Towards a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

During the United Nations Summit for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants was adopted unanimously by all 193 UN Member States. This milestone document expresses their recognition of the need for a comprehensive approach to human mobility and enhanced cooperation at the global level to save lives, protect rights and share responsibility on a global scale. It provides for the development of two global compacts to be adopted in 2018: a Global Compact on Refugees and a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).

The Declaration further anticipates that the GCM will have a wide scope: setting out a range of principles, commitments and understandings regarding international migration in all its dimensions, including the humanitarian, development and human rights-related dimensions. It will thereby offer a unique opportunity to present a comprehensive framework for migration governance.

The development of the Migration Compact is further described in UN General Assembly A/RES/71/280 as State-led participatory process and negotiations with the effective participation of all relevant stakeholders, culminating in an intergovernmental conference on international migration in 2018 for the planned adoption of the Global Compact on Migration. The UN Secretary General has appointed Ms. Louise Arbour as his Special Representative for International Migration and as Secretary-General of the 2018 Conference. IOM is tasked with jointly servicing the negotiations (and the full State-led Migration Compact process) with the UN Secretariat by providing the needed technical and policy expertise. This includes support to the Special Representative in developing a workplan and preparing issue briefs for the thematic consultations, as well as helping the Office of the President of the General Assembly of the UN to organize thematic consultations.

At www.iom.int/global-compact-migration, you will find further information on the process and our role therein, IOM’s vision for the Migration Compact, as well as our thematic papers, which aim to provide succinct overviews of the topics in question, and to suggest possible areas of action for consideration as inputs into the Global Compact on Migration.
First beneficiaries assisted in their reintegration in Iran

In January 2017, IOM Austria started to support the reintegration of returnees to the Islamic Republic of Iran within the framework of the project RESTART II – Reintegration Assistance for Voluntary Returnees to Afghanistan and Iran. This project, co-financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) of the European Union and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior, will assist a total of 490 project beneficiaries in their countries of return - 190 out of them will be supported by IOM in Iran.

In Iran, some specific characteristics have to be considered for the implementation of the project. IOM’s office is situated in the capital city Tehran. It assists all project beneficiaries in this large country (see diagram on the right). Fortunately, these distance-related challenges are bypassed by the mobile app “Telegram”, which allows IOM staff and beneficiaries to communicate and share information as well as documents in a safe and time-efficient manner.

The major challenge IOM faces in Iran is connected to international sanctions: Respective restrictions in the banking system lead to long transfer periods for the assistance.

During a coordination mission to Tehran in February 2017, IOM Austria project staff met some of the first RESTART II beneficiaries and discussed their experiences after return. The main challenges reported are related to the high level of living expenses in Iran and an insufficient income after return. For Ali R., beneficiary of RESTART II, accommodation was the most pressing need after his arrival in Iran. He applied for housing assistance and will receive two months’ rent. With his reintegration grant, Ali R. will start a small car repair shop.

Within the framework of RESTART II, returnees like Ali R. can be supported in their reintegration in Afghanistan or Iran until the end of December 2019.

For further information please contact IOM Austria’s Unit for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration: avrr.vienna@iom.int.
Mid-year statistical update on Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) from Austria

During the first six months of 2017, IOM Austria has assisted a total of 1,716 migrants in their voluntary return. Six of the returnees were unaccompanied minors.

Continuing a trend already observed in 2016, the most relevant country of return was Iraq (356 persons), followed by Serbia (156 persons) and Afghanistan (149 persons).

IOM Austria provides support to the voluntary return of migrants within the framework of the „General Humanitarian Return Programme“. The travel costs for the majority of the programme’s beneficiaries are covered by the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum (Bundesamt für Fremdenwesen und Asyl).

Furthermore, IOM Austria offers reintegration assistance for returnees to the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan and Iran within the project RESTART II, which is co-financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) of the European Union and the Austrian Ministry of the Interior. During the first six months of 2017, RESTART II has assisted 46 project beneficiaries in Afghanistan as well as 53 beneficiaries in Iran.

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<th>Top 5 Countries of Return: AVRR from Austria, 1 January 2017 - 30 June 2017</th>
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<td><strong>Country</strong></td>
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Global Migration Film Festival

The UN Migration Agency (IOM) is inviting professional and emerging filmmakers to submit perception-changing films about the migrant experience for the second annual Global Migration Film Festival (5-18 December).

The Global Migration Film Festival showcases films that capture the promise and challenges of migration for those who leave their homes in search of a better life and the unique contributions migrants make to their new communities.

In 2016, the inaugural festival took place in Vienna’s Top Kino and 88 other countries. Nearly 10,000 people attended 220 screenings at cinemas, universities, cultural institutions and other venues. The festival hosted 13 films and documentaries, as well as 200 short films about and by migrants.

“The journeys migrants take, sometimes full of peril, often full of hope, have been the subject of films throughout the history of cinema,” said IOM Director General William Lacy Swing. “We hope the films at our next festival will instil understanding, empathy with characters, awe at their journeys and admiration for those who welcome their new neighbours.”

Please submit your film by 17 September 2017!
See IOM’s website for details of submission.

For more details on IOM’s Global Migration Film Festival, email: migfilmfest@iom.int
First and foremost they are children

All children in migration are vulnerable and in need of protection. Children arriving in foreign countries without parents or caregivers find themselves trapped in their status as migrants or refugees, with their vulnerabilities and needs as children often given too little consideration.

In line with the newly released EU Communication on Protection of Children in Migration and with the revised EU Guidelines of the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child, the project Protecting Children in the context of the Refugee and Migrant Crisis in Europe is offering technical support to all those working with children in migration.

In order to have a comprehensive approach, joint trainings were held together with ECPAT Austria and UNICEF for target groups active in crisis situations or in reception centers: CIMIC (civil-military cooperation) soldiers, social workers and humanitarian aid workers from the Red Cross, the Caritas, the Samaritan Association, social workers in reception centers for (unaccompanied) migrant/refugee children.

During one-day trainings, participants received theoretical input on child rights and child protection and were able to apply them in practical exercises e.g. how to identify and prevent child trafficking in crisis situations or in reception centers, how to analyse, detect and amend protection gaps both in camps and in local reception centers and how to ensure that child rights are safeguarded at all stages of the migration process.

A total of 37 frontline responders were reached through these trainings. Further trainings are foreseen for law enforcement officials and streetworkers working with children at risk.

Child protection is everyone’s responsibility

They say “it takes a village to raise a child” and the same principle applies to child protection. It is everyone’s business to ensure that children are protected from violence, exploitation and abuse. The project Protecting children focuses on building the capacity of various actors who come into direct contact with migrant and refugee children and equip them with both knowledge and tools to identify and refer any abuses against children.

To this end, a one-day training on child protection and child trafficking was conducted in June 2017 with street workers from Caritas Graz. Street-based youth work focuses on the most vulnerable teens, who are often not in education, employment or training, are often socially excluded and who very often come from disadvantaged families. These teens are particularly vulnerable to traffickers.

Street workers are in a unique position to detect indicators of trafficking due to their relationship based on trust, confidentiality and mutual respect. Their direct contact with teens at risk make them paramount in the prevention of trafficking by raising the children’s awareness regarding the risks of exploitation and also by empowering them to seek help if they find themselves in a risky situation.
ASYL-Train: First Intercultural Competence Training

On 20-21 June 2017, the first Intercultural Competence Training took place at the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum in Vienna. The training was organized in the frame of the project ASYL-Train, which inter alia aims at improving intercultural competences of employees of the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum, and thus to shape interactions with asylum seekers in a culturally more sensitive and efficient manner.

During the first Intercultural Competence Training there were vivid discussions around topics such as one own’s perspective and how it is determined, different ways of communicating in different cultural groups, how to deal with intercultural conflicts and how to gain a different perspective. Altogether there was a constructive exchange and the participants were eager to apply their newly gained competences and knowledge during their daily work.

Increased reports of trafficked women from Nigeria in the asylum procedure

The asylum procedure is one of many instances where people who have suffered exploitation and human trafficking can be identified and offered assistance. IOM continues to provide specialized trainings to actors within the asylum system through the project ASYL-Train together with the LEFÖ Intervention Center for Trafficked Women, the Federal Criminal Intelligence Service, MEN VIA, the Drehscheibe center of the City of Vienna and UNHCR.

Since the beginning of 2017, four training sessions have been held for officials of the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum and an additional training is planned for legal counsellors in September.

Feedback from both asylum officials and organizations providing protection to trafficked persons indicates that recently an increased number of Nigerian women who have lodged an asylum claim have been identified as trafficked persons. The cases have been referred to the police and to relevant protection services.

This trend was also confirmed by a recent report from IOM Italy on "Human Trafficking through the Central Mediterranean Route". According to the report, an almost 600 per cent increase in the number of potential victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation who arrived in Italy by sea was witnessed over the past three years. This upward trend has continued during the first six months of 2017. Most suspected cases involved Nigerian citizens. IOM Italy estimates that up to 80 per cent of girls arriving from Nigeria – whose numbers have soared from 1,454 in 2014 to 11,009 in 2016 – have been trafficked for sexual exploitation.
Cultural orientation - a response to current challenges of integration

In view of recent and current refugee movements to Europe, integration processes are becoming even more significant for a peaceful coexistence in thriving, multicultural communities. Therefore, IOM Austria continues to provide cultural orientation trainings for young refugees, in order to enhance their chances of becoming active participants in the Austrian society.

Within the current project phase of CulTrain (Cultural Orientation Trainings for young Refugees), IOM Austria has already conducted five trainings in Vienna, Styria and Burgenland and has also launched a series of extracurricular workshops in cooperation with the Museum of Natural History and the Tanzquartier Wien in the frame of Kultur Transfair, a project initiated by Hunger auf Kunst und Kultur. The workshops were developed as a process-orientated cultural activity: concretely, the connection between the animal world and the dancing world was visualized through a dance choreography which was agreed upon between the young refugees themselves and the other workshop participants. This series of workshops culminated in a final performance which was put on stage in the Natural History Museum. This type of activities foster a low-threshold access to cultural events and encourage young refugees to engage in social and cultural life.

Additionally, IOM Vienna arranged an intercultural scavenger hunt, were young refugees and members of Austrian youth organizations together solved tricky riddles and made new friends.

Train the Trainer-Workshops on Cultural Orientation for Migrants

IOM has been providing pre-departure and post-arrival cultural orientation trainings to migrants and refugees since the early 1950s. Trainers use their knowledge and experience to help migrants and refugees establish realistic expectations of their future in the host country, while also providing them with the necessary skills to enable a smooth integration. IOM Austria has conducted similar trainings since 2012. Over the years considerable knowledge was gained, diverse training methods were developed and valuable lessons were learnt.

IOM shared this expertise in the frame of two Train the Trainer-Workshops in June and July 2017. At national level, representatives from the Regional Competence Center for Integration and Diversity in Upper Austria were trained on how to conduct cultural orientation workshops. At the international level, employees of the Migration Information Center based in the IOM Country Office for Slovakia were trained on how to address complex issues of interest for the migrants in an interactive and low-threshold manner. Depending on the participants, the Train the Trainer-Workshops can be tailored to their particular needs. These trainings can be booked within the project INT-Train.

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

The Annual Policy Report 2016 provides an overview of migration and asylum-related developments and debates in Austria. The main legislative development was the entering into force of the Amendment to the Asylum Act, the Aliens Police Act and the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum Procedures Act. One significant policy development was the adoption of measures to implement the 50 Action Points for the integration of persons entitled to asylum or subsidiary protection. Both the legislative amendment and the integration measures were among the most intensively covered topics in the Austrian media.

EMN Study: Family Reunification of Third-Country Nationals in Austria

IOM Austria recently published the study Family Reunification of Third-Country Nationals in Austria as national contribution to the European Migration Network. Main parts of the study are dedicated to the requirements and the procedure for family reunification. Additionally, the rights and duties of family members after their arrival in Austria are dealt with. The study also highlights recent developments, challenges and good practices in this field. Important court rulings with respect to family reunification are presented and commented upon. Statistical information is included in a separate chapter.

Family reunification is an important policy issue in Austria; currently this applies in particular to family reunification with persons granted asylum and with beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. The rights of family members who have entered Austria depend to a decisive extent on the type of residence permit obtained, which in turn depends on the residence permit held by the sponsor in the particular case. Generally speaking, spouses, registered partners and unmarried minor children are entitled to migrate to Austria for family reunification. Examples of good practices include the coordination meetings held among the most important institutions for the purpose of exchanging information and views.

EMN Study: Illegal Employment of Third-Country Nationals in Austria

IOM Austria recently published the country report of the study Illegal Employment of Third-Country Nationals in Austria. Illegal employment is defined as an economic activity carried out in violation of provisions set forth in legislation, specifically the Act Governing the Employment of Foreigners. Combating illegal employment in all its aspects is a political priority in Austria, while the identification of irregularly staying and illegally working third-country nationals has a particularly high priority.

The study takes a look at various aspects of illegal employment: (i) prevention measures, (ii) identification of illegal employment, (iii) sanctions for employers, and (iv) consequences for third-country nationals found to be working illegally. The study also presents available statistical data and highlights challenges and good practices.

All studies, reports, synthesis reports and informs are available for download at www.emn.at.

The National Contact Point Austria in the EMN is financially supported by the European Commission and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior.
Migration Movement towards Europe: Data Analysis and Alternatives
National EMN Conference on 9 October 2017

The current movements of migrants to Europe is challenging for many actors: the EU Member States, the EU and not least migrants themselves. A differentiated view on migration goals, migration routes and the underlying motives for migration is necessary when trying to identify alternatives for supporting migrants in their regions of origin. In this context, the National Contact Point Austria in the EMN is organizing an expert conference with the aim of providing the basis for an alternative discourse in the gridlocked migration debate.

Due to the participatory structure of the event, the number of participants is limited. For more information on the event please visit www.emn.at/en/national-emn-conference-2017.

Career Day at the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna

IOM Austria participated in this year’s Career Day “DA LINK 2017” at the Diplomatic Academy (DA) of Vienna. On 14 March 2017, DA students and 25 companies, international and non-governmental organisations, corporate business as well as public institutions gathered for the 5th time.

During a “Business Speed Dating”, our Research Associate Saskia Heilemann represented IOM Austria and met highly qualified international students interested in working with an international organization or in the field of migration. Many of DA’s more than 200 students and future graduates were able to generate a first contact with IOM and to learn about the work, possibilities and key information on IOM recruitment.

IOM’s Saskia Heilemann informs students about IOM’s work. © DA/Ernst Weingartner