

Baltic States put migrants to use and then eject them

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It turned out that migrants are no longer welcome in the Baltic States.

In 2002, the Ministers of the Council of Europe member states undertook to develop and implement integration policies founded on the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Being the Council of Europe member states the Baltic countries welcomed thousands of migrants and enthusiastically supported them.

It was loudly declared that giving migrants a voice, recognising their true value and building their sense of belonging to receiving societies, in short empowering migrants, is the only appropriate policy choice in a democratic society.

Today migrants in the Baltic States face unfulfilled promises of equal treatment in polarised and fragmented societies. These democratic policies do not work anymore here. Unfortunately, failures have strengthened the voice of those who only see in migrants and their different traditions and customs a threat to public order, national identity and their own security.

Thus, up to 6,000 of Russian citizens in Latvia are expected to receive official notices next month asking them to leave the country. Representatives of the Latvian Interior Ministry confirmed that letters are being prepared.

This caused mixed reactions in the country that still hosts thousands of Russian citizens who have lived in the country since the 1990 independence from the Soviet Union, but have never obtained the Latvian citizenship. Latvia failed to

integrate them into the society and even did it impossible.

In Lithuania, according to LRT, some 1,164 Belarusian and Russian nationals have been deemed a threat to national security, meaning they were not able to renew or claim their residency permit or visa.

It is well known that Lithuania was seeking to attract high-skilled IT professionals. In particular, entire Belarusian tech companies moved to Vilnius, bringing in thousands of their workers. They were easily granted temporary residence permits, but, three years later, it is time to renew them. And the welcoming atmosphere in Lithuania has changed considerably.

The number of rejections is growing. Recommendations to refuse residence often come from the State Security Department, Lithuania's intelligence agency, which assesses each application individually.

Belorussians denied residence permits have to leave the country within a month. If their actions are deemed detrimental to national security, they get deported immediately.

The authorities of the Baltic States have completely forgotten their promises and do not pay attention to the democratic values. They just put migrants to use and then eject them. In case they could not get rid of them legally, they create unbearable conditions for living.

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