

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The UN Migration Agency
Country Office for Austria



Editorial

We hope that this will find you and your colleagues, families and loved ones in good health amid this pandemic, and that this newsletter will provide you an interesting insight into the work of IOM in Austria and beyond.

In recent months, with the generous support of the Austrian government, we have worked closely with various IOM missions to support migrants and other countries. We will provide more details on the different projects throughout the year. For a first glimpse, we invite you to take a look at the [Situation Reports](#) regularly published by IOM Bosnia and Herzegovina with detailed information on the quickly evolving situation in this region. In this context, we would like to thank the Austrian Ministry for European and International Affairs and the Austrian Development Agency for their trust and much needed financial contribution.

On a more global note, we are pleased to inform you that [IOM's Regional Strategy for the European Economic Area, Switzerland and the United Kingdom](#) has recently been published, along with eight other regional strategies as well as the continental strategy for Africa. All of IOM's Regional Strategies can be accessed online at www.iom.int/strategy. These strategies highlight the current and future regional and cross-regional trends and challenges with respect to migration and situations of displacement, and outline how IOM will seek to address them, including through collaboration with other United Nations agencies and additional partners. We hope that you will find this outlook to be of interest!

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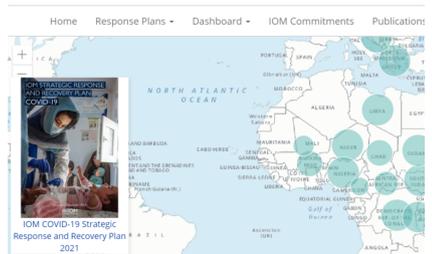
New Global Crisis Response Platform

In 2021, 235 million people will need humanitarian aid and protection as a result of COVID-19, natural hazards, conflict, violence and other human right violations. An active member of the humanitarian response system, IOM responds to crises situations to meet the needs of populations impacted by crisis and fragility. Complementing humanitarian protection, which is central to IOM's crisis response, IOM also engages in transition and recovery programming that uses development-principled approaches to address the drivers and longer-term impacts of crisis and displacement as well as supporting preparedness and disaster risk reduction in fragile areas.

IOM's new [Global Crisis Response Platform](#) provides donors and partners with an overview of IOM's funding needs in 2021 and beyond, responding to the evolving needs and aspirations of those impacted by, or at risk of, crisis and displacement. It currently contains Crisis Response Plans for 42 crises (country and regional) and will be regularly updated.

The Global Crisis Response Platform can be accessed here: crisisresponse.iom.int.

Global Crisis Response Platform Humanitarian and Crisis Transition Activities



Welcome to the new Ambassador of Afghanistan!

On 5 March 2021, Marian Benbow Pfisterer, Head of Office IOM Austria, and Edith Vasilyev, Head of AVRR, had the honour to meet H.E. Ambassador Manizah Bakhtari, the new Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Vienna, and Second Secretary Mr. Omid Kamal.

IOM has been present in Afghanistan since 1992, and Afghanistan joined IOM as a Member State in 2004. The focus of IOM's work in Afghanistan is based on a three-pillar approach and includes: addressing humanitarian needs, strengthening migration management, as well as supporting reintegration, stabilization and resilience. Under this priority, IOM Austria and IOM Afghanistan are jointly implementing the [RESTART III project](#), which is co-financed by the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and the European Union.

We look forward to continuing the fruitful collaboration with the Afghan Embassy for the support of Afghan citizens in need.



Meeting at the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Vienna. © IOM 2021

Closing event of the integration project WIR II

Within the project [WIR II - Workshops for integration and prevention of radicalization](#), 17 girls and young women took part in a series of three 2-day workshops in Linz and Vienna. The project team also trained five multipliers who conducted three school workshops on discrimination and civil courage. In December 2020, the traditional closing event was conducted in a new way.

While hybrid events were no anomaly for 2020, this type of event was new for the WIR team and beneficiaries. Due to public health regulations, the WIR 2020 closing event for both Linz and Vienna was carried out via livestreaming. Two beneficiaries, supported by two team members, volunteered to contribute to the event from a television studio. The other beneficiaries as well as the guests of honor joined the event via video conferencing.



WIR II project beneficiaries and team members preparing for the live streaming closing event from a TV studio. © IOM

As in the past, the workshop participants displayed how strong, diverse and resilient young migrant women are and how willing to contribute to society. During the event, this year's short film "WE are many" was premiered and the beneficiaries were proud of having contributed to it.

We are looking forward to this year's workshops and events, as the new project [WIR III](#) is currently being implemented in Graz and Vienna!

 **Federal Chancellery
Republic of Austria**

*This project is funded by
the Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria.*

Admin4All: Supporting local integration actors during the pandemic

To support municipalities in raising awareness about COVID-19 among the migrant population, IOM has produced multi-language [informative leaflets](#) in 39 languages and multi-language [informative audio clips](#) in 23 languages. The material was produced by the project [Admin4All - Integration in municipalities](#), which supports 35 municipalities in seven countries.

In addition, a stakeholder meeting on enhancing cooperation between integration actors in the Austrian municipality of Kufstein as well as a peer-to-peer meeting between the Romanian municipality of Galati and Kufstein took place online. The exchange focused on integration practices and accommodation of refugees and persons in vulnerable situations in both cities.



The meeting was fruitful, and the representatives plan to further enhance mutual information and exchange in order to learn more from each other and better understand how to adapt and replicate some of the respective good integration practices.

For more project details, please visit our website:

austria.iom.int/en/admin4all-integration-municipalities-phase-2



This project is funded by the European Commission.

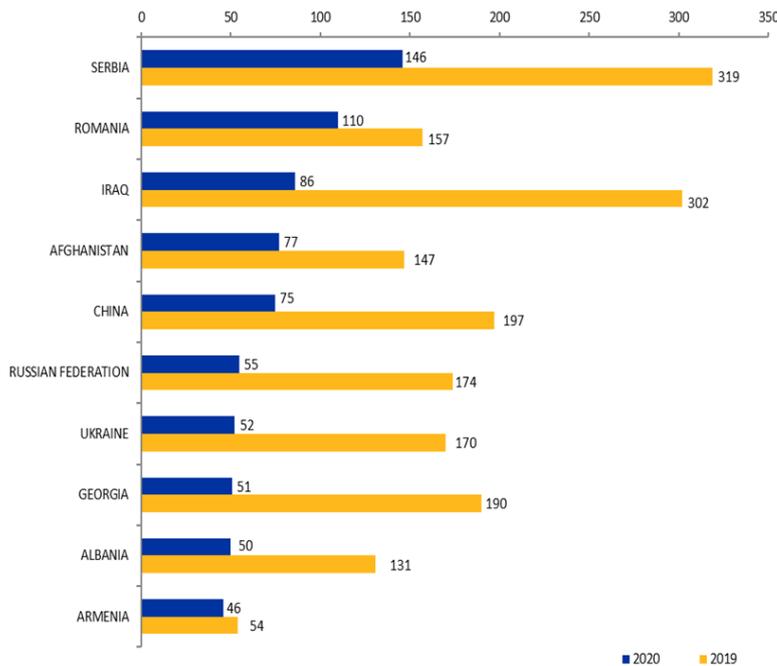
2020: IOM assisted more than 1,300 voluntary returnees

2020 marked the 20th anniversary of the Memorandum of Understanding between IOM and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior, which paved the way for the close cooperation between IOM and Austria, one of our founding Member States, in the field of voluntary return. From 2000 until 2020, together with the respective authorities and return counsellors from NGOs, more than 50,000 people were supported in their voluntary return from Austria.

In 2020, COVID-19 reduced international mobility to a minimum. IOM Austria was nonetheless able to support 1,316 persons to return voluntarily from Austria to their country of origin.



Top 10 Countries of Return 2020



As in 2019, Serbia was the country with the highest number of voluntary returnees from Austria (146 persons assisted), followed by Romania (110 persons). As the first non-European country, Iraq ranks third in the statistics of top return countries with a total of 86 assisted persons.

82 percent of the returnees were male, 8 percent were minors. Among all voluntary returnees who were assisted by IOM Austria in 2020, a total of 18 persons had medical needs that were considered during the preparation and organization of the return. Three unaccompanied minors were assisted with special protection measures, such as Family Assessment prior to return to support determination of best interest.

More details can be found here: austria.iom.int/en/statistics-avrr

Top 10 countries of voluntary return assisted by IOM Austria in 2020. ©IOM 2021

AVRR Information and COVID-19

AVRR Information
Flugeinschränkungen und COVID-19 spezifische Einreisebestimmungen*
Stand: 23.03.2021

Länder	Fluglinien	Flugrouten/ Transit	Flugdatum	COVID-Spezifische Flugmaßnahmen, Einreisebestimmungen und Auflagen
Afghanistan	Turkish Airlines	VIE-IST-KBL	Flüge verfügbar!	Keine Einreisebeschränkungen/Quarantäneregulungen. Bei der Einreise kommt es zu allgemeinen Gesundheitsscreenings auf COVID-19 Symptome. Falls entsprechende Symptome festgestellt werden, erfolgt eine Zuweisung in ein Krankenhaus oder in eine 14-tägige staatlich organisierte Quarantäne. Generell gibt es vor Ort weiterhin einen Lockdown! Es muss noch in Österreich ein COVID-19 RT-PCR Test durchgeführt werden (Testabnahme maximal 72 Stunden vor Abflug). Nur ein Nasen- oder Rachenabstrich ist zulässig. Das Zertifikat muss von einem zugelassenen Labor unterschrieben und gestempelt sein, es werden nur Zertifikate auf Englisch oder Arabisch anerkannt. Beschädigte oder Zertifikate mit handschriftlichen Ergänzungen werden nicht akzeptiert. Kinder unter 6 Jahren sind davon ausgenommen. Bei der Ankunft muss eine ausgefüllte „Public Health Card“ vorgelegt werden.
	Emirates	VIE-DXB-KBL	Flüge verfügbar!	
Ägypten	Austrian Airlines	VIE-CAI	Flüge verfügbar!	Alle kommerziellen Flüge nach Ägypten sind bis auf Weiteres eingestellt. Aktuell dürfen nur Personen mit einer Sondergenehmigung („exception entry permit“) ausgestellt vom Außenministerium bzw. der Botschaft mit den Sonderflügen z.B. ex Frankfurt und Paris einreisen. Für die Einreise ist ein PCR-Test notwendig (Testung maximal 72 Stunden vor Ankunft). Das Attest wird nur auf Arabisch, Englisch oder Französisch akzeptiert. Kinder unter 12 Jahren sind davon ausgenommen. Nach der Ankunft erfolgt eine 3-wöchige staatliche Quarantäne gefolgt von einer weiteren Woche in häuslicher Selbstisolation.
	Egypt Air	VIE-CAI	Flüge verfügbar!	
Algerien	Air Algerie	VIE-ALG	Keine Pläne bis Anfang Mai!	
Albanien	Austrian Airlines	VIE-TIA	Flüge verfügbar!	Keine Einreisebeschränkungen/Quarantäneregulungen.
Armenien	Austrian Airlines	VIE-EVN	Flüge verfügbar!	Wir empfehlen, noch in Österreich einen PCR-Test durchführen zu lassen (maximal 72 Stunden vor Ankunft), um eine Quarantäne und Testung vor Ort (auf eigene Kosten) zu vermeiden. Es werden nur Tests auf Englisch, Russisch oder Armenisch anerkannt. Es muss noch in Österreich ein COVID-19 RT-PCR Test durchgeführt werden (Testung maximal 72 Stunden vor Abflug). Kinder unter 10 Jahren sind davon ausgenommen. Bei der Einreise muss eine ausgefüllte „Health Declaration Form“ vorgelegt werden (https://dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/Notice/Notice_06_12_2020_HDF_BN.pdf) Nach der Ankunft muss eine 14-tägige häusliche Quarantäne angetreten werden.
Bangladesch	Turkish Airlines	VIE-IST-DAC	Flüge verfügbar!	
Belarus	Belavia	VIE-MSQ	Flüge verfügbar!	Für Reisende aus Österreich ist eine 10-tägige Selbstquarantäne vorgesehen.
	Turkish Airlines	VIE-IST-MSQ	Flüge verfügbar!	
Benin	Turkish Airlines	VIE-IST-OOO	Flüge verfügbar!	Vor der Abreise muss noch eine Onlineregistrierung durchgeführt werden (http://centresurveillancesantairs.com), der Authentifizierungscode muss bei der Ankunft vorgelegt werden können. Gemeinsam mit dem Authentifizierungscode kann über die Homepage die Testung vor Ort bereits im Voraus bezahlt werden. Zusätzlich ist eine 14-tägige Quarantäne angeordnet.
Bosnien und Herzegowina	Austrian Airlines	VIE-SJI	Flüge verfügbar!	Keine Einreisebeschränkungen/Quarantäneregulungen.

IOM Austria AVRR Information on COVID-19 movement restrictions and border management measures.
©IOM 2021

Despite pandemic-related challenges, IOM Austria continues to assist voluntary returnees whenever flight options are available. IOM Austria is therefore in close contact with return counsellors, IOM offices in countries of return and airlines to monitor entry restrictions/measures implemented by the respective countries as well as flight suspensions.

To keep all relevant partners informed on movement possibilities, an information sheet is shared on a regular basis, giving an overview on flight options and relevant quarantine measures.

Please address any questions you may have to: iomviennaoperations@iom.int or avrr.vienna@iom.int.

Adapting to pandemic conditions:

Trainings on Human Trafficking & Intercultural Competences under Asyl-Train II

“Can you hear me?” “Do you see the presentation?” Questions such as these have become a regular part of our working realities in the past year, when the COVID-19 pandemic pushed many meetings and events into the digital sphere. The effects have also been felt within the [Asyl-Train II project](#), which provides trainings on human trafficking, intercultural competences and additional topics to actors in the Austrian asylum and migration system.



The inability to hold in-person trainings due to public health regulations by no means meant a stillstand for IOM trainings. Quite the opposite: the project team adapted the trainings to the online setting, adjusting methodologies and approaches together with partner organizations to offer engaging sessions that invoke exchange and interaction despite physical distance. All six training sessions in 2020 were hosted virtually, and the trend continues for the beginning of 2021.

While our team is looking forward to a return to face-to-face trainings, we recognize that the pandemic has given us the unexpected chance to gain new technical skills that we can employ in future in-person events. Please contact our office if you would like to set up a training session this year!

Project and contact details are available here: austria.iom.int/en/asyl-train-ii



 Federal Ministry
Republic of Austria
Interior

*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.*

Protecting migrant workers' rights across the globe

Recruitment of migrant workers is a core aspect of facilitating global labour mobility. When done fairly and transparently, recruitment contributes to safe, orderly labour migration, which benefits countries of origin and destination, employers and migrants. However, when it is conducted in a manner that contradicts international standards, unethical recruitment can lead to fraud, exploitation and, in the worst cases, forced labour and human trafficking.

In order to protect the rights of migrant workers, IOM around the world partners with governments, civil society and the private sector to improve ethical recruitment practices. IOM's flagship initiative [IRIS: Ethical Recruitment](#) brings these efforts together. IRIS includes elements such as a [certification scheme](#) for private recruitment agencies, training programmes for migrants and the private sector as well as enhancing a holistic safe migration experience for migrants.

The initiative furthermore provides support to IOM Member States. Since December 2020, IRIS supports the new [Global Policy Network on Recruitment](#), a Member State-led collaboration to bring together senior policy makers, regulators and practitioners to address challenges, identify solutions and highlight promising practices to strengthen recruitment regulation and migrant worker protection. IOM invites Member States to contact IRIS to discuss membership or to learn more.

In Austria, IOM is working to put ethical recruitment and protection of migrant workers in supply chains on the policymaking agenda. In March, IOM Austria hosted two virtual events together with IOM Headquarters to introduce the Global Policy Network to relevant federal ministries. In April, the IRIS initiative will be presented to the national working group on human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation, a sub-group of the Task Force on Combating Human Trafficking.

SAVE THE DATE

Labour and Human Rights: Supply Chain Laws for Fair Business Practices

Online Symposium hosted by the Platform against Exploitation and Human Trafficking & Südwind in cooperation with IOM
Friday, 7 May 2021, from 9am to 4pm

Invitations to follow. Please contact Katie Klaffenböck for further information: kklaffenboeck@iom.int



Forecasting the Future of Global Migration

On 29 September 2020, EMN Austria organized the [National EMN Conference 2020](#) on the topic of “Forecasting the Future of Global Migration”. The conference, which was attended by 180 virtual participants from Austria and around the world, provided the opportunity to critically reflect on future migration scenarios and proactive migration policies. Selected conference presenters contributed to a special issue of IOM’s [Migration Policy Practice](#) journal, which serves as the conference outcome document.

All videos and presentations of the conference can be found [here](#).



EU Migration Talks: Trend Barometer Migration and Asylum 2020

On the basis of the [EMN Annual Policy Report Austria 2019](#), EMN Austria invited policy makers and experts to discuss recent developments in the field of migration and asylum on 11 November 2020. Ola Henrikson, IOM’s Regional Director for the EU, Norway and Switzerland, provided some insights into the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, followed by Austrian experts examining the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on labour migration and asylum in Austria. In addition, an outlook on the upcoming migration agendas was given by the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior. The event was part of the [EU Migration Talks](#) series, which aims at promoting dialogue between migration stakeholders in Austria.

EMN Austria National Steering Committee: Annual Meeting

On 11 November 2020, the [EMN Austria National Steering Committee](#) gathered for their annual meeting. The National Steering Committee consists of 11 member organizations and plays a key role in setting the strategic direction of EMN Austria. Alongside a general reflection on migration-related developments and activities in Austria, the members discussed research and topic proposals for the EMN 2021 Work Programme.



New EMN Study: Seasonal Workers from Third Countries in Austria

EMN Austria recently published a [new study](#) on Austria’s experience with the admission and employment of seasonal workers from third countries since 2016. In a new layout, the study provides an overview on the Austrian seasonal workers model, the rights of seasonal and harvest workers, and how these rights are upheld. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the employment of seasonal workers is also addressed. In addition to the National Report, the EMN also published a [Synthesis Report](#) summarizing the study results of all EMN Member States. A printed copy of the study (in German or English) can be ordered free of charge [here](#).

To mark the launch of the study, EMN Austria organized an [expert discussion](#) with national policy makers as well as representatives of the private sector and non-governmental organizations. Among other things, participants discussed why there is a demand for seasonal workers from third countries in Austria and how the demand will develop in the future.



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