



Situation Room – Horizon Series

**** BALKAN MIGRATION HORIZON: SLOVENIA ****

Period under review: from January 2021 to 31 May 2021.

[This report is based on publicly available sources to describe a changing situation. Information subject to change.]

Situation analysis recap:

- Slovenia is a gateway to northern and western European countries, with considerable transit movements across its territory, both of migrants as well as persons seeking international protection.
- In February, the last month for which data is available, there were 806 refugees and 460 asylum-seekers present in the country. The top three countries of origin for refugees are Syria with 319 people, Eritrea with 86 people and Iran with 75 people. As for asylum-seekers, the top three countries of origin are Morocco with 224 people, Algeria with 77 people and Afghanistan with 34 people.
- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children face relatively high risks as they are exposed to exploitation by smugglers and human traffickers. Italian police reported that in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region, on the border with Slovenia, some 75% of those that have gone missing are under the age of 18. The region is a transit area of the so-called Balkan route.
- 21 police officers from Estonia, Lithuania, and Poland began joint patrols with Slovenian border police at the Slovenia-Croatia border in May in a bid to intercept illegal migrants and asylum seekers attempting to reach Western Europe.
- The national COVID-19 vaccination plan includes refugees in the roll-out on par with citizens. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been advocating for a similar inclusion of asylum seekers as well.
- Refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless people are included in the national health response plan, and they can access all COVID-19 health services. Refugees are part of the socio-economic response plan and eligible for the same financial support as citizens of Slovenia.
- On May 27, Slovenian State Secretary Stanislav Raščan met with Roland Schilling, Regional Representative of the UNHCR for Central Europe. They discussed the priorities of Slovenia's EU Council Presidency, migration, the difficult humanitarian situation of refugees and migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic, and Slovenia's support for the UNHCR.

Sources/Further Reading:

Estonia, Lithuania and Poland help migrant patrols at Slovenia border. (7. May 2021). Euronews. Available at <https://www.euronews.com/2021/05/07/estonia-lithuania-and-poland-help-migrant-patrols-at-slovenia-border>

Northern Italy: 75% of missing under 18, mostly migrants. (26. May 2021). InfoMigrants. Available at <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/32511/northern-italy-75-of-missing-under-18-mostly-migrants>

Slovenia's EU Presidency: Looking for Progress on Migration, Asylum, Schengen & Security (Feature). (31 May 2021). Total Slovenia News. Available at <https://www.total-slovenia-news.com/politics/8366-slovenia-s-eu-presidency-looking-for-progress-on-migration-asylum-schengen-security-feature>

State Secretary Raščan meets with UNHCR representative. (27. May 2021). GOV.SI. Available at <https://www.gov.si/en/news/2021-05-27-state-secretary-rascan-meets-with-unhcr-representative/>

UNHCR: Slovenia Bi-annual Fact Sheet, February 2021. (28. February 2021). Reliefweb. Available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/slovenia/unhcr-slovenia-bi-annual-fact-sheet-february-2021>

Analysis by: **Matjaž J. Leben**

Would you like to know more? Are you interested in international security? Join us. Find more about Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia at www.euroatlantic.org or contact us at info@euroatlantic.org.