

# International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The UN Migration Agency in Austria



## National EMN Conference 2019

### Migration and Communication -

### Information & Awareness-raising Campaigns in Countries of Origin and Transit

Information and awareness-raising campaigns for migrants and potential migrants in third countries constitute a central element of current migration strategies, both at the European and national level. Over the past decade, this form of communication with (potential) migrants has become increasingly relevant. Information campaigns have not only increased in number but the types, formats, messages and strategies of such campaigns have also diversified. Despite the heightened relevance of these campaigns in current migration policies, little is known from a scientific perspective about their impact and effectiveness and how they influence migratory behaviour.

Against this backdrop, the National Contact Point Austria in the European Migration Network (EMN) on 3 December 2019 organized the National EMN Conference in Vienna to provide an overview of existing information and awareness-raising campaigns, discussing their objectives and underlying assumptions. Existing evidence on the effectiveness of these campaigns and ways in which communication can change behaviour were presented. More than 100 participants exchanged and discussed about ways to further improve information and awareness-raising campaigns.

On the following day, selected policymakers and practitioners were given the opportunity to deepen their knowledge on how to design and implement impact evaluations of information awareness-raising campaigns during a workshop. Academics and subject-matter experts introduced basic evaluation concepts and created a space for practice-oriented learning.

A briefing paper and a video summarizing the main findings of the conference can be found on the EMN website.

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## Asyl-Train Project Completion

After three years of successful implementation, the project Asyl-Train - Trainings for identifying trafficked persons and acquiring intercultural competences in the Austrian asylum procedure is coming to an end. The project provided an overall of 37 trainings for a total of 525 participants from various stakeholders involved in the Austrian asylum procedure.

Trainings on the identification of potential victims of trafficking in the asylum procedure aimed to increase awareness and develop a better understanding of legal, identification and protection issues amongst stakeholders. Cooperation between respective Austrian asylum stakeholders and victim support organizations as well as with the Austrian Federal Criminal Intelligence Service improved significantly thanks to the active involvement of experts from the latter within the training sessions. An increase of referrals of potential cases of human trafficking to victim support organizations by participants has been particularly noticeable in this regard.

The provision of trainings on intercultural competences for asylum stakeholders is unique and innovative in the context of the EU. The trainings encompassed a range of thematic areas such as theories of culture, deconstruction of stereotypes, self-reflection on one's own cultural background and social and conflict management skills. Participants evaluated the trainings as particularly useful for their intercultural encounters in their daily work and expressed their wish for more similar trainings on a more regular basis.



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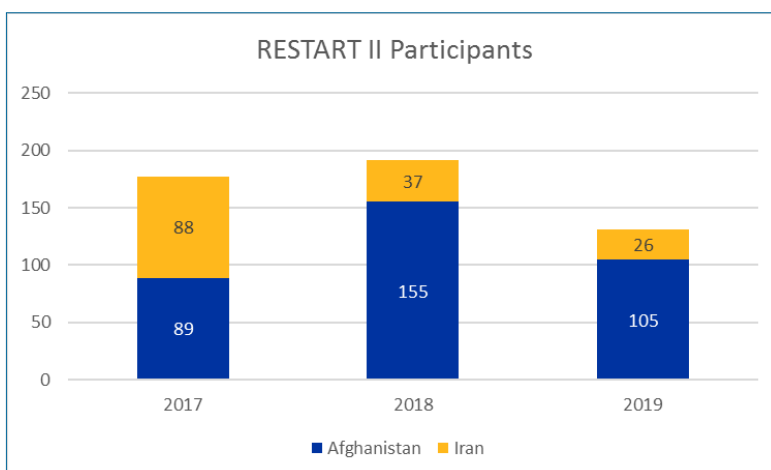
*This project is co-financed by  
the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) of the European Union  
and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior.*



## RESTART II Project Completion

The project RESTART II - Reintegration Assistance for Voluntary Returnees to Afghanistan and Iran recently ended after three intense project years. In the framework of the project, a total of 500 third-country nationals were assisted by IOM in their voluntary return from Austria to Afghanistan and Iran between 1 January 2017 and 31 December 2019. 349 project beneficiaries (including 6 female participants) voluntarily returned to Afghanistan, 151 (including 27 female participants) to Iran. The project offered reintegration assistance of EUR 500 in cash to address the most immediate needs after arrival to the country of origin as well as EUR 2.800 in-kind. In most cases, the in-kind assistance was used for starting or joining a business (e.g. purchase of equipment, goods) to generate income.

The graph shows the number of project participants, listed by year of return and country of return. While the number of returnees for Iran decreased in 2018 and 2019 compared to the first project year, 2018 was the year with the highest number of project participants returning to Afghanistan.



## WIR II – Two inspiring short films were produced by 24 young filmmakers

In the frame of two final closing events held in Vienna and Linz in December 2019, IOM Austria celebrated the successful implementation of the second phase of the girls-only project WIR II - Workshops for integration and prevention of radicalization, which supports adolescents and young adults with the development of their identity in a multicultural setting as a means of prevention of radicalization.

The Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (project donor) and representatives from integration offices of the City of Vienna and the City of Linz stressed the importance of such projects with a focus on multiple identities and social cohesion. The highlights of each event were the film screenings attended in total by more than 120 guests from the Chechen community, local NGOs and institutions, followed by a discussion with the young filmmakers on the complex process of conceptualization and production of the two films. The videos can be viewed [here](#).

In the frame of 11 workshops, 24 project participants from Vienna and Linz engaged in critical and self-reflective dialogues and discussed topics such as identity, biography, religion, violence, gender-based discrimination and media competences. With the support of media experts and facilitated by intercultural mediators, the Chechen girls aged 14 – 19 conceptualized their own short films from scratch: they acted as sound managers, directors, moderators, experts and journalists, shot the scenes and produced their own contributions.



Feedback from project participants clearly confirmed the empowering effect of the project. On the topic of identity, one girl pointed out: *"It was very motivating to see how openly the girls shared their own experiences in the group"*. Several girls mentioned that they now know *"who to go to"* and that *"there are places to go to"* in cases of discrimination and mobbing. Another girl summarized her key take-away as: *"Through this project, women empower women!"*. The positive feedback received from both the Chechen community as well as local (non-governmental) institutions and particularly from the participants reinforces the project's participative, socially inclusive and empowering approach.

## Admin4All: Integration in municipalities

The project Admin4All – Integration in municipalities supports 35 municipalities in 7 countries in increasing their capacities in enabling integration at a local level. During 2019, trainings reached a total of 67 persons in 5 municipalities (Bruck an der Leitha, Korneuburg, Kufstein, Schwaz, Telfs) and a mid-term consultation meeting organized in Milan in October 2019 brought together representatives from over 35 EU municipalities, the European Commission, national ministries, national municipal associations and research institutes.



Within the Austrian context, it became apparent that there is very little networking and exchange between the various integration actors, so the trainings and ad-hoc modules allowed for a starting point for the participants to get to know each other better.

In addition to the capacity-building trainings, municipalities expressed interest for more exchange both on a local and international level, therefore IOM will continue to support municipalities in this endeavor in the frame of the project Admin4All until June 2020.

More information on the project is available on our [website](#).



## Impressions from a Monitoring Mission to Afghanistan

In November 2019, three IOM Austria staff members were on a monitoring mission in Afghanistan with the purpose of meeting *RESTART II*<sup>1</sup> project participants and assessing their reintegration process since their return to Kabul and Mazar-I-Sharif.

In the course of the journey, staff members of IOM Austria, together with colleagues from IOM Afghanistan, met with two female and sixteen male project participants. The monitoring interviews were based on IOM's reintegration sustainability survey which aims to evaluate the economic, social and psychosocial aspects of voluntary return and reintegration. All interviewees stated to have invested their reintegration assistance to start or join a business and identified the challenging security situation as the main difficulty in their reintegration process.

### A comprehensive insight into the work of local partners

In addition to meetings with project participants from *RESTART II*, the IOM delegation used the opportunity to exchange with various external actors, such as the NGO Afghanistan Development & Welfare Services Organization (ADSWO). A central goal of these meetings was to identify additional support structures to strengthen the sustainability of the reintegration process through additional referrals, whenever possible.

### Meeting with RADA project

The Austrian IOM delegation also met with the manager of the project *Reintegration and Development Assistance in Afghanistan (RADA)*, which is implemented by IOM with financial support of the European Union. The project targets eight provinces of high return (Baghlan, Balkh, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunar, Laghman and Nangarhar) with an integrated approach to the economic, social and psychosocial aspects of reintegration at both the individual and community levels. At the structural level, technical assistance is provided to support national and sub-national Afghan government authorities in strengthening their capacity to plan, manage and facilitate reintegration.

IOM Austria delegation members met with leaders of two communities in which community reintegration initiatives were implemented. The first initiative was the construction of 50 culverts (a water pipe or sewer under roads or railways), which was planned to be handed over to the community and the government in December 2019. This infrastructure project offered temporary employment to 16 skilled and unskilled laborers, including returnees and host community members. The second initiative that was visited was a community center that had been identified by the community leaders as a priority and was subsequently built in the framework of a GIZ-funded project implemented by IOM.

During the visits with the community leaders, difficulties regarding the reintegration of returnees not only from European but also from neighboring countries such as Pakistan and Iran were discussed. Provision of housing, access to education, medical care and jobs, especially for women, were mentioned as the main difficulties by community members.

For more information, please contact the AVRR Unit at IOM Austria: [avrr.vienna@iom.int](mailto:avrr.vienna@iom.int)



Flight over the Hindukush  
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Community leader in Mazar-I-Sharif  
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<sup>1</sup> The project "RESTART II – Reintegration Assistance for Voluntary Returnees to Afghanistan and Iran" is implemented by IOM and co-financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) of the European Union and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior. The project assisted voluntary returnees to Afghanistan and Iran in their reintegration process and was running from January 2017 to December 2019.



## MIGRATORY PATHWAYS FOR START-UPS AND INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURS TO AUSTRIA

Alexander Spiegelfeld

European Commission BM.I

The European Migration Network (EMN) is coordinated by the European Commission with National Contact Points (NCPs) established in all Member States. The National Contact Point Austria in the EMN is financially supported by the European Commission and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior.

## EMN Study: Migratory Pathways for Start-ups and Innovative Entrepreneurs to Austria

Thanks to their unique qualities, start-ups and innovative entrepreneurship contribute to creating new employment opportunities, implementing innovative technologies and securing international investments. The new EMN Study examines in detail the migratory pathways open to third-country start-up founders and innovative entrepreneurs who wish to become established in Austria. The main focus is on identifying the various conditions and factors influencing the success of efforts to attract and retain such businesses as well as describing the migratory pathways. The study also addresses the challenges, good practices, public debates as well as the existing evaluations of this issue. The Synthesis Report of the study summarizes the findings of all EU Member States.

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

## EU Migration Talks: The Race for Innovative Talents

On International Migrants Day (18 December), IOM as the National Contact Point Austria in the EMN hosted the event “EU Migration Talks: The Race for Innovative Talents”. Policymakers, practitioners and start-up founders discussed migratory pathways for innovative entrepreneurs from non-EU countries to Austria and compared the situation to other EU Member States. The participants critically reflected on the start-up ecosystem for non-EU start-ups and outlined approaches to make Austria more attractive for international entrepreneurs.

*EU Migration Talks* is an event series providing experts, stakeholders and the general public with the opportunity to discuss research findings on migration-related topics.

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

## 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the National Steering Committee of EMN Austria

The National Steering Committee of the National Contact Point Austria in the EMN is composed of representatives from various ministries, interest groups and research institutions. On 11 November 2019, the Committee met for its 12<sup>th</sup> meeting to discuss current developments within the EMN and the study topics for the year 2020.

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



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