





TOWN LAB INTERNATIONAL MEETING

05-06 SEPTEMBER 2020

ZOOM Platform

WELFARE AND SOCIAL INCLUSION OF MIGRANTS – THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND LOCAL PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

DAY 1 Saturday 05 September	Location ZOOM	Agenda
11.00 – 12.00		<p>Workshop 1: Introductory presentations by guest speakers and local stakeholders, main topic elaborated by the guest speakers and participants: <i>Many migrants have passed through Serbia since 2015 and even more of them are yet to arrive. However, some of them don't even want to go to shelter since they don't want to miss an opportunity to reach the EU.</i></p> <p><i>Introductory notes by Stanka Parac Damjanovic, LDA Subotica</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  <i>Migrants in local communities in the border area of Serbia and EU: case study of municipalities in border area: Sombor, Subotica and Kanjiza</i>  <i>Local initiatives in Sombor, Srdjan Vlaskalic, NGO Sombor Education Centre</i>
<p>Stanka Parac Damjanovic – LDA Subotica presented the update regarding the situation with migrants in Serbia and the Balkan route, following the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown measures, restrictions and their repercussions to the status of migrants.</p>		



Recommendations by civil society highlighted the following:

There is a need for strengthening migration management system and capacities in the Republic of Serbia in line with the international standards and the EU acquis, with special focus on cooperation mechanisms and capacities at the local level in order to ensure protection of the rights of migrants. Therefore, the role of local authorities, local civil society organisations and local media are crucial for setting the grounds for improved migration management and for awareness raising among the local population so as to prevent prejudices and promote solidarity and intercultural exchange in local communities, with particular focus on smaller communities in border area of Serbia with the EU.

Srdjan Vlaskalic from Sombor Education Center-SEC, presented the Local initiatives undertaken in this city in the northwest of Serbia. Involvement of local institutions and organizations, non-formal activities for users of Refugee Center were pointed out as important for developing social inclusion and better reception of migrants in the local communities.

Activities of SEC consists among others of workshops for children and parents in Refugee center, learning aid for children, art contest, with overcoming differences between refugees and citizens of Sombor as the main focal point – sensitization of the local community.

12.00 –
12.30

Workshop 2:

Welfare and Social inclusion – status, challenges and perspectives of migrants moving across Serbia Balkan route

Milan Milivojevic, journalist, Municipality of Sid

Robert Sors, Municipality of Kanjiza

Project partners' interaction, Questions and Comments

Milan Milivojevic, editor in chief of the local online media portal Srem, presented the experiences from the local Municipality of Sid in the region of Srem, along the borderline between Serbia and Croatia, while Robert Sors, chairperson of local community council Horgos at the borderline between Serbia and Hungary, gave an overview from the current situation in this region. These particular areas have been exposed to large influx of migrants recently and many illegal attempts to cross the border. They highlighted the main challenges facing the local community with the influx of migrants since 2015, but also identified opportunities and necessary support for their reception while passing across the Balkan route. Recent developments following the Covid-19 lockdown measures and current trends facing the migrant population and involved local communities were discussed. A number of concerns were mentioned, including fears and distrust among the local population who expressed their concerns with regard to their property and houses being occupied by the groups of migrants. They were also complaining about security issues requiring from their local community



leaders to be more effective in coordinating the assistance and provision of adequate shelters and housing for migrants and their families. Examples of co/operation between local authorities and local civil society organisations were presented particularly in local communities such as Adasevci, Sid, Kanjiza and Horgos.

DAY 2 Sunday 06 September		Cultural and information session
11.00 – 11.30		Short documentaries from the borderline February/August 2020 https://pannonrtv.com/rovatok/vesti-na-srpskom/migranti-predstavljaju-veliki-problem-u-opstini-kanjiza https://mondo.rs/Info/Drustvo/a1358905/Migranti-Horgos-madjarska-granica-snimci.html https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YjVygOdJG0s
11.30 – 12.15		Documentary film on migrants in Serbia – “Busting the prejudices” Source: Maglocistac.rs https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPHLCpcjXt0&feature=emb_logo https://www.maglocistac.rs/drustvo/migrantska-kriza-na-balkanskoj-ruti-rusenje-predrasuda-video Closing observations and remarks