusion of foreign citizens how benefit of international protection, with residence in Romania, and their participation in social, economic and cultural life, one of the most important issues taken into consideration is the access to the labor market. The main regulation on access to the labor market in Romania for foreign persons seeking for asylum or foreigners who gained the refugee status or

another form of international protection is the Law on the unemployment system and employment.

71. The Law stipulates that in Romania "every person is guaranteed the right to freely choose their profession and work, and the right to unemployment insurance" and there are "excluded any kind of discriminations for criteria such as politics, race, nationality, ethnic origin, language, religion, social status, beliefs, sex and age", beneficiaries of the provisions of this law are also the jobseekers that achieved the refugee status or another form of international protection, according to the law".
72. The Law on asylum in Romania, as amended and supplemented, establishes in favor of the foreigner applying for a form of protection, "the right to receive access to the labor market, after the expiry of a period of 3 months from the filing date of the application of asylum demand, whether if, in this situation it was not taken a decision in the administrative phase of the procedure, and the delay cannot be attributable to the person."
73. According to the article the Law on asylum in Romania, during the asylum procedure, the foreigner who is seeking a form of protection has, among others, is granted the right to participate in cultural adaption activities, to receive free medical care, the right to be included in the national health programs that aim to prevent, monitor and control the contagious diseases, in the epidemiological risk situations; in case of the event of minor asylum seekers, the right to gain access to compulsory education under the same conditions as Romanian minor citizens.
74. A person who has been granted a form of protection, by recognition of a refugee status or subsidiary protection, has the right "to be employed by natural or legal persons, to exercise freelance professions and to carry out legal activities, to perform commercial acts, including economical activities independently, under the same conditions as Romanian citizens, to benefit from social insurance, social assistance and social health insurance. This refugee has the right to "access all forms of education, and benefit from equal treatment to that granted to Romanian citizens, in terms of freedom of practicing one`s own religion and the religious education of one`s children, equivalence of the studies or study periods, recognition of degrees, diplomas and certificates of competency, as well as professional qualifications giving access to regulated professions in Romania, in accordance with the regulations".
75. A short term Action Plan is being developed in order to facilitate the integration in the Romanian society of the persons who obtained a form of protection, which addresses the most important areas required for integration, such as: the development of Romanian language courses; facilitating access to social housing; access to the labor market by creating a framework which would facilitate access to training courses, as well as assessing the professional skills acquired in their home country; conducting awareness campaigns among the local population; extending the network of NGOs operating in assistance and integration of refugees; develop an information system (leaflets, brochures, manuals and guides) translated in languages spoken by people with a form of protection.
76. According to the Federal Migration Service (FMS) of *the Russian Federation* as of 1 November 2015, on the territory of the State were settled more than 332 thousand Ukrainian citizens with temporary residence permit and more than 113 thousand with

residence permit, as well as more than 326 thousand citizens of Ukraine who have refugee status or temporary asylum status. By the end of 2015 were registered approximately 7 thousand Syrian citizens, including about 4500 with a temporary residence permit, as well as 8500 Afghans, over half of them with temporary residence status. The massive influx of refugees into the country required a number of important political and institutional decisions for the reception of the refugees and their resettlement.

77. The Federal Law on Refugees defines the grounds and procedure for the recognition of a person as a refugee in the territory of the Russian Federation, establishes economic, social and legal guarantees for the protection of the legitimate rights and interests of refugees. The law establishes the realization and protection of the rights and freedoms of refugees in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation. The issues related to the refugees are regulated within the framework of Action plan for the implementation of the Concept of the State migration policy for the period to 2025 and other social programs. In the Russian Federation has been established holistic system of granting asylum to foreigners. In accordance with the international and national legislation, the Russian Federation provides three forms of asylum to foreign citizens: political asylum; recognition as a refugee; temporary asylum.
78. Since 5 April 2016, the main authority to determine the legal status of foreign citizens belong to the Head department of the Migration Affairs of the Ministry of internal affairs of the Russian Federation. Between the respective authorities of the Federal Government has been established close cooperation in the enforcement of the legislation concerning the refugees. Refugee status is indefinite. Temporary shelter is provided in accordance with article 12 of the Federal Law on Refugees. An important element of the asylum system is the temporary accommodation centers for asylum-seekers.
79. An important part of the implementation of the State migration policy of the Russian Federation is the development of international cooperation in the area of migration with the respective departments in the other States, as well as international integration associations and humanitarian organizations. Currently as priority of international action is the development of cooperation with countries in Eurasia, Asia, Middle East as well as strengthening international capacity in Russia through cooperation with the institutions of the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the BRICS. The Russian Federation has always been the centre of migration flows on the territory of the Centre of the Commonwealth of Independent States and since 2015 the Eurasian Economic Union has been successfully launched, ensuring free movement of goods, services, capital and work force.
80. At present about 11 million foreign citizens are settled on the territory of the Russian Federation due to various reasons. After the start of the migration crisis in Europe, there has been increased attention of foreign partners to the effective experience of the Russian Federation in the field of migration flows, illegal migration and international protection. Part of the practical actions of the Concept of migration policy for the period to 2025 is the implementation of effective measures to combat illegal migration. Over the last three years the number of the legally working migrants in Russia has increased by more than 1 million. However, in the view of the complicated migration situation, the Russian Federation has been constantly improving its

legislation on migration, asylum refuge through developing the necessary infrastructure. For example, currently in 57 points of the Russian Federation are built 236 temporary accommodation centers, where are situated more than 9 thousand people. The funds required for the process of reception, allocation, social assistance and integration of the arriving foreigners are allocated from the federal budget.

81. One of the topical directions of development of international cooperation between the Russian Federation and the BSEC Member States is to implement international treaties on readmission. Currently, successfully has been implemented the agreements signed with Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Turkey, Ukraine. However, readmission agreements with Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova are still under negotiation.
82. Since the beginning of the migrant crisis (May 2015) the Government of the *Republic of Serbia* chose a proactive approach in order to provide adequate protection and assistance to the large influx of migrants. In 2015 in the State were registered 580,000 migrants, which is almost 35 times more than in 2014. In the first two months of 2016, 94,605 certificates of entry into the territory of the Republic of Serbia for migrants were issued, while 1,187 foreign citizens expressed an intention to seek asylum. According to the countries of origin, the migrants' structure is as follows: Syria - 52%, Afghanistan - 28%, Iraq - 13%, Pakistan - 2%, Iran - 2%, other - 3%.
83. On 18 June 2015 the Government of the Republic of Serbia, established a Working Group for Resolving Problems of Mixed Migration Flows consisting of five ministers and the Commissioner for Refugees and Migration. On 8 July 2015, Reception-Transit Centre was opened in Presevo in order to provide one-stop security check, registration, medical screening, food and water aid and accommodation. Work on the reconstruction of the facility was conducted, which provided additional accommodation capacities. On 4 September, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted a Response Plan in Case of Mass Influx of Migrants with the aim to provide adequate capacities and measures to be undertaken in case of mass influx of migrants into the Republic of Serbia.
84. In accordance with the Plan and in cooperation with local Councils for Migration, the authorities have provided the necessary assistance on the ground, opened up additional transit centres and identified appropriate facilities for emergency accommodation of migrants. Training has been organised for municipal/city Commissioners for Refugees and Migration on the topic of the humanitarian care of migrants, in order to improve the efficiency of local self-government representatives in this area in case of further escalation of the number of migrants and the need of the engagement of additional number of professionals on the ground.
85. In order to obtain additional international financial support to help migrants the Republic of Serbia, on 22 September 2015, activated the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. Serbia required funds through the Mechanism for the purchase of beds, mattresses, hygiene products, vehicles, fuel and food. The Republic of Serbia monitors the treatment of the EU and its Member States on this issue and with a view to adequate and timely response it endeavours to harmonise its measures and activities with the countries along the Balkans route, both with those at the entry points, and with countries that are at the exit points.

86. Since the beginning of increased influx of migrants to the territory of the Republic of Serbia, one of the most important tasks has been to ensure sufficient accommodation capacities for persons in transit, and preparation of adequate accommodation capacities in the event of changes in practice of countries on their route and the possibility of their longer stay in the country. The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration has increased the existing capacities in five regular centres for asylum seekers by 25%, from 810 to 1010 places. Although the Plan envisaged space for 3,000 people, after the Summit of leaders of the Western Balkans route, in October 2015, it was agreed to provide facilities for 6,000 persons.
87. **Republic of Turkey**, which possesses a strong historical, cultural and neighborhood links with Syria, has assumed an "open door" policy for Syrians affected by the situation in their country. Republic of Turkey, due to international obligations, strongly abides by the "non-refoulement" principle for Syrians, who applied for asylum. Voluntary returns of Syrians to their country of origin are being managed in coordination with UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The main legal instrument regarding refugees in Republic of Turkey is the Law on Foreigners and International Protection, which had been adopted in 2014, covers the principles and procedures regarding entry of foreigners to Turkey, and scope of protection to be granted to foreigners seeking protection from Turkey.
88. "Temporary protection", which encompasses health care, education, access to labor market, social aid and translation services, is rendered to refugees in Republic of Turkey, with 1951 Geneva Agreement, and "Temporary Protection Regulation" which came into force on 22 October 2014. In order to speed up the access of Syrians under protection to the labor market, the Regulation on granting work permits to Syrians came into force on 15 January 2016. As of 15 April 2016, 277,260 refugees are accommodated in 26 temporary sheltering centers in 10 cities. The total number of refugees has exceeded 2.7 million (2,749,733 registered refugees). Education services are provided to 78,707 children at sheltering centers and schooling rate is 90%. At the centers, outside, the schooling rate is 35% and 200,000 children benefit from educational services. 400,000 children are not able to receive an education.
89. Syrians entering to Turkey are registered and are subject to a medical screening. In addition, the expenditures related to the medical treatment at state hospitals for Syrians under protection, living outside the sheltering centers, are also covered. Expenditures made by Turkey for Syrians have reached 10 billion US Dollars. An amount of 4,290,529,667.48 TRY was spent for the sole purpose of maintenance of the accommodation centers. The financial burden laid by the humanitarian crisis on Turkey increases each passing day. However, the assistance made by international society up until now remained below the expectations (455 million US Dollars).
90. In addition to this, health care, education and food assistance is provided to 2,460,614 Syrian foreigners outside the temporary accommodation centers. Health care services rendered to Syrian citizens inside and outside the temporary sheltering centers, are provided under the control and responsibility of the Ministry of Health. Those in need among the Syrians in Turkey are able to apply to governorships, Foundations of Social Assistance and Solidarity, municipalities or non-governmental organizations in order to benefit from social assistance with Temporary Protection ID to be issued following their completion of registration procedures in their relevant province.

91. A great majority of Syrians in Turkey hail from regions close to Syria-Turkey border. Also, these regions are where intense armed conflicts are present. Only 11% of Syrian asylum seekers coming to Turkey have been settled in temporary sheltering centers in the south and south-east parts of the country, close to Syria-Turkey border. The remaining 89% asylum seekers have been settled in various cities.
92. Within the scope of temporary protection, in addition to the education services for all school-age children, including pre-school education, and standard health care services, adult training courses are also available for Syrian citizens at these camps. Turkey does not only host Syrians but also prepares them for the post-crisis period. A written standard guideline has been established for the foundation and performance of the temporary sheltering centers and therefore the conditions in all sheltering centers have been harmonized. Besides, these centers have been built in accordance with the standards used for emergency shelters.
93. Regarding the social integration of Syrians in Turkey, studies on developing the "Strategy Paper and Action Plan" were conducted in order to support the development of policies consistent with their political, historical and socio-economic conditions and situations and to determine the main activities required in the next 5 years within the frame of strategic priority areas. Relevant public institutions and organizations, municipalities, NGOs, academicians, research institutions and organizations, mass media and refugee groups are performing works to raise knowledge and awareness and to establish a governance mechanism on adaptation.
94. "Agreement on Establishment and Functioning Common Contact Center for Police and Customs Cooperation" which projects the establishment of a joint communication center for the purpose of coordination in the field of fighting with illegal migration at the Turkey-Bulgaria-Greece border had been signed by the Ministers of Interior in May 2015, in Sofia. In addition to this, coordination with Italian authorities on illegal migration via seaways has been enhanced. Since 14 January 2016, the Turkish Coast Guard has apprehended 42 illegal migrants and loss of 36 lives has been registered in 2016. The Turkish Coast Guard has confirmed a total of 91,611 migrants who had entered the country throughout the year of 2015. This means a 512% increase compared to 2014 when 14,961 illegal migrants were apprehended. There also has been 300% increase on mortality between 2014 and 2015; while 69 registered deaths occurred in 2014, this number increased to 279 in 2015.
95. Since 2006, Republic of Turkey has been acting as the Chair of Budapest Process which was established in order to identify the problems in Europe and neighboring countries regarding the illegal migration and develop migration policies at the same time. The aim in this process is the enhancement of coordination between the countries which are the targets of migration.
96. An institutional cooperation had been established with European Union at the fight against the illegal migration within the framework of Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Agency of EU in charge of the control and security of external borders (Frontex) in May 2012. Implementation of this Agreement involves the Action Plan for 2014-2016 which had been drawn up in 2014, in Warsaw, and defines the activities related to the exchange of information with EU, risk analysis, joint activities and projects, education, research and border control.

97. Strengthening the existing cooperation with EU on fight with illegal migration by building on "load and responsibility sharing" principle constitutes the most important element of the Action Plan. The plan focuses on illegal migration and includes constituents such as focusing efforts in order to prevent illegal migration across Aegean Sea as much as possible, fighting against migrant smuggling, improvement of living conditions of Syrians living in Turkey under temporary protection and promotion of yasal migration.
98. On January 1, 2016 in *Ukraine* were registered 2487 refugees and 598 people who need additional protection, 669 of them were children. The main countries of origin of refugees in Ukraine are Afghanistan (1142), Armenia (195), Azerbaijan (129), Russian Federation (102), Syria (59), Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (55 each), Iran, Iraq (45 each). Persons identified as needing additional protection in Ukraine are from - Syria (352), Afghanistan (82), Somalia (50) and Iraq (22). In accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On refugees and persons in need of additional or temporary protection", persons recognized as refugees or persons who need additional protection are granted the same rights and freedoms and also bear the same duties as Ukrainian citizens, except in cases established by the Constitution and the laws of the State. Following the adoption of amendments to some social laws (on education, on health, on employment, on social services, on assistance to families with children, etc.), foreigners and stateless persons who are recognized in Ukraine as refugees or persons in need of additional protection enjoy equal treatment with Ukrainian citizens with regard to their rights.
99. As of February 2016 there are 1.7 million displaced persons from the Crimea and Donbass. The main challenges related to the forced displacement of citizens include an increased load on local labour markets as well as problems of accommodation, employment, medical services, psychological rehabilitation, access to education, cultural and social reintegration, etc.
100. The Government is taking all measures to solve the problems of the social protection of internally displaced persons. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted several legal acts that regulate the registration of internally displaced persons, providing them with financial assistance, the recovery of their social benefits, pensions, assistance in finding employment, etc. The Ministry of Social Policy is responsible for resolving issues related to the social protection of internally displaced persons.
101. The Law of Ukraine "On ensuring the rights and the freedoms of internally displaced persons" recognizes the right of internally displaced persons to receive social and administrative services in the place of their actual residence. As of January 2016 about 50 thousand citizens requested that kind of support. On 1 of October 2015, a Resolution was adopted "On providing monthly targeted financial support to IDP's to cover living costs, including housing and utilities". The 2016 Budgetary programme foresees 114 million USD (2.9 billion UAH) to be allocated for monthly targeted assistance. Ukraine's Pension Fund bodies provide a simplified procedure for transferring pension benefits to new addresses of the actual residence of these persons: the total amount of payments made to those who had applied for pension transfers from the Donetsk and Luhask regions was 1,156 billion USD (29.4 billion UAH) in 2015.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

102. The time has come for a progressive development of a global approach to the refugee problem, an approach which takes due cognizance of the basic human rights of refugees and interests of the asylum countries and the international community, and secures the cooperation of all parties in seeking a solution to the problem. Since the refugee problem is an important aspect of human rights protection, human rights groups, humanitarian organisations, the UNHCR, Governments and U.N. human rights agencies should take a hard look at their respective roles and make coordinated efforts for elimination of human rights abuses and protection of the rights of refugees.
103. The BSEC Member States are facing formidable challenges in responding effectively to the arrival of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants at its borders and on its territory. With both political will and renewed commitment to cooperation and solidarity, these are challenges that can be met. Refugee integration becomes a key issue at the national, regional and global level, while most countries now recognize the need for cooperation in order to manage migration effectively. In the last decade the refugee issues are a reality of all times and all places. Therefore, it is necessary to address this phenomenon, not as a series of isolated issues, but in a comprehensive framework that takes into account its socio-economic, cultural, demographic, humanitarian, and other aspects.
104. Regional cooperation and building the capacity of the States in the region to deal effectively with refugee issues remain a priority. As a platform for a political discussion on migration issues, PABSEC could effectively promote common understanding of migration-related benefits and risks, as well as the potential of inter-state cooperation in the Black Sea region. The BSEC States consider that the key point aiming at the improvement of the cooperation in refugee issues should be approximation, and in further view, harmonization, national legislations of BSEC countries with the international standards.