



Institute of European Democrats
in cooperation with Young Europeans (Mladí Európania)
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Schengen at Risk: Can We Keep the Freedom of Movement?

THE MIGRATION CHALLENGES

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International Conference, Bratislava, May 2016



- The Migration Challenges: Human Rights,
International Cooperation and Migration

Management -

Western Balkan route towards
Schengen borders

WESTERN BALKANS – BEFORE AND TODAY



WESTERN BALKANS – BEFORE

Yugoslav wars in the '90s due to the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia → formation of independent successor states → numerous refugees and displaced persons in the Western Balkan area →

~**4 million** people have been displaced or have become refugees in the former Yugoslavia in the period between 1991 – 1999;

~**800.000** people emigrated to other European countries & USA

WESTERN BALKANS – TODAY



WESTERN BALKANS – TODAY

In 2015 ~**800.000** migrants used Western Balkans route to enter the western European countries (out of 1.321.560 total asylum claims in EU in 2015 according to Eurostat)

In 2016 Western Balkan countries close their borders → result: in first 2 months ~130.000 migrants

HUMAN RIGHTS?

Universal Declaration of Human Rights – UN

The right to asylum is one of the basic human rights
– If we are frightened of being badly treated in our own country, we all have the right to run away to another country to be safe

HUMAN RIGHTS?

Returning migrants to Turkey – violating human rights?

Poland wants to receive only Christian refugees from Syria – violating human rights?

Conditions in migrant camps - UN accused Czech republic of holding migrants in 'degrading' conditions

HUMAN RIGHTS?



INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION?

No common and unified EU response!

Some results:

Hungary – conservative government – 172 km fence keeping migrants out – keeps the Western Balkan isolated

Czech deputy PM Andrej Babis called Schengen zone to be closed with NATO troops

Austria's Foreign Minister warned on introducing anti-migration measures with border controls

WESTERN BALKANS AND MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

- **Balkans Summit** – August 2015 in Vienna within Berlin process – solutions on dealing with financial burdens in relation to migrants issues
- **Balkan mini summit** – October 2015 – 17-point plan – set of operational measures – EU approved additional 17 million Euro to assist FYR Macedonia and Serbia

COOPERATION AMONG WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES – MIGRATION MANAGEMENT?

- Bilateral meetings on improving cooperation

COOPERATION OF WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES WITH THE EU

- Western Balkan countries rely on European Union and international assistance in their ways of dealing with the problems

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES

- new European nationalism?
- razor-wire fences and renewed border controls → migration management or end of Schengen area?
- homegrown terror; fear
- jeopardized international security

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Common Foreign and Security Policy – does it function in reality?
- Are EU member countries united in having a common voice?
- NATO or Common Security and Defence Policy?

MESSAGE TO HEAR

Federica Mogherini:

'It's sad to see Europe panicking before 700,000 refugees. This is a sign of a weakness.'

The Guardian, January 2016



Thank you