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Forward-looking discussions: Working Session 2: Intolerance against migrants

CONGRESS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES OF UKRAINE

The problem of children migrants in Ukraine

According to the OSCE hate-crimes monitoring in Ukraine the level of xenophobia and migrantophobia increases, the major victims are visible minorities, many of them asylum seekers or refugees. Children migrants are the most vulnerable group. There are several groups of unaccompanied children migrants in Ukraine experiencing very poor life conditions, lack of medical and social protection and the danger of xenophobic persecution. International and Ukrainian NGO's provide assistance to unaccompanied children, but it is hardly enough to cover even their basic needs. Another problem face children of asylum seekers from Uzbekistan, whose fathers are arrested to be extradited basing on political and religious articles. Children are left with mothers without financial means, meal and medicine. Ukrainian and international NGO's provide assistance, but it is hardly enough to cover children needs.

A recent project by Danish refugee council and Ukrainian NGO's had shifted the process providing legal and psychological assistance for several groups of children refugees. Experience of the inter-ethnic "Sources of tolerance" camp for Ukrainian and refugee kids showed good results on lowering prejudice and facilitating integration. Those efforts should be continued and supported by Ukrainian government. The state should adopt a systematic migration policy and social assistance with a special focus on children rights. Special state guidelines should be developed for teachers and social workers to foster for adaptation of children asylum seekers and integration of children refugees. The guidelines should be accompanied with educational tools to foster dialogue of children refugees and Ukrainian peers and joint training activities on combating intolerance.