



International Organization for Migration

Mission in Vienna



IOM Vienna Activities

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Focus: IOM's Global Restructuring

Editorial from the Director

Uneven global demographic developments and diverging economic opportunities have combined with accelerated communication and unprecedented mobility to intensify migration dynamics over the last half century and to push migration to the top of political agendas. The consolidation of the concept of territorial and national sovereignty since the 30 Years' War, the break-up of empires with WW I, decolonization and the demise of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia have continued to add to the number of independent states. Over the last 100 years alone, their number has almost quadrupled to nearly two hundred. The proliferation of international borders has in time favoured the rediscovery of common regional interests. Migration governance and cooperation is foremost a matter of sovereign states while international organizations play a supportive and facilitating role. Against this background, IOM was faced with the challenge of adapting to evolving realities. The Organization thus chose to restructure its institutional texture accordingly, by further decentralizing and concentrating programme development and support functions into eight regional offices worldwide, serving some 130 country missions. This change leaves Headquarters free to deal with IOM's thematic and global strategy, international partnership and cooperation, and migration issues in the context of emerging mega trends, such as widening demographic gaps, urbanization, water-food-energy security and climate change.



IOM Restructuring in Vienna

Between 1998 and 2011, IOM's field presence has grown from 119 field offices to over 400. At the same time, membership has increased from 67 States in 1998 to 132 States in 2011. In order to respond to this rapid expansion and strengthen IOM's institutional efficiency so as to better address migration issues and assist governments and migrants across the globe, the Organization is currently undergoing worldwide restructuring.

Restructuring within IOM's Headquarters in Geneva was finalized in autumn 2010, at which point the focus turned to the field. Through the field restructuring, 18 Missions with Regional Functions and 7 Special Liaison Missions have been re-organized into 8 Regional Offices and 2 Special Liaison Offices. The remaining missions have been converted into Country Offices.

In this context, the IOM Special Liaison Mission in Vienna has expanded into two separate offices: a Country Mission for Austria and a Regional Office responsible for non-EU countries in Europe and for Central Asia that is henceforth designated as Regional Office for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The activities of the Regional Office in Vienna will be marked by EU accession, association and neighbourhood dynamics as well as the migration dynamics between countries that were once part of the former Soviet Union.

Issues specific to Austrian interests will be covered by the Country Mission for Austria, while the Regional Office will support IOM Missions in 20 countries and coordinate regional and sub-regional strategies and programmes with those Missions. The Regional Office will additionally be responsible for liaison with international and regional organizations located in Vienna and in the region.

The practical work of the Regional Office will begin by September 2011, when additional colleagues, including Regional Representative Renate Held, will arrive to take up their new positions. Before assuming her duties in Vienna, Ms. Held served as Regional Representative at the former MRF office in Lima, Peru. She has also held the position of Inspector General at IOM Headquarters.

Ms. Held will be joined by five international colleagues, who will cover issues and programme development in areas such as labour migration, trafficking in persons, migration and development, irregular migration, technical cooperation or financial and administrative support and oversight. In addition, a number of national colleagues will also apply their areas of expertise in the new Regional Office.

The Austrian Country Mission will continue its work in the areas of counter-trafficking, assisted voluntary return and reintegration, resettlement to the USA, as well as its function as the Austrian National Contact Point of the European Migration Network.

This institutional consolidation will enhance IOM's already decentralized, field-oriented approach. Through a strengthened and regionally targeted support structure, IOM will be even better able to respond to the needs of Member States and migrants and to resourcefully and effectively address the issues of a rapidly evolving world of mobility.

Study visit to Nigeria: strengthening international cooperation to fight human trafficking

Seventeen participants from six European countries assembled in Nigeria from 12 to 17 June 2011, eager to learn more about the mechanisms counteracting human trafficking, to exchange information and to strengthen cooperation with their Nigerian counterparts. The visit took place in the framework of the joint IOM/UNODC/EXIT project *Enhancing multi-stakeholder cooperation to fight human trafficking in countries of origin and destination*. Law enforcement, judiciary and civil society representatives from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom gathered to exchange experiences with their Nigerian counterparts and to gain a greater understanding of the phenomenon of human trafficking in Nigeria. A full programme lay ahead of them!



In the Nigerian capital of Abuja, the participants accompanied by representatives of IOM and UNODC met with the Director of the Nigerian National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP) and with the heads of relevant NAPTIP departments to be able to learn more about the activities of the Agency in fighting human trafficking while protecting and assisting victims. Participants also engaged in discussions with representatives of the Nigerian Immigration Service and the Nigerian Police on the nexus between migration and trafficking in persons in the Nigerian

context. Along the way, they stopped off at the launch of the Na wa Film Festival (www.nawafestival.org), a ten-day interactive event organized by the NGO EXIT to raise awareness and to inform vulnerable groups about human trafficking. A meeting with the Chief Judge of the High Court of Justice of Benin City allowed for an examination of the legal framework proscribing human trafficking in Nigeria as well as the concrete measures which are being undertaken to identify, investigate and prosecute suspected trafficking cases. Visits to two shelters for trafficking survivors proved a sobering yet enriching experience to better understand the root causes of trafficking. A number of informal networking receptions, one hosted by the Austrian Ambassador in Nigeria, enabled participants to continue discussions and to establish closer contacts in order to develop trust among practitioners.

After two intense days in Abuja, the delegation left to Benin City, capital of Edo state, an area which has been identified as endemic for human trafficking. Meetings with NAPTIP, political leaders and NGOs enabled participants to get an overview of trafficking trends in the region. Meanwhile, visits to victim shelters, to a church and to a Juju shrine the next day helped participants to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the socio-cultural context within which human trafficking from Nigeria is situated. The influence of Juju on human trafficking proved especially interesting to the European participants, many of whom had not previously been familiar with the way in which this folk religion is frequently misused as a tool to coerce victims of trafficking into submission. Socio-cultural themes were further elaborated during an evening event hosted by the Swiss embassy, which addressed the role of tradition and religion in regards to human trafficking.

Returning to Abuja on the final day, participants joined for a debriefing to evaluate the Study Visit. Despite some logistical challenges, impressions were generally positive, with increased knowledge of the society, culture and people of Nigeria rated as especially valuable in understanding the human trafficking context. Participants also appreciated the opportunity for closer communication channels and cooperation among partners, and looked forward to further in depth collaboration on this issue. They will have the chance to do so in Belgium, where the next Study Visit of the project will take place in October. In the meantime, the Project Management Team is busy evaluating the Nigeria experience based on feedback received and is already working on project planning in order to ensure that the upcoming Belgium visit is just as successful!



UNODC
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



IOM International Organization for Migration



News from the Austrian EMN National Contact Point

Medstat Study Visit

The National Contact Point Austria in the EMN presented the EMN research and networking activities during the study visit of MEDSTAT, a regional statistical cooperation programme by the European Commission between the EU Member States and ten Mediterranean countries. The programme seeks to promote evidence-based policy-making and foster democratic development by using statistical data. Furthermore, it promotes the further harmonization of statistical data in line with European and international standards, as well as consolidating the data exchange process between Eurostat and the national statistical systems. The study visit to Vienna included presentations of the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior, ICMPD and Statistics Austria.



IMISCOE Workshop

The EMN is currently implementing a study on "Practical Measures for Reducing Irregular Migration" in 2011. The forthcoming study as well as the phenomenon of irregular migration in Austria (relevant terms, estimates, legal framework), and control mechanisms currently used to prevent and lessen irregular migration were presented in an IMISCOE workshop on the "Europeanization of Exclusion Policies and Practices". The workshop included presentations from the academic field and touched on a variety of questions, which also play a major role in the EMN study, such as: Who is responsible for controlling (irregular) migration? What is the legal framework creating categories of irregular migrants? How many migrants are being removed, expelled or are estimated to live in an irregular situation? What current migration control mechanisms respond to irregular migration movements? The forthcoming study will include the outcomes of the workshop.



New EMN Publication

The EMN study "Satisfying Labour Demand through Migration in Austria", edited by the labour migration expert Prof. Dr. Gudrun Biffel of the Danube University Krems, has been published. The overall purpose of this study was to identify labour market sectors experiencing shortages in EU Member States, to outline the national strategies for addressing labour market needs with third-country national migrant workers and to gain an understanding of the perceived effectiveness of these strategies, including examining the impact of the recent economic downturn and recovery. The study covers the period from 2004 up to end of 2010 though statistics are provided up to the end of 2009. The National Report as well as the EU Synthesis Report covering 23 Member States can be downloaded from www.emn.at/studies.

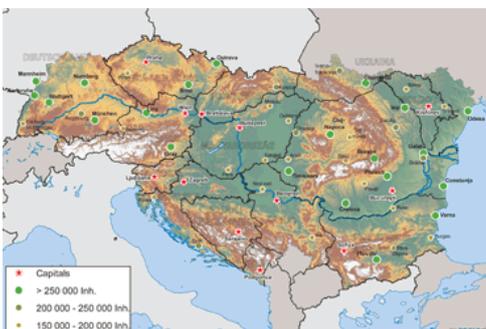
More information on the EMN is available at www.emn.at.



The EU Strategy for the Danube Region and IOM

Through the efforts of IOM Vienna, the topic of migration has officially been included in the EU Strategy for the Danube Region. The European Council formally asked the European Commission to prepare an EU Strategy for the Danube Region stating in its conclusions of 19 June 2009 that: "Sustainable development should also be pursued through an integrated approach to the specific challenges facing particular regions ... It... invites the Commission to present an EU strategy for the Danube region before the end of 2010." At present, the countries mainly concerned will be those covered by the Danube Cooperation Process: Germany (Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria), Austria, the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Romania, Bulgaria, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine (the regions along the Danube). Eight are EU Member States and six are not. The EU Danube Strategy was approved by the European Commission on 8 December 2010. In June 2011, the Strategy was endorsed by the Council of the EU, under the Hungarian EU Presidency.

Additionally, on 17 June 2011, the Emilia Romagna Region of Italy, in partnership with different EU Member States and IOM, submitted an expression of interest for the 3rd Call for Proposals with the South-East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme. The proposed project "Making Migration Work for Development: Policy tools for strategic planning in SEE regions and cities," will address the capacity of regional and local governments to understand, anticipate, and strategically manage the implications of demographic change and population movements for the growth and cohesion of European regions and cities, and for the overall integration of the SEE area. Its ultimate goal is to improve the strategic quality of policy-making in supporting the competitiveness of SEE regions. It will offer practical tools to policy-makers, and test policy-making processes - at both the regional and transnational levels - in policy areas that are clearly impacted by changes in the population structure: labour market (to promote employment), human capital (to raise productivity and economic performance), and the local offer of social services (to ensure their sustainability). The role of IOM in this project would be to develop some of the policy tools needed for strategic planning, including Extended Migration Profiles, and to help improve the strategic quality and effectiveness of policy planning. The project would fall under priority area number 10 of the "Action Plan" that accompanies the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, which is coordinated by the City of Vienna and Slovenia (the City of Vienna and Slovenia are both partners to the submitted SEE project).



New AVRR project from Austria to Georgia

The IOM Vienna Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) Unit is pleased to announce that all three projects it submitted to the European Return Fund have been selected for funding. The two AVRR projects that are already being implemented to Chechnya and Nigeria have been extended for another project year and a third new project focusing on return and reintegration to Georgia will be introduced. The AVRR Kosovo project has been extended until December 2011, when it will end after three and a half years of implementation.

The new AVRR Georgia project has been designed as a pilot initiative. It will provide return transportation, reception and reintegration assistance to up to 50 asylum seekers, recognized refugees, persons with subsidiary protection as well as persons without a valid residence permit from Georgia who currently reside in Austria and wish to voluntarily return to their home country. Like IOM's other AVRR projects, reintegration assistance will be tailored to meet the needs of individual returnees in order to facilitate their reintegration into the Georgian labour market.

In Austria, before departing for their home country, potential Georgian returnees will be counselled by Austrian return counseling agencies. In order to be supported with their reintegration, voluntary returnees will have to meet the selection criteria laid out by the Austrian aliens police. If decision is made to return voluntarily, arrangements will be made to begin the return and reintegration process.

Upon arrival in Georgia, project beneficiaries will be provided with reception assistance at the airport in Tbilisi and IOM will organize their onward journey to their final destination if needed. Furthermore, an appointment with the project beneficiary will be arranged at the nearest IOM office (Tbilisi, Kutaisi or Batumi) to provide further in-depth counselling on the exact implementation procedures of the reintegration assistance. Depending on the needs and skills of the project beneficiaries, the reintegration assistance can consist of assistance in setting up a small business (including the offer of participating in business set up and management courses), attending training classes, purchasing tools required for exercising a particular profession or job placement.

The total value of the in-kind reintegration measures in materials can account for a maximum support value of up to EUR 2,500 per beneficiary.

The selection of the individual reintegration measure will be based on the professional qualifications, experience and interests of the returnees. Additionally, the nationwide presence of IOM in Georgia will enable the reintegration measures to be precisely tailored to the prevailing local socio-economic conditions at the final destination.

IOM Georgia itself will offer vocational counselling and placement support for returned project beneficiaries as well as their returning family members. The AVRR project for returnees from Austria will be able to take advantage of pre-existing IOM structures in the country: In the framework of previous projects implemented by IOM, a structure of "Job Counseling and Placement Centers" as well as a close cooperation with various relevant Georgian ministries has already been established. The centers employ counsellors who have great expertise concerning the specific socio-economic situations of different regions in Georgia, economic niches and job opportunities.

Another innovative approach of the project is the extended special support that will be provided to vulnerable returnees, particularly those with health problems. For these project beneficiaries, additional support measures matching their often challenging medical needs will be offered.

Through the assistance provided within the framework of this pilot initiative, IOM Vienna hopes to give new perspectives to Georgian returnees from Austria so that they can successfully re-establish their lives in their home country.



Changes in the IOM Vienna AVRR Team

With the new project phase come new faces and responsibilities in the IOM AVRR team. First and foremost, Ms. Andrea Götzelmann will act as interim head of unit for one year, while Ms. Ilirjana Gashi takes a leave of absence.

In addition, three new colleagues will be joining the team: Ms. Daniela Blecha will coordinate the Georgia project, Ms. Barbara Albrecht will coordinate the Nigeria project, and Ms. Katie Rogers will assist with the Chechnya project.

The team also says good-bye to Ms. Katarina Lughofer, who is transferring to the newly established IOM Regional Office in Vienna.

Ms. Evelyn Rainer will continue her activities as coordinator for the Chechnya project and Ms. Anna Thiersch will continue to implement the Kosovo project.

The AVRR team is looking forward to another successful project year!



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