

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The UN Migration Agency in Austria



Taking migrants' perspectives into account

Smugglers promised Shakeel a better life in Greece. Instead he was captured while crossing into Turkey and held for ransom. He jumped three stories to escape. After arriving in Greece, he realized that he had been deceived about the opportunities there.

Six-year-old Murad fled the war in Syria with his family. His father and older brother engaged a smuggler to take them to Europe, hoping to bring the family through regular channels. That was two years ago. Murad, his mother and other brother are waiting in Greece and hope they will be reunited soon.



Zabihullah paid for his family to be smuggled to Germany to protect his children from kidnappers in Afghanistan. His relatives in Germany told him that his children would be safe there and could attend university. But when they arrived, it was difficult to receive asylum and his children could not enter university.

IOM Austria presented these true migrant stories at a table top exercise for practitioners on disrupting organized irregular migration on 4 June 2019 to demonstrate that to reduce irregular migration, it is vital to take migrants' perspectives into account. The event was part of the 2019 EMPACT programme funded by Frontex.

Reasons for migration are complex: persecution, conflict, poverty, food insecurity, natural disasters and the hope for a better life are only a handful of reasons causing people to move. However, many of these realities do not conform with available regular channels for movement, including international protection frameworks and national laws regulating migration. This creates a market for the facilitation of irregular migration.

Irregular migration is known to increase migrants' vulnerability, but often migrants are placed into simple categories that aim to define whether they need assistance. This can lead responders to overlook needs or stereotype certain groups. IOM has published the handbook [Protection and Assistance to Migrants Vulnerable to Violence, Exploitation and Abuse](#) providing guidance on identifying and addressing migrant vulnerabilities.

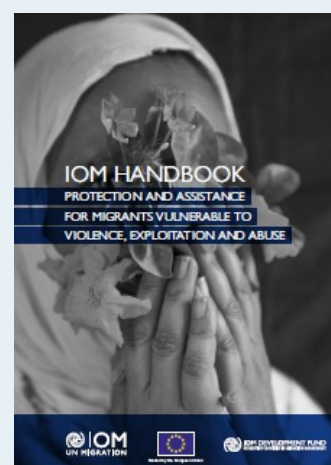
As demonstrated by these migrants' stories, more channels for orderly, regular and safe migration are necessary. Migration governance cannot be successful without placing migrants and their realities at the centre of all efforts.

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Save the date!

The [Task Force on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings](#) is hosting an event on the EU Anti-Trafficking Day on **16 October 2019** in the Diplomatic Academy. The topic of this year's event is "Technology and Human Trafficking". IOM will host a station on trafficking as grounds for asylum and the role of social media.



Project WIR: Workshops for integration and prevention of radicalization (WIR II)

The project WIR II aims to support young Chechens in their integration process. Videos produced by young Chechens within the first phase of the WIR project were published on the [IOM YouTube Channel](#) and the local TV Channel *Dorf TV* in Linz. The [two short videos](#) as well as the [talk show](#) were a huge success resulting in high viewing rates.

A Train-the-Trainers for intercultural mediators and trainers as well as two stakeholder meetings have already been held in April and May in Vienna and Linz.

The IOM project team is currently organizing outreach and liaison activities to encourage Chechen youngsters to take part in the [second phase of the WIR project](#). For that purpose, a flyer and poster have been designed and disseminated. A get-together meeting in Vienna with interested participants including their parents is planned for 24 August 2019 in WUK. For registration, please contact the project team at integrationvienna@iom.int. The WIR II workshop series will start in September 2019.

 Federal Ministry
Republic of Austria
Europe, Integration
and Foreign Affairs

This project is funded by the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs



Project FAB: Fostering Across Borders



[FAB](#) is a project aimed at raising awareness regarding alternative care for unaccompanied minors. Within the FAB project, videos have been produced in cooperation with young unaccompanied (former) minor children living in family-based care in Austria. One of these [videos](#) was screened during the documentary film festival [Ethnocineca](#) in May as well as during the evening screenings in Vienna's Top Kino. All videos will soon be available on the [project webpage](#). IOM is planning a final information session in September where the videos will be screened and the youngsters will be celebrated and thanked for their participation.

Also, IOM has organized two thematic workshops for foster carers and "buddies" for unaccompanied migrant children: one on resilience and trauma; one on nonviolent communication. The project FAB is also supporting foster carers with group supervision sessions. In addition, two expert meetings have been held in June in Vienna and Innsbruck where professionals in the area of family-based care and care for unaccompanied migrant children had an opportunity to exchange experiences and reflect on their practices from previous years. The final stakeholder meeting will be held in September in Brussels.

This project is funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020)



Project Admin4All Phase II: Supporting Social Inclusion of Vulnerable Migrants in Europe

A highly flexible training curriculum was developed according to the municipalities' individual needs to best support capacity-building in the area of integration [in phase II of the project](#). In April and May, IOM held trainings and workshops in all participating municipalities.

In Kufstein, Schwaz and Telfs, the team focused on topics such as understanding migration, culture and intercultural competences, discrimination and supporting culturally sensitive and effective integration paths. Altogether 67 participants took part in the trainings, which were generally evaluated as very positive and a demand for additional A4A project activities including further networking, liaison and coordination of municipalities and stakeholders was expressed.

The workshop in Bruck focused on providing information on daily practices in Islam. The workshop was held by Mr. Rami Ali, an expert on this topic, who was able to answer multiple questions and to debunk many myths about Islam. The workshop was a great success.



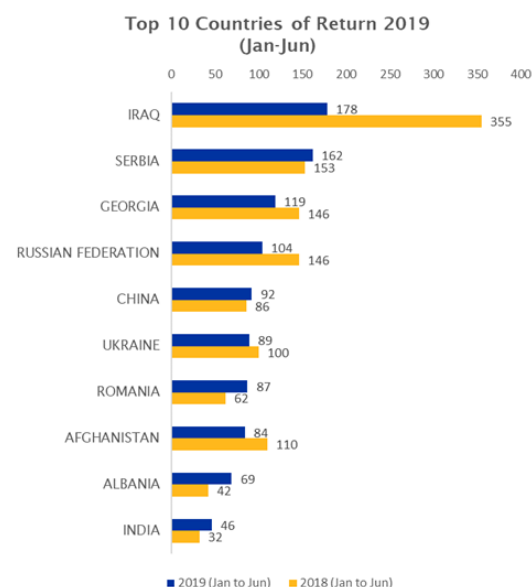
This project is funded by the European Commission's DG for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion.



Voluntary Return from Austria: IOM assisted 1,511 migrants in the first six months of 2019

In the first six months of 2019, IOM Austria assisted a total of 1,511 migrants in their voluntary return from Austria to their countries of origin. In comparison to 1,732 returnees in the same period of time in 2018, the number has decreased by 13 percent. While the number of returnees to Iraq (178) has dropped by almost 50 percent compared to the same period in 2018, Iraq still remains the country with the highest number of assisted voluntary returnees from Austria, followed by Serbia (162) and Georgia (119).

In line with the years before, the overwhelming part of all assisted voluntary returnees in the first six months of 2019 were male (77 percent). Within the 1,511 migrants assisted, 3 were unaccompanied or separated children. 34 persons, a third of them returning to Georgia, had medical needs which had to be taken into account for their travel preparation. The travel costs for the majority of returnees were covered in the framework of the “General Humanitarian Return Programme” by the Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum.



AVRR – a retrospective

As of 1 July 2019, the Unit for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) is led by a new Head. IOM Austria is very pleased to welcome Ms Edith Vasilyev in this function. On this occasion we would like to take this opportunity to shortly summarize the developments and achievements of the [AVRR Unit](#) during the past years.

Under the leadership of Ms Andrea Götzelmann-Rosado who headed the AVRR Unit for eight years, IOM Austria has implemented reintegration projects in Kosovo¹, Nigeria, the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan². In the framework of these projects and thanks to the tireless efforts of Ms Götzelmann-Rosado and her team, 1,737³ returnees were able to benefit from tailor-made assistance for their voluntary return and reintegration in the above listed countries.

During the past years new content-related challenges have emerged. The number of unaccompanied and/or separated migrant children as well as of other returnees in vulnerable situations, e.g. of persons with health needs, has increased and the type of needed assistance has gained complexity. Therefore, individualized, context-based support for this specific target group was developed and put in place. Another emphasis was put on the dialogue with and the provision of information about the AVRR system to all relevant stakeholders, journalists, scientists, diaspora organizations and the general public to enhance awareness and knowledge about the AVRR system.

During her function as Head of Unit, Ms Götzelmann-Rosado has continuously reflected national and international developments in the area of AVRR. On the basis of her knowledge and experience, obtained inter alia from the exchange of information with all stakeholders, the analyses and lessons learned from the monitoring and evaluation of reintegration projects, she actively contributed to relevant national and international discourses and publications in the field of AVRR and addressed the challenges that have arisen.

Dear Andrea, we would like to thank you for your excellent leadership of the Unit and your tireless commitment and great dedication to the Area of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration throughout the years.

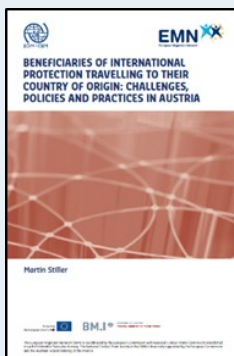
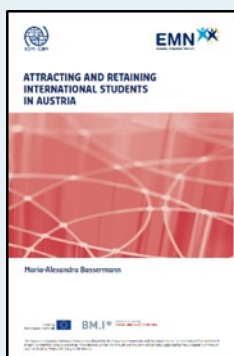


Andrea Götzelmann-Rosado during a monitoring meeting in Afghanistan with a returnee from Austria. © IOM 2018

¹References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

²These projects have been financed by the Austrian Ministry of the Interior or co-financed by Austrian Ministry of the Interior and different funds of the European Commission. For further information, please visit our [website](#).

³Number of voluntary returnees assisted with return and reintegration assistance between 1 January 2011 and 30 June 2019.



New EMN Studies:

Attracting and retaining international students in Austria

The study examines the conditions of entry and residence, concrete rights and the higher education system regarding international students in Austria. Moreover, the residence options for international graduates and their subsequent labor market integration are analyzed. Finally, the study explores transnational cooperation in the higher education sector.

[Country Report Austria \(DE\)](#) | [Country Report Austria \(EN\)](#)

Beneficiaries of international protection travelling to their country of origin: Challenges, policies and practices in Austria.

The study deals with the question whether international protection may be withdrawn in Austria after a person who has been granted international protection travelled to their country of origin or established contact with the authorities of their country of origin. The study therefore covers the precise legal provisions applying to the withdrawal of both asylum status as well as subsidiary protection status.

[Country Report Austria \(DE\)](#) | [Country Report Austria \(EN\)](#)

These and other EMN publications are available online and can be ordered as hardcopies free of charge [here](#).

Annual Policy Report Austria 2018

The Annual Policy Report Austria 2018 provides an overview of migration and asylum-related developments and debates in Austria. The main legislative development was that the Act Amending the Aliens Law 2018 entered into force. Furthermore, the topic of migration played a key role in the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2018 and thus also in the country's media reporting.

[Annual Policy Report Austria 2018 \(EN\)](#)

In addition to the Austrian Report, the EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2018 outlines the most significant political and legislative developments in all EU Member States and at European level. The report can be downloaded [here](#).

EU Migration Talks

EU Migration Talks is a new event series organized by the National Contact Point Austria in the EMN. It provides experts, stakeholders and the general public with the opportunity to discuss research findings on migration-related topics. On 12 June 2019, we invited to the first *EU Migration Talks* in Vienna. Together with the experts who contributed to the new EMN study "Attracting and Retaining International Students in Austria" we discussed the Austrian situation and compared it to findings in Germany and the Netherlands.

More information on the event can be found [here](#).



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