



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Organisation internationale pour les migrations (OIM)
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AUCO – Austrian Cultural Orientation Trainings for Syrian Refugees admitted for the Humanitarian Admission Programme (HAP III) to Austria

Implementing Agency: IOM Country Office for Austria
Project Partners: IOM Missions in Jordan and Turkey
Time Frame: 18 months
Starting Date: 01 July 2016 - 31 December 2017
Donor: Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior

In the frame of the third phase of the Humanitarian Admission Programme to Austria (HAP III) 400 Syrian UN quota-refugees will be resettled from Jordan and Turkey to Austria and granted asylum. IOM will support the process by providing a range of services including:

(a) implement pre-departure medical checks for all refugees; (b) offer medical support for vulnerable cases; (c) carry out fitness to travel-check for all refugees prior to their travel to Austria; (d) implement 12 two-day pre-departure cultural orientation trainings; (e) take care of the travel arrangements (commercial flights) according to each person's health needs and assist at the airport of departure, the airport of transit (if necessary) as well as the Vienna International Airport.

Pre-departure cultural orientation

In the course of this project, IOM Austria will conduct 12 Cultural Orientation Trainings (COs) for 400 Syrian refugees currently residing in Jordan and Turkey. Each CO will last for two days and will be conducted by a co-teaching team, consisting of one IOM Austria staff and one bi-cultural trainer. A bi-cultural trainer is a person who has a background similar to that of the beneficiaries and who resides in Austria since some years already. Hence, all contents can be translated consecutively from German into Arabic and discussed from both perspectives, which will maximize the output of the topics and prepare the beneficiaries as comprehensively as possible for their arrival in Austria.

The COs will provide the participants with basic information about Austria. Contents focus inter alia on geography, history, family, educational system, society, labor market and health care as well as political issues, i.e. democracy, gender or rights and duties. This measure also supports the participants in identifying and developing necessary soft skills, which will be helpful to succeed in the new environment. The methodology of the trainings is hands-on, learner centered and encourages refugees to share their expectations and worries.

Furthermore an information folder about the Humanitarian Admission Programme and Austria in general will be distributed to the participants, which serves as guideline for the COs und also provides them with concise information after the CO. Certificates of attendance will be awarded to the participants at the end of each CO.

The overall objective of conducting COs is to provide refugees with a realistic picture of Austria as well as informing them about related opportunities but also possible challenges. All in all, this measure aims at facilitating the beneficiaries' integration process from the very beginning.

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