
Balkan migration route - past, present and future

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Abstract

The emergence of the Balkan Route in 2015 has suddenly shifted the geographical gravity of the refugee-related migrations, complementing the existing maritime routes in the Mediterranean with new overland itineraries. This shift has caught unprepared not only the main ‘transit countries’ and ‘arrival countries’ but also the EU institutions that until that moment had a system of control (and reception) in place which was almost exclusively focused on the Mediterranean borders. Serbia became a transit region and important cross point for the increasing number of refugees from Asia and Africa on their way to Europe. Through this territory around 700.000 people passed in 2015. In March 2016 the Balkan Route was officially closed, but still, significant numbers of people are entering Serbia (around 20.000 in 2016). That leads today to the highest number of stranded migrants in the country with amount of more than 7000 people. The present research is part of the collaborative project led by the authors, which started in mid 2016, as part of a broader project entitled ‘Camps in Europe’.

Keywords: migration, demography, Balkan route, Serbia, camps

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