



IOM Oslo



IN THIS EDITION

- ▶ 2011 in a nutshell.
- ▶ Empowering Lithuanian workers.
- ▶ Training session in counselling for VoT.
- ▶ IOM Oslo staff counselling and security training.
- ▶ Awareness session for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.
- ▶ IOM Iraq and IOM Afghanistan visits to Norway.
- ▶ IOM Oslo VARP database and system.
- ▶ International Migrants Day and IOM's 60 anniversary.
- ▶ Mr. Joost van der Aalst, New Chief of Mission at IOM Oslo.
- ▶ Cultural Orientation for Norway-bound Refugees (NORCO)

2011 IN A NUTSHELL

Reflecting back on 2011. We started the year by launching the new Voluntary Assisted Return Programme (VARP) database which took the better part of 2010 to develop. The VARP team then took one day to enter over 850 forms into the new database; the team has made tremendous efforts to make this tool as effective as possible.

IOM started implementing a reintegration project for Unaccompanied minor - UAM - and aged-out minor - AOM - which was also a major breakthrough for our mission and the support to minor asylum seekers here in Norway. The interest in the project shows the importance that it has had.

IOM continues to work closely with partners. We organized a successful Embassy seminar with 26 embassies represented from all over Europe. IOM introduced a monitoring feedback mechanism in order to receive feedback from the reception centres on the biannual IOM visits. We have also continued great momentum with the outreach project from the outreach

seminar in March to the International Migrants Day celebration on December 10th in cooperation with 25 migrant organizations and the Oslo municipality!

IOM Oslo had the pleasure to receive visits from IOM missions from Afghanistan, Brussels, Geneva, Iraq, Nigeria, and Russia which gave us opportunities to exchange ideas and network with other missions.

The Cultural Orientation Programme for Norway-bound Refugees provided pre-departure cultural orientation (CO) classes for over 1000 refugees accepted for resettlement in Norway. IOM Oslo also has started a new project for Lithuanian Construction workers and has trained a core group of 25 workers

While these are all great achievements of our mission, it is important to say a big thank you to our donors, cooperative partners and migrant organizations for their contribution in our daily work to achieve excellent results.

Migration for the benefit of all

WWW.IOM.NO



EMPOWERING LITHUANIAN CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

Last spring IOM Oslo started a project “Empowering Lithuanian Construction Workers in Oslo, Norway”. This project is based on a similar training program for Polish construction workers (2008-2010) which provided Polish construction workers with correct and relevant information about Norwegian labour laws and regulations. IOM maintains contact with the core group trained in 2010 in Stavanger and has had some follow up meetings with them.



The project for Lithuanian construction workers in Oslo empowers them with accurate information about their rights and duties as employees in Norway, and the relevant laws and regulations of the Norwegian society. The project is carried out by IOM in partnership with the Carpenters and Construction Workers Union (Tømrer og Byggfagforeningen) in Oslo and financed by the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi). The main activities include dissemination of information via project’s website and carrying out a training programme for a core group of 25 Lithuanian construction workers. This group functions as resource persons and further disseminates the acquired information through their private networks to other Lithuanian construction workers. The resource persons get basic Norwegian language training as well.

The project also contributes to:

- Decrease the information burden of employers and labour unions;
- Promote legal employment and work conditions;
- Combat social dumping;
- Improve the security and conditions at work;
- Gather information from different authorities which is provided in Lithuanian on one website (www.iom.no/Lithuanian/li_projects_li.html)

Courses for Lithuanians started in June and lasted until the end of December. It was free of charge for the participants and was carried out in Lithuanian.

Representatives of various organizations have participated in this project by presenting one or another topic. For example, Egil Mongstad from Tømrer og Byggfagforeningen explained what it means to be a construction worker in Norway; Daina Bogdaniene from Arbeidstilsynet presented work environment regulations and danger of labour exploitation; Torunn Haugen and Linda Birkenes Andresen from Skatteetaten spoke about income, tax return and double taxation; Kristoffer Medhus Sannes from DnBNOR bank introduced money management in Norway. Lithuanian core group also was greeted by Lithuanian ambassador in Norway, Mr. Andrius Namavicius.

Caritas information center cooperates with IOM in this project by disseminating information to Lithuanian and Polish migrants.

More information about the project is available in Lithuanian and English on IOM Oslo website or contact Ms. Jurgina Maciulyte, Tel: +47 23 10 53 34 | Fax: +47 23 10 53 21; e-mail: LABMIG@iom.int.

TRAINING SESSION ON COUNSELLING FOR VOT

On September 09th, IOM Oslo counter-trafficking and unaccompanied minor coordinator facilitated an internal training session for the rest of the VARP team, on counselling for victims of human trafficking. The main topics in this training were focused on:

- Introduction to Human trafficking: legal framework and definitions, types of exploitation, human trafficking vs. smuggling.
- Learning about general and specific indicators.
- Assistance system in Norway: structure, partners and division of services.
- Rights & services offered VoTs.
- IOM Global achievements.

- IOM Norway programme: components, cooperation with other missions, beneficiaries and monitoring.
- The role of IOM Oslo staff in identifying & referring a VoT.
- Unaccompanied Minors & Aged – Out Minors: UAM Rights, provision of information, counselling and UAM/AOM project procedures.

The aim of the training was to provide the VARP team with better understanding of the programme and to be better prepared to manage the identification and counselling of victims of human trafficking.

IOM Oslo staff counselling and security training

The Voluntary Assisted Return Programme team received a special training session that provided the IOM staff with the appropriate tools/guidance to provide counselling at both individual and group levels, to better equip them with dealing with difficult situations they may face and ultimately, how to process and move on after difficult situations.

The session was focused on:

1. Role of IOM employees
2. Communication
3. Security
4. How to handle crisis situation
5. How to move on

The training culminated in developing action points related to providing information sessions for groups, improving counselling, and improving the security procedures within the office. Based on the training, guidelines are being developed for the VARP team.

IOM Oslo Staff attended the awareness session for the Prevention on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

As part of IOM's international plan and commitment to prevent and address Sexual Exploitation and Abuse – SEA; IOM Oslo staff attended an awareness session on PSEA with the objective to understand the rules in place in our Organization and the causes and consequences of SEA. This session took place in our main office on September 23rd.

During the session the participants went through a package of tools that provided the necessary information to prevent the sexual exploitation and abuse. The exercises provided concrete examples of SEA in an IOM context and guidance on reporting mechanisms within IOM. With the completion of this activity, IOM Oslo has now fulfilled the mandate from IOM Headquarters to inform all IOM staff worldwide on this important issue.

IOM IRAQ AND IOM AFGHANISTAN VISITS TO NORWAY



In 2011, IOM mission in Norway received visits from IOM missions from Iraq in late May and from Afghanistan in October, during these visits IOM Oslo and its counterparts from Iraq and Afghanistan have jointly organized infor-

mation and counselling activities related to the Information Return and Reintegration for Iraqi Nationals to Iraq (IRRINI) and for Afghan Nationals (IRRANA) Programmes respectively. The overall objectives of the visits were to exchange information between IOM Oslo and both missions related to IRRINI and IRRANA programmes and look at possibilities to improve the development of the programmes in a way that meets the needs of their respective beneficiaries. During the visits which each lasted two days, various activities were organized in order to share the information related to the programmes and trends of return to Iraq and Afghanistan. For both missions IOM Oslo organized meetings and activities with IRRINI and IRRANA stakeholders, potential applicants from both countries and representatives of migrant organizations in Norway.

IOM OSLO VARP DATABASE AND SYSTEM

Since the beginning of 2011, IOM Oslo has been using a new online database which was developed together with the Information and Technology (IT) department at IOM Manila for the purpose of maintaining accurate records of all applicants under the assisted voluntary return and reintegration programmes. Twelve months after the launch, we have a successful tool which has greatly facilitated our work and processing of the cases.

This system (www.voluntaryreturn.com) allows applicants to apply online directly, which means that the application will be received automatically. Applicants must however still submit a signed declaration form in order for us to start processing the case.

In addition, the database also includes an interface for the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) where they have direct access only to the relevant information they need in order to clear the case for

travel, but not to all the information of each case.

Due to the geographical spread of our staff in Norway, this system also permits colleagues who are not based in the main office to have full access to the database in order to inform applicants and support casework. This has greatly improved our efficiency in processing of cases. The system is protected and falls under the norms of IT standards for IOM.

Until the end of November 2011, 27% of our applications were submitted online. Whilst we consider this a modest positive achievement, we continue to encourage potential applicants to apply online as it helps reduce some of the processing time required.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY 2011 – IOM'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY



Tamil and Chilean cultural dance performances on Dec. 10th, during the International Migrants Day celebrations.



Former Chief of Mission at IOM Oslo, Mr. Antonio Polosa with representatives from migrant organizations.

Over the last year, Mission in Norway marked IOM's 60th anniversary through various activities. The Staff Day was organized on September 09th and the celebration of the International Migrants Day took place on December 10th. The International Migrants Day was organized together with the municipality of Oslo and twenty five migrant organizations represented in the network Eras Group. The event was attended by over 200 people representing 25 migrant communities and local partners from the public sector.

IOM's 60th anniversary was reflected in the development of information materials throughout the year. These were widely distributed to governmental counterparts and other partners, and contributed to increasing the visibility of IOM in the country.

The anniversary year culminated with hosting a successful anniversary reception on December 13th. Around 60 people attended the event, including Government officials, Consul Generals and other diplomatic representatives, local partners along with IOM Oslo staff and representatives of migrant organizations and individual migrants. IOM Oslo former Chief of Mi-

ssion Mr. Antonio Polosa gave a speech welcoming guests, highlighting the achievements of IOM during sixty years of operational activities and referring to this year's IOM Migrants Day Press Release, where Director General, Ambassador William Swing focuses on the need to ensure health safeguards and assistance to migrants.

The event gave IOM Oslo yet another opportunity to highlight IOM's active role in addressing migration challenges in Norway, where over 15000 migrants have benefited from various IOM run programmes over the last 9 years, as well as to pay a tribute to IOM partners reinforcing a continuation of good relations and solid partnerships. Two dance performances - a flamenco show by IOM staff and traditional dances from the Andes mountains in South America by a children dance troupe Andes fjellene helped to create a festive event, where IOM Chief of Mission and staff welcomed guests in relaxed and warm atmosphere.

MR. JOOST VAN DER AALST, NEW CHIEF OF MISSION AT IOM OSLO

“Working in the field of migration to deliver humane results is a rewarding experience, thus contributing to the very demanding circumstances in different countries, emerging from years of civil war, a traumatic genocide, at the start of independence, in a fragile security environment or - such as in the Netherlands with a identity dilemma.”

This reflects the professional life with IOM of Joost van der Aalst over the past 19 years. Since January 2012 he is Chief of Mission (COM) of IOM in Norway. As former COM of IOM-offices in The Netherlands, Islamabad, Azerbaijan and Rwanda as well as having been an official at IOM HQ he covers a wide scope of expertise in the field of migration. Migration can be considered as one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century, both concerning political, economic and social areas. Through a professional global and impartial approach IOM is offering interventions making migration to the benefit of all. Worldwide the organisation is executing programmes on Capacity Building in Migration Management, resettlement, assisted voluntary returns and integration, combating trafficking, labour migration and temporary return of qualified nationals for the development of their countries of origin.

Joost van der Aalst is in particular passionate in translating current migration dilemmas into concrete and tangible objectives and results. This helps shape programmes and projects to focus on improved conditions for migrants in the society. Understanding the correlation between development and migration is a cornerstone to solutions that reduce forced migration flows.

In Norway Joost van der Aalst and his staff is implementing IOM's main programme voluntary return assistance with an increasing focus on sustainable reintegration in countries of origin. Other programmes include Cultural Orientation including for labour migrants and facilitation of resettlement to Norway. IOM is offering its expertise to the Norwegian government on migration policy according to its principle 'Migration for the benefit of all'. The nexus between Migration and Development deserves further recognition and can build bridges between countries of origin and Norway.

Working in an international environment and for a good part overseas, requires and foremost inspires to meet professional challenges from different perspectives.



Mr. Joost van der Aalst, Chief of Mission

Joost van der Aalst gained his expertise from working in several IOM missions.: as Chief of Mission in the Netherlands (2005 – 2011), Regional Representative in Islamabad in Pakistan (2004-2005), as Chief of Mission in Baku in Azerbaijan, (1997-2004), IOM-HQ Geneva (1997), Chief of Mission in Kigali in Rwanda (1995-1996), and in Quelimane in Mozambique (1993-1994).

During these almost nineteen years Joost van der Aalst worked on capacity building with Governments, on Migration Management, Assisted Voluntary Returns and Reintegration, Micro-credit support for rural development and Demobilisation and integration programmes. In Rwanda, as Chief of Mission, he was responsible for the IOM coordinated repatriation assistance to over 1 million Rwandan refugees from neighbouring countries. At IOM's HQ he drafted a general Return Project for former Yugoslavia.

Mr. van der Aalst believes that results can be achieved when synergies and cooperation with governments, NGOs and UN agencies are maintained and nurtured.

CULTURAL ORIENTATION FOR NORWAY-BOUND REFUGEES (NORCO)

Anyone moving to a new society where cultural practices and traditions are different from one's own can expect to undergo a period of significant adjustment and adaptation of variable duration and difficulty. Many refugees accepted for resettlement in third countries, including Norway, have little or no knowledge of the culture and socio-economic practices of the new society. They often come directly from refugee camps and move straight into their new homes. The result is an extended period of difficulty, which the newcomers encounter. Lack of accurate and relevant information may lead to the refugees having unrealistic expectations of life in their new country. If not addressed, these expectations will not only cause stress to the newcomers on arrival, but may also cause undue pressure on the social service providers in the host communities. This may in turn result in strain and tension on the relationship with the general public, thus weakening prospects of integration and public support for resettlement of refugees in general.

To reduce or prevent such tension and strain Norway has recognized the benefits of pre-departure cultural orientation for quota refugees bound for resettlement in Norway. Preparing these refugees and informing them about inevitable issues like culture shock and providing strate-

gies and coping mechanisms have long-lasting positive effects, not only on the refugees themselves, but also on the society in general.

Since 2003 the IOM mission in Norway has been implementing a comprehensive pre-departure cultural orientation to Norway-bound refugees accepted for resettlement to Norway. The NORCO programme also provides social and refugee workers in the receiving municipalities with relevant and updated information about the refugee populations, including their countries of origin and cultural background.

Since the inception of NORCO over 5000 quota refugees have received pre-departure cultural orientation, 1063 of them received the training during the 2011 project year. The refugees were originally from Afghanistan, Bhutan, Eritrea, Iran, Myanmar and Somalia. Training has been provided in the following transit countries: Iran, Nepal, Malta, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, Malaysia, and Kenya; where these refugees were located before their arrival to Norway.



CONTACT IOM OSLO HERE:

+47 23 10 53 20 tel

+47 23 10 53 21 fax

800 - frivillig - retur

800 - 37484

www.iom.no

IOMOslo@iom.int

www.voluntaryreturn.com

Visiting address:

Storgata 10A, Oslo

Postal address:

PO Box 8927, Youngstorget

NO-0028, Oslo

Norway