

THE REFUGEE AND MIGRATION CRISIS THREATENS YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT GAINS IN WESTERN BALKANS - BORDER COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ON MIGRATION ROUTES KEY TO REGION'S RESILIENCE

Ms Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano

Monday 14th December 2015, 4.30 pm

University of Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science, Conference Hall A, Lepušićeva 6

Speaker

Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano, UN Resident Coordinator
UNDP Resident Representative for the Republic of Serbia



Ms. Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano a German national, has been appointed as UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative to the Republic of Serbia in October 2013. In this capacity she has strengthened the UN interagency coordination and the cooperation with the Government of Serbia and Civil Society partners. She has lead the UN country team's response to the floods in 2014 together with UNDP and to the refugee/migrant crisis in 2015 together with UNHCR.

Prior to this appointment she has worked in different capacities for 28 years for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Asia, Europe and globally developing expertise in Migration and Development, Labor Migration, Refugee Resettlement, Border Management, Smuggling, Integration, Trafficking and emergency response. Her last appointment was as Director of the Department for Migration Management (2010-2013) in IOM Headquarters in Geneva. Over the years she has served on boards of research institutions and developed strong collaboration with think tanks.

Irena holds a B.A. in History and Political Science from the University of Heidelberg, Germany; a M.A. in History, Geography, and International Law from the University of Vienna, Austria and a Diploma of the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna, Austria.

About the lecture

A close-up view of the crisis points to its humanitarian character focusing available resources and support to direct aid for refugees and migrants. This includes the provision of food, water, clothing, temporary shelter, medicines and medical services to sustain them on a journey that's particularly challenging for children, the elderly and other vulnerable groups within the broader refugee population. Much of this aid's effective deployment rests upon continuity of local government services, which now have to deliver services not only for its' own residents, but also for increasing numbers of refugees and migrants.

These pressures are mounting against the background of tough austerity measures designed to bring the unsustainable public deficit under control. This includes the mandatory reduction of a buoyant public sector, also of local governments and their communal utility companies. What makes matters worse is that employment alternatives in economically underdeveloped border areas of the Western Balkans are few and have already led to outward migration and even depopulation. Finally, almost by definition, such border communities are of mixed ethnic backgrounds, often home to sizeable minorities, which have so far demonstrated impressive unity in supporting the refugee and migrant populations.

A live stream of the lecture will be available here:
<http://kapuscinskilectures.eu>

PROGRAMME:

- 4.30 - 4.45 pm **Welcome addresses:**
Prof. Damir Boras, Ph.D.,
Rector of the University of Zagreb
Prof. Lidija Kos-Stanišić,
Dean of the Faculty of Political Science
Representative of the European Commission
Mr Mehmet Erdogan,
representative of UNDP
- 4.45 - 5.30 pm: **Kapuscinski Development Lecture,**
Ms Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano (UNDP Resident Representative for the Republic of Serbia)

5.30 - 6.00 pm: **Q&A session**

Moderator: Hrvoje Špehar, Ph.D.,
Faculty of Political Science

The project is a joint initiative of the European Commission, the United Nations Development Programme and the University of Zagreb.

