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# The Link

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A new EU-funded ION-UNHCR-ICMC project on resettlement was launched in March in Timisoara, Romania. The project promotes further engagement by EU Member States in resettlement activities and focuses in particular on strengthening the practical cooperation between Member States by drawing on the benefits of a coordinated approach. In the project, established resettlement countries such as Sweden and the Netherlands will work together with countries which have started implementing resettlement programmes more recently, such as France, Romania and Portugal. A few countries that have not engaged in resettlement yet, including Hungary and Slovakia, will participate as well, in order to draw from the experiences of other countries in preparation for engaging in resettlement programmes in the future.

During the first project meeting, the participants explored possible cooperation activities in the different phases of resettlement, from joint selection missions to exchange of best practices in integration of resettled refugees. Participants also explored information sharing and cooperation between those resettlement actors dealing with the selection of refugees for resettlement and those working in reception and integration.

## New Momentum in Resettlement in Europe

The workshops consistently highlighted the need for structured exchange between the actors involved.

The following proposals on practical cooperation between the EU Member States and stakeholders emerged as main conclusions of the workshop:

- Carrying out joint selection missions and involving both the Emergency Transit Centre (ETC) in Timisoara and relevant NGOs
- Sharing of equipment, facilities and medical staff to conduct health assessments
- Sharing cultural orientation methodology, models, resources and good practices
- Involving all stakeholders, including reception and integration service providers, in the management of expectations, pre-departure information and planning phases

The launch of the project took place before the meeting of the UNHCR Working Group on Resettlement on 10-11 March, which discussed evacuation and temporary and emergency resettlement. In total, four resettlement-related meetings took place in Timisoara during that week, including the European Council for Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) Core Group on Resettlement and a

meeting on resettlement of refugees with medical needs.

Timisoara was chosen as a location for the meetings due to the presence of the ETC, which was established there in November 2009. Since then, more than 600 refugees have transited through the centre.

Established pursuant to a Tripartite Agreement between the Government of Romania, UNHCR and IOM, the ETC provides a safe haven for refugees in urgent need of resettlement and can host up to 200 refugees for a maximum period of six months, pending their onward resettlement to a country of permanent asylum.

Apart from the ETC in Romania, two more emergency transit mechanisms have been developed in the Slovak Republic and the Philippines. The Asylum Centre in Humenné, in the eastern part of the Slovak Republic, was adapted as an emergency transit facility in August 2009 and offers temporary stay for 100 refugees waiting to continue to their final resettlement destination. ■



A refugee bound for resettlement to the UK at the Emergency Transit Centre in Timisoara, Romania. © IOM 2009 - MRO0052

## Czech Republic Provides Reintegration Assistance to Mongolian Migrants



Batdorj Badamgarav in her workshop. © IOM 2010

In cooperation with the Mongolian NGO the Centre for the Child and Woman Protection, as of April 2010, IOM in the Czech Republic has provided 12 reintegration grants to Mongolian labour migrants who returned home voluntarily in 2009. The pilot project financed by the Czech Ministry of Interior aimed to assess the feasibility of different types of reintegration assistance available to returnees in Mongolia and to help returnees to start a new life in the country.

Mongolian returnees who participated in the program of voluntary returns for legal migrants applied for micro-grants at the Centre for Child and Woman Protection. The grants covered the costs of rent of small shops, counters at a trade centre, establishing a tire service shop, a silversmith workshop, university tuition fees, cost of a vocational training etc. In total, twelve people received micro grants, within the range of 1,500 – 2,000 USD per person.

The grant component of the project was accompanied by a feasibility assessment, which included the analysis of meaningful and viable types of reintegration, assessment of capacities and competencies of Mongolian governmental bodies and the NGO sector and an analysis of the existing legal framework for reintegration assistance.

The number of Mongolian migrant workers coming to the Czech Republic sharply increased from 2006 – 2008, rising from 3,500 to 14,000. Many of them lost their jobs in 2008 and 2009 due to the global economic crisis and decided to return home voluntarily with the support of the Czech Government or at their own cost. Today, 6,000 Mongolian migrant workers remain in the Czech Republic.

Based on the experience gained with these pilot reintegration projects, IOM put forward a proposal for future reintegration and social stabilization activities, to be implemented by the Czech Government in Mongolia. ■

Batdorj Badamgarav arrived in Czech Republic in the summer 2007, during the massive and unprecedented wave of labour migrants leaving Mongolia for the Czech Republic.

In the Czech Republic, Batdorj worked in the small city of Blansko in the eastern part of Bohemia. Her job was to sew together the leather covers of steering wheels for luxurious cars. Over 500 Mongolians worked with her in the factory, but due to the global economic crisis, many workers were laid off. In the spring of 2009, after 18 months of working in Blansko, she, along with many others, faced the reality of losing her job.

In February 2009 Batdorj accepted the Czech government's offer for her to return home through a program supporting the voluntary return of legal labour migrants. Some 2,000 labour migrants accepted this offer and returned home in 2009, 400 of them to Mongolia.

Upon return, Batdorj set up a silversmith workshop together with her brother, who brought expertise and additional financial resources to the business. With the micro-grant received from IOM and their own savings, the two were able to put down enough money to rent a small two-room shop on the premises of a public transportation depot in Ulaanbaatar for six months and buy one kilo of silver. Now the workshop produces silver adornments used for traditional Mongolian costumes, including belt buckles. Batdorj and her brother will be quite busy until the main Mongolian national holiday, Nadaam, which begins in July. Once they fulfil their orders for Naadam, they will shift their focus to another traditional product, silver cups.

## New Standards for Shelters for Victims Human Trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In the continuing fight against the trafficking of human beings in Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH), a need has arisen to revise policies and strengthen the existing victim assistance framework. As a destination country for victims of human trafficking (VoTs), BiH has developed immediate mechanisms for assistance to victims but few long-term resources for their full reintegration. An assessment of victim assistance in BiH in 2006 noted that there was a lack of reintegration assistance, especially for Bosnian nationals, and found that only victims residing in shelters were receiving any assistance at all. Additionally, shelters that did exist were found to maintain varied standards of care. Furthermore, funds for victim assistance were also being distributed by individual donors without coordination by the State Coordinator's Office, resulting in over-funding of shelter services and a lack of funding for other forms of assistance.

In order to respond to these issues, IOM has devised a sustainable set of minimum standards for victims' shelters in BiH, within a project "Strengthening Local Capacities to Prevent and Counteract Trafficking in Human Beings", funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The standards have been developed in the form of a manual, published in late April 2010.

The manual seeks to establish common policies on how VoT shelters should be operated across BiH in order to promote quality of assistance to VoTs. Comprised of twelve main "standards" to be implemented in the operation of shelters, this manual provides logistical information such as requirements for the location, structure and security of shelters; who is eligible for their services; the rights and obligations of those assisted; necessary qualifications for shelter personnel; reception and release policies; and other matters, such as relevant ethical standards and direction on how to transform these shelters into sustainable forms of assistance. The manual serves as a referential guide for those providing direct assistance to VoTs in BiH and standardizes and raises the disparate levels of existing service. The manual represents the continued dedication of IOM to improve reintegration resources for VoTs in the Western Balkans.

The project also established and piloted a national fund for direct assistance to VoTs that was handed over to the BiH government after project completion, establishing the basis for a sustainable and structured service provision system targeting victims of



*Handbook on Standards for Shelters for Victims of Human Trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina*

trafficking, especially Bosnian nationals. By centralising distribution of victim assistance funding, the State can ensure that organisations which receive the funds meet established standards of care. They can also ensure that reintegration services are being provided and that shelter-based services are funded only to the extent that they are required.

The Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees will officially issue the standards, which will be published and distributed to all organisations and agencies providing assistance to victims of trafficking. ■

## Community Stabilisation Programme in Kosovo under UNSCR 1244



*A cattle feed production point in Ranilug village, set up within a previous phase of CSP. The production facility has been located within the village veterinary centre where local residents can purchase the nutritionally enhanced cattle feed.*

The IOM mission in Pristina has signed an agreement with the European Commission Liaison Office to initiate an ambitious programme to improve the socio-economic circumstances of vulnerable minority groups, including ethnic Serbs and members of Kosovo's Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian (RAE) communities. The Community Stabilisation Programme (CSP) will support micro-enterprise development and income generation, as well as infrastructure and community development projects.

The 1.9 million EUR programme will target the minority communities in 27 of the 38 municipalities of Kosovo under UNHCR 1244, including the most recently formed municipalities of Gracanica, Klllokot and Ranilug, where minority groups are particularly affected by unemployment and poverty. Target minority groups include ethnic Serbs and members of Kosovo's RAE communities. Albanian minority communities living in those municipalities with a predominantly Serbian population are also included.

To enhance the employment prospects of the targeted communities, the programme will offer financial and technical assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs and support on-going or start-up ventures. Through the programme activities, beneficiaries will be trained in business skills to further support their small businesses and ensure the venture's viability. In an effort to increase inter-community and inter-beneficiary business exchange, the programme will support local business fairs and facilitate business-to-business meetings between beneficiaries, local producers and local suppliers.

Support will also be granted to local associations, both business and agricultural, and for community-initiated development projects, such as rehabilitating water supply networks and renovating schools and cultural centres. A special focus will be placed on implementing projects that support female-led businesses and women's associations. IOM will work in close coordination with municipal officials and local stakeholders as well as the Ministry of Community and Returns and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

This is the sixth round of financing IOM has received from the EU to implement a community stabilisation programme. The programme builds on many successful EU-funded small businesses and community development programmes that IOM has implemented in the last 11 years in Kosovo under UNHCR 1244. In addition to the CSP, similar programmes have included: Poverty Alleviation in Marginalised Municipalities (PAMM), the Fund for Agro-processing and Industrial Revitalisation (FAIR) and the Support for Enterprise Development in Minority regions (SEDMIN). Between 2002 and 2008, a total of 1,110 projects were completed, creating some 2,900 full-time and 1,315 part-time jobs. ■

## IOM Provides Support to the Social Inclusion of Roma in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

In close cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the IOM mission in Skopje is planning a training within the project “Institutional Building and Direct Labour Promotion Measures to Reduce Irregular Migration and Human Trafficking among Young Roma in Skopje and Tetovo”. The training will gather representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Employment Service Agency, Office of the Ombudsman, Ministry of Interior and local municipal officials. The aim is to sensitise the training participants to non-discriminatory policies, equal treatment of ethnicities and women’s rights.

This event is an integral part of a sequence of five training modules. Thus far, a total of 150 policymakers and practitioners implementing the National Roma Strategy have participated in the trainings to increase their capacity to advance the inclusion and socio-economic empowerment of vulnerable groups.

The project aims to contribute to the implementation of the National Roma Strategy, specifically working to combat the poverty and social exclusion of Roma and improve their socio-economic integration and educational outcomes. This program also contributes to implementation of the National Programme for Adaptation of the EU legislation, specifically Chapter 1 under the segment “Minority rights, protection of minorities and cultural rights,” where policies and activities for the socio-economic inclusion of Roma are specifically mentioned, and Chapter 2, which highlights the need for implementation of employment promotion activities.

The project, funded by the Government of Norway, aims to prevent human trafficking and smuggling in the Roma Communities of Skopje and Tetovo. The main project focus has been the provision of tailored vocational training courses for 75 young Roma. As an integral part of the project, IOM has also provided expert support and organized a high-level inter-institutional roundtable for the elaboration of the “Action Plan on Employment” for the Municipality of Suto Orizari, which is home to the world’s largest concentrated Roma population, over 13,000. ■



*Vocational training course on appliance repair and maintenance.*



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**IOM Budapest  
Regional Mission for  
Central and  
South Eastern Europe**

Révay u. 12  
Budapest 1065  
Hungary  
Tel.: +36.1.4722500  
Fax: +36.1.3740532

The International Organization for Migration is the principal intergovernmental organization in the field of migration. Committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to assist in meeting the growing operational challenges of migration management, advance understanding on migration issues, encourage social and economic development through migration and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

IOM Regional Office for Central and South-Eastern Europe provides support to IOM missions and offices in Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Montenegro, Poland, Romania, the Republic of Serbia, Kosovo under UNSCR no 1244, Slovakia and Slovenia.

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To provide comments to this edition, please contact [mrfbudapest@iom.int](mailto:mrfbudapest@iom.int).

## Youth Initiatives in Serbia

A dynamic youth initiative program carried out by the IOM mission in Belgrade celebrated several major achievements in April of this year. SHAPE ("Strengthening Serbia's Human Capital through the Active Involvement of Young People"), a project aimed at mobilizing and empowering young Serbs, not only culminated its more than 70 youth workshops but also handed out mini-grants to outstanding local youth initiatives. These grants, amounting to a total of 1.4 million RSD, were awarded to non-formal youth groups from ten target communities on 8 April 2010 in an official ceremony in the Palace of Serbia. In attendance were a number of notable guests, including the Serbian Minister of Youth and Sport, Ms. Snezana Samardzic Markovic, the Ambassador of the Republic of Italy in Serbia, H.E Armando Varicchio, the IOM Chief of Mission, Mr. Gregoire Goodstein, and representatives and officials from the Italian Development Cooperation and the target municipalities. This groundbreaking project is among the first initiatives recognized by the Serbian Ministry of Youth and Sport as crucial to supporting the 2008 National Youth Strategy.

During the past eighteen months of implementation, the SHAPE project has successfully progressed towards its main objective of

mobilizing Serbian youth and encouraging them to remain in Serbia and become active members of their communities. This project seeks to reverse past negative trends, such as outward migration of many young Serbs and subsequent brain drain. The project achieved its goals by providing over 1,000 young Serb activists the opportunity to participate in a number of hands-on workshops, in an attempt to counter the prevailing feelings many young Serbs have of isolation and lack of opportunities. One popular workshop covered the topic of human trafficking and gave youth the chance to meet with a former victim of trafficking, providing a real-world perspective on a current regional issue. In addition to these workshops and the provision of mini-grants for the strongest youth initiatives, the project also offered practical assistance in improving valuable skills such as public speaking, conflict resolution, effective use of media, and CV preparation.

Speaking about the project's achievements thus far, the IOM Chief of Mission, Gregoire Goodstein said that one of the most important results of this project is that it has firmly anchored the positive impact of youth offices in their communities, which are increasingly seen as relevant, practical, dependable and forward-looking partners

and are recognized as such by youth beneficiaries and local institutions alike.

The project, which is funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will continue until September 2011.



*Grant awards event in the  
Palace of Serbia*