

International Organization for Migration

Country Office Austria

Editorial

Resettlement is a convincing humanitarian instrument to find durable solutions for those refugees who are either unable to return to their country of origin for fear of continued persecution and/or who do not have the option to stay and integrate properly in their first country of asylum. The latter might for example be the case for refugees living in a camp situation for a prolonged period of time.

Traditionally, the most important countries offering resettlement on a voluntary basis are the Australia, Canada and the US. But looking ahead at the evolving resettlement landscape, even though more countries take part in resettlement activities, the places available world-wide are not sufficient. UNHCR argues that the demand (181.000 places in 2013) by far outweighs the available places per year (80.000). Therefore participation in resettlement activities as a symbol of international solidarity and burden sharing is incrementally supported in the EU.

So far, the main countries offering resettlement in Europe are Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the UK and Germany. In 2011, 4.125 refugees were resettled in the EU, which equals 6.7% of resettlement places offered worldwide – a relatively small share. These numbers might increase in upcoming years keeping in mind the evident need and the incentives offered by the EU, for example in the framework of the Joint EU Resettlement Programme 2012. The campaign 'Resettlement saves lives' from the European Resettlement Network sets the ambitious target of making 20.000 places available in the EU each year by 2020.

IOM has been involved in providing essential services in support of refugee resettlement operations for over sixty years and stands ready to work closely with governments, UNHCR, NGOs and other partners to implement resettlement activities in the EU. Since the 1950s IOM has organized resettlement movements of approximately 900.000 refugees from 185 locations around the world. The involved services include case processing, health assessments, pre-departure orientation, language and literacy training, pre-embarkation briefings and travel operations.

In Austria, IOM Vienna is part of a working group on resettlement that includes UNHCR, the Red Cross, Caritas and Diakonie. The working group discusses perspectives and opportunities for a possible resettlement programme in Austria and is finalizing a concept outlining measures to practically implement such a programme, if selected by the Austrian authorities. As a first step to raise awareness on the subject of resettlement in Austria, a folder on resettlement will be available soon.



Katerina Kratzmann

iYouth Symposium

The national symposium organized within the iYouth project was held on 3 December 2012 in Vienna. The event was hosted by IOM Vienna in partnership with the Austrian National Youth Council (Bundesjugendvertretung) and Interface Wien and aimed to outline the needs of young migrants in Austria and to exchange best practices in working with migrant youth. In total 38 representatives of federal ministries and organizations dealing with migrant youth participated at the symposium. After the welcoming words of representatives from the City of Vienna and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior, the participants shared their experiences with one another and discussed the development of further migrant youth related projects and initiatives in the course of four workshops. The presence of the NGO META from the Czech Republic ensured a diverse exchange of ideas and experiences and enhanced the possibility of cooperation with youth organizations abroad.



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Caritas Graz

Caritas Graz was part of the EU project "Volunteering & Migration" in 2012 together with partner organizations from the UK and Slovenia.

As part of the project, an online survey on volunteering and migration was conducted. Caritas Graz has gained valuable expertise on the relevance of migrant volunteering, its advantages and its positive outcomes.

Please visit their website for more information on their activities:

<http://www.caritas-steiermark.at/>



Kick-off of the new project GIVE - Grassroots integration through volunteering experiences

Time and time again, it has been proven that volunteering can foster social integration within and between communities and that it has enormous potential to increase tolerance towards diversity. The project GIVE "Grassroots Integration through Volunteering Experiences" is rooted in these ideas of social integration and solidarity.

Developed by IOM Dublin and implemented in four EU MS (Ireland, the Netherlands, the UK and Austria) the project GIVE aims to achieve better integration of third country national migrants within local communities. By promoting and supporting migrant participation in grassroots volunteering activities, the project contributes to an enhanced public perception of migration and diversity by fostering a better understanding of the contributions of migrants to the receiving society.

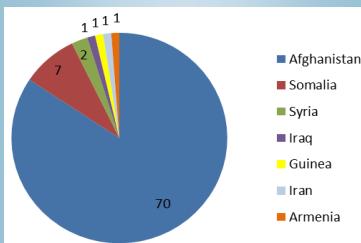
Our local partner, Caritas Graz, has extensive experience in involving migrant volunteers in their projects. Their activities enhance diversity management in neighbourhoods by supporting the creation of inclusive neighbourhoods and bottom up initiatives for local participation through the volunteer work undertaken by migrants. Volunteering is especially important for people to experience a sense of belonging and responsibility and to become productive actors in their respective society.

The first International Steering Group Meeting will take place on 4-5 February 2013 in Dublin and it will include participating IOM offices, local volunteer organizations and relevant integration related NGOs from the participating countries. The aim of the meeting is to get to know each other, discuss volunteering approaches in each participating EU MS and plan the next project activities.



CulTrain II - Cultural Orientation Trainings for (former) Unaccompanied Minors

Training participants - countries of origin:



Trainings are being offered in all of Austria.



The pilot project "CulTrain – Cultural Orientation Trainings for (former) Unaccompanied Minors (UAM)" started in January 2012. Within the project year 2012, 11 cultural orientation trainings with 83 training participants in total were conducted in four Austrian provinces, namely Vienna, Lower Austria, Upper Austria and Salzburg. The project beneficiaries were unaccompanied minors or young adults who came to Austria as unaccompanied minors, had refugee or subsidiary protection status, were between 16 and 21 years of age and had German speaking competences of at least A2 level. The majority of the training participants came from Afghanistan (70), followed by 7 participants from Somalia, 2 from Syria and 1 each from Iraq, Guinea, Iran and Armenia.

Since the project was highly successful in terms of implementation and also very well perceived by the target group, it was selected to be further implemented in 2013 with new project elements. These innovations include an increased number of trainings and participants through the extended offer of trainings in all of Austria. Moreover, one Intercultural Evening will be conducted in the framework of each training in order to meet the often expressed wish of the young refugees to have more contact with Austrian youth.

The overall objective of CulTrain II is to facilitate the smooth long-term integration of the target group into Austrian society by providing them with comprehensive information about Austria and its people.

Trainings will be conducted from April until November. For further information, please contact Katharina Benedetter (kbenedetter@iom.int) or Marianne Dobner (mdobner@iom.int).

The project is co-financed by the European Refugee Fund and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior.



International Workshop for Return Counsellors

For the third consecutive year, IOM Vienna and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior jointly organized an “International Workshop for Return Counsellors” from 22 to 23 November 2012 at the ministry’s premises in Vienna.

This yearly event aims to enhance the direct information exchange between Austrian return counsellors and IOM colleagues who assist voluntary returnees in their countries of origin in the framework of the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) projects coordinated by IOM Vienna. During the workshop, participants have the opportunity to learn more about the socio-economic conditions in the countries of return and to discuss country and project related questions directly with IOM staff working on the ground.

IOM colleagues from Afghanistan, Georgia, Nigeria, the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation as well as representatives of the NGO Vesta from the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation met with Austrian return counsellors from Caritas, ORS Service GmbH, Verein Menschenrechte Österreich and Verein Menschen.Leben. Other participants included representatives from the Swiss Federal Office of Migration, IOM Switzerland, the Austrian Federal Asylum Office, the Nigerian Embassy in Vienna, the National Association of Nigerian Community Austria as well as from other institutions.

As in previous years, the respective project coordinators from IOM Vienna and their colleagues from the countries of return presented the projects, which are co-financed by the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior and the European Return Fund, and highlighted successes as well as challenges related to the implementation of the reintegration measures.

This year’s workshop added the innovative element of country-specific working groups, during which participants had the opportunity to brainstorm, reflect on and discuss the different steps of the reintegration process in Afghanistan, Georgia, Nigeria, the Republic of Moldova and the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation. In two sessions, concrete case studies were discussed, which allowed the return counsellors to better understand the country-specific challenges that may arise during the implementation of reintegration plans.

The smaller format of the working groups offered an opportunity to enhance the flow of information between return counsellors and IOM colleagues and allowed for critical discussions. The participants from all countries deemed the workshop a great success, highlighting the advantages of direct contact with each other.



This workshop was co-funded by the European Return Fund and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior.



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Regional Initiative — Round table on labour exploitation

A regional high-level round table on labour exploitation was held on 23 November 2012 under the auspices of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Women and Public Administration, in cooperation with the Austrian Institute for International Affairs (oiip) as the lead organization and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Vienna. This event was the final round table to be organized as part of the Regional Initiative, a two-year project that aimed to advance a coherent policy response to trafficking in human beings for the purpose of all forms of exploitation. The event was attended by approximately 50 international participants. A number of presentations were held focusing mainly on a victim-centred approach, outlining among others a set of legal procedures and methodologies to secure the rights of domestic servants and stressing the importance of access to compensation.





National EMN Conference "Immigration of International Students from Third Countries to the EU and Austria"

On 18 December 2012, the IOM Country Office Vienna as the National Contact Point (NCP) Austria in the European Migration Network (EMN) organized a conference on the topic of "Immigration of International Students from Third Countries to the EU and Austria" which took place at the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna. Despite the busy Christmas season, around 70 participants from Austria and abroad, including students, researchers, representatives of embassies, ministries, national institutions and NGOs, attended the conference.

The immigration of international students from third countries is an issue of major relevance for the EU. Their number has significantly increased worldwide over the past 30 years, with Europe being one of the preferred destinations. This is also true for Austria, where in light of an increasing competition for qualified and highly qualified workers among the most advanced economies, the value of internationalisation has been recognized.

The conference was held in the framework of the main study of the EMN in 2012 that aims at providing an overview of the immigration policies in the EU regarding international students. As a starting point, the conference outlined preliminary findings of the EMN synthesis report "Immigration of International Students to the EU". Following, representatives from six EMN NCPs (Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom) presented their national research findings, addressing in particular national provisions and policies regarding the access to the labour market for third-country students and graduates. The conference was concluded by a panel discussion of five distinguished Austrian experts, representing ministries, national institutions and students who reflected on Austria as a destination for international students.

The PowerPoint presentations as well as a summary of the conference are accessible at www.emn.at.



Panel discussion: (from left to right) Angelika Gruber (Austrian Students' Union), Johannes Peyrl (Vienna Chamber of Labour), Margit Kreuzhuber (Austrian Economic Chambers), Stefan Beig (Wiener Zeitung), Dietmar Hudsky (Federal Ministry of the Interior) and Elmar Pichl (Federal Ministry of Science and Research).



EMN Work Programme 2013

In 2013, the EMN is within its fifth operational year on the basis of the Council Decision 2008/381/EC. The main objective for 2013 is to continue to better inform EU and national policymakers. In accordance with policy priorities in the Member States and the EU, the following four studies will be undertaken in 2013.

(I) The study on "Attracting highly qualified and qualified third-country nationals: Good practices and lessons learned" will seek to explore strategies and practical measures that national authorities of EU Member States and Norway employ in order to attract highly qualified and qualified third-country nationals. By drawing on national experiences and lessons learnt, good practices regarding successful practical measures to attract labour migrants shall be identified.

(II) The purpose of the study titled "Organisation of reception facilities for asylum seekers in the different Member States" is to inform in particular policymakers in the Member States and Norway and the European Commission on the reception system, in particular on good practices and existing mechanisms to strike a balance between the quality, the efficiency and the flexibility of reception systems.

(III) The aim of the third study "Identification and treatment of trafficking victims in asylum, migration and return procedures" is to act as a scoping exercise to better understand how trafficking victims are identified in asylum, migration and return procedures, as well as to explore to what extent procedures are linked and coordinated within and/or between Member States.

(IV) The study on "EU Member State policies and practice related to social security, health and housing services for migrants" aims at understanding how national policy on social welfare interacts with migration policy. More precisely, the study will analyze national policies, institutions and



The European Migration Network (EMN) is co-ordinated by the European Commission with National Contact Points (EMN NCPs) established in each EU Member State plus Norway. The National Contact Point Austria in the EMN is financially supported by the European Commission and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior.

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